RECEPTION CLASSES: A MODEL FOR BRIDGING INFORMAL AND FORMAL EDUCATION

by

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Durban
November 1997

DECLARATION

" I declare that this dissertation, '*Reception classes: a model for bridging informal and formal education*,' represents my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references."

S. SIEBALAK
Durban
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This work is dedicated to my brother-in-law, Madhan Balgobind, who was the source of inspiration in my studies.

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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to confirm that I have read and edited the dissertation, "Reception classes: a model for bridging informal and formal education", which is to be presented by Shamilla Siebalak in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree, Master of Education, at the University of Zululand. I have also read over the Afrikaans summary, but these two pages will have to be checked by an Afrikaans-speaking language specialist.

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I am a professional language editor and attach an abbreviated CV, detailing such aspects of my qualifications and experience as are relevant to the editing of academic and other manuscripts.

Shirley Bell
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SUMMARY

The aim of this investigation was to determine the role of reception classes in bridging informal and formal education.

An introductory description of the life-world of the preschool child was given. It is essential for the child to orientate himself in relation to his world; and for this purpose he must understand the significance of other people, objects/ ideas and himself. The bases of relationships which the preschool child forms, namely the physical, psychological, social and cultural bases, were described. This was followed by an examination of the relationships he forms with himself, his parents, peers, objects/ideas, and religion. The self-actualization of the preschool child as a person was discussed; that is helping the child to become the best that he is able to become. Conditions for the emergence of school readiness, criteria for school readiness and factors hindering school readiness were examined.

An overview was provided of preschool education in the Republic of South Africa with specific reference to its origin and development thereof in the different provinces before 1994. Attention was also given to the inter-provincial movement regarding preschool as well as the present status of reception classes in the country.

A literature study was also made of the existing preschool models for the different race groups in KwaZulu-Natal (former Natal), as well as governmental and non-governmental involvement in preschool education. The reception class model was discussed with reference to the programmes offered, curriculum, accreditation, training of teachers and funding. The quality of preschool

education presently rendered in KwaZulu-Natal was explored with regard to the training of teachers, pupil-teacher ratio and preschool facilities.

In conclusion, a summary of the investigation and findings emanating from the literature study was presented. Based on these findings, the following recommendations were made:

- Provision for reception classes should form part of the free and compulsory education plan of the government.

- Urgent attention should be given to parent guidance and involvement programmes in the education of preschool children.

OPSOMMING

Hierdie ondersoek was daarop gerig om die rol wat ontvangsklasse in die oorbrugging van informele en formele onderwys speel, vas te stel.

Ter inleiding is die leefwêreld van die kleuter (voorskoolse kind) beskryf. Die kind wil en moet homself ten opsigte van sy omringende wêreld oriënteer en daarvoor moet hy in sy verhouding met homself, ander mense, dinge en objekte/idees betekenis gee. Die grondslae van hierdie verhoudings wat die kind vorm, naamlik die fisiese, psigiese, sosiale en kulterele gronslae is van nader beskou. Daarna het 'n beskrywing van die kleuter se vorming van relasies met homself, sy ouers, portuurgroep, objekte/idees en religie gevolg. Die selfaktualisering van die kleuter as persoon, d.w.s. om hom in sy wording te help om die beste te word waartoe hy in staat is, is onder die loep geneem. Voorwaardes vir die bereiking van skoolgereedheid, kriteria vir skoolgereedheid en faktore wat skoolgereedheid belemmer, is ondersoek.

Vervolgens is 'n oorsig van voorskoolse onderrig in die Republiek van Suid-Afrika gegee met spesifieke verwysing na die ontstaan en ontwikkeling daarvan in die verskillende provinsies voor 1994. Aandag is ook gegee aan die inter-provinsiale beweging met betrekking tot voorskoolse opvoeding en die huidige status van die ontvangsklasse in die land.

'n Literatuurstudie van die bestaande voorskoolse modelle vir die verskillende bevolkingsgroepe in KwaZulu-Natal is onderneem en die betrokkenheid van die staat en privaat instansies in voorskoolse onderrig is terselftertyd in oënskou geneem. Die kwaliteit van die onderrig wat deur die bestaande voorskoolse

inrigtings in KwaZulu-Natal gelewer word, is ondersoek, met betrekking tot die opleiding van onderwysers, die leerling-onderwyser verhoudings en bestaande voorskoolse fasiliteite.

Ten slotte is 'n opsomming van die studie en sekere bevindings voortspruitend uit die literatuurstudie aangebied. Na aanleiding van dié bevindings is die volgende aanbevelings gemaak:

- Die staat se verpligte gratis onderwys moet voorsiening maak vir ontvangsklasse vir voorskoolse kinders.

- Begeleidings- en betrokkenheidsprogramme rakende die opvoeding van voorskoolse kinders moet vir ouers ingestel word.

CHAPTER 1

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CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Before building a house it is necessary to lay a solid foundation to support the entire structure. Before a child enters primary school, his first experience of formal education, a similar foundation must be laid - a school readiness foundation (ELC, 1993:1). School readiness refers to the child's total readiness to benefit from formal education in a group (Vrey, 1990:80). During the first six years of the child's life, the preschool period, the child's development on all fronts is phenomenal (Short & Kawa, 1990:36). Embedded within his family, his community and cultural values, the preschool child, from birth to six years, needs to be supported in the development of his physical, mental and social abilities: the abilities that will enable him to be ready for formal schooling. The school readiness foundation laid during these years largely depends on the nature and quality of the parents' educational methods (Taylor, 1984:138). The family forms the basis of the child's personal world of experience, as well as the social and educational structure in which he develops to adulthood (Du Toit & Kruger, 1991:54).

The main activity of the preschool child is play. Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg (1988:175) formulate as follows: " Play is the work of a child. It makes a major contribution to the physical, social, affective and cognitive development of the child and is essential for learning." It forms the foundation of almost everything the child learns during the preschool years and also serves as preparation for formal schooling (Bottelheim, 1987:35,46). According to Grobbelaar (1994:57), it is possible to enrich the child's play activities both at home and outside, with the aim of enhancing the child's development. Therefore

the value of play in the becoming of the child must never be underestimated. Hurst (1991:53) says play is a spontaneous way by which young children of all cultural groups discover their life-world. The child learns by means of play, and if play is enjoyed, learning is also enjoyed, because it is associated with the enjoyment of play. According to Blyth (1988:78), the value of play in early childhood is widely recognised, and structured provision for play activities can be found in many classrooms. Catron & Allen (1993:17) state that because reading and writing play such an important part in everyday life they should be reflected in play situations.

Learning experiences in the reception class are mainly informal and play-orientated and provide opportunities for exploration, experimentation and discovery in a creative and meaningful way. As opportunities arise in the reception class, educators must present children with challenges that will help them to move beyond their current understandings and strategies (Newman & Church, 1990:20). Education in the reception class is directed at promoting the independence of the child, the gaining of confidence, developing a positive self-image and encouraging critical thought. The learning experience during the reception year is important, as it enriches and extends the state of allround readiness for formal education of the learner (Alexander & Hines, 1994:17).

1.2 ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM

Researchers are in agreement that during the first six years the child's development on all fronts is phenomenal (Vrey, 1990:65). The quality of the home environment and the parents' educative assistance have a direct bearing on the child's development during the first six years of his life. It is in the family home that the child first learns what is important and what is less important, what is good and what is bad, what has value and what is worthless (Du Toit & Kruger, 1993:54). The informal education in the parental home should serve as

foundation for formal schooling so that the child is school-ready at the appropriate time. School readiness presupposes a certain level of development and maturity, together with a clear frame of reference (Bottelheim, 1987:35).

Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1988:203) state that before the child enters school, the parents, as primary educators, should have been active in the following areas of the child's development:

- intellectual stimulation;
- practice in social relationships;
- the acquisition and assumption of a positive attitude to work and not simply to play;
- the acquisition of school techniques; and
- agility of linguistic expression and communication.

If the above is adequately realised in the parental home, the child will be ready to go to school. School readiness is the stage reached when the child is cognitively, socially, physically and emotionally ready to undergo formal schooling (De Witt & Booysen, 1995:99). The child is not school-ready when parents fail to provide the range of activities, mostly based on play-orientated learning experiences, which serve as a rounding-off of all preschool experience and as a preparation for entering the primary school phase (Grobbelaar, 1994:16-17). If the home environment is therefore insufficient as a learning environment, the prognosis for a child to be school-ready is poor (Grobler, Penning, Orr, Calitz & Van Staden, 1992:12).

The labelling of many children as "scholastically retarded, emotionally disturbed" or "with special needs" is frequently the result of their entering school before they are school-ready (Grobler *et al.*, 1992: 14). Besides school immaturity, other factors which hinder the natural transition from informal education at home to formal school education include the following (Gajadhur, 1990:166):

- little or ineffective education at home;
- parental neglect;
- poor family relationships;
- psychopathic traits;
- physical inhibitions; and
- functional neuroses.

Premature entry into the school may result in psychological and learning difficulties which may have an effect on the child's whole school career.
The reception class may provide the child with the necessary experiential background and a genuine desire and willingness to undergo formal instruction (Short, 1992:23).

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In essence the problem to be investigated in this study centres on reception classes in bridging informal and formal education.

1.4 ELUCIDATION OF CONCEPTS

This study of the reception class as a bridge between informal education at home and formal education in school, will cover a wide spectrum of concepts. To ensure a clear understanding of the problem to be investigated it seems necessary to explain the following concepts:

1.4.1 Bridging Classes (BC)

According to Van Zyl (1991:54), The De Lange commission on preprimary education resulted in acceptance of the idea of bridging classes before the child enters formal primary schooling. After the release of the De Lange Report in

1983, the Department of Education And Training (DET) began experimenting with bridging classes during the first year of school.

Children who were not ready for formal instruction, and those who were likely to fail Sub A, participated in a preparation programme in a separate group which was conducted by the Sub A teacher. This programme, extending for a few weeks to an entire year, was very flexible with children passing into Sub A at various times as they reached an acceptable level of competence.

Work began on this programme in 1988 and is reported as functioning in 1230 DET schools in 2117 classes in 1992 (NEPI, 1992:23). Bridging Classes are regarded as a short-term strategy to render schools more responsive to the needs of children. In the National Education Planning Investigation Committee (NEPI) report of 1993 it was stated that bridging classes are seen as a "minimum first step towards the upgrading of the quality of Junior Primary schooling and a second-best option to a preschool year for all five-year-olds along the lines of the British infant school model" (NEPI, 1993:125).

The bridging class programme would be based on a high activity curriculum with teacher-friendly school-readiness manuals and materials. Implementation of such a programme would therefore also amount to in-service-courses for teachers.

1.4.2 Bridging Module Readiness Class (BMRC)

In an attempt to achieve school readiness in areas which can be described as both economically and culturally deprived the House of Delegates started Bridging Module Readiness Classes at primary schools with available classroom space. In 1992 fifty-two primary schools in the Durban area had Bridging Module Readiness Classes for five-year-olds due to enter grade one the following year (Dayanorain, 1992:2). The main purpose of these classes is to provide an environment in which physical, experiential and psychological development

towards school readiness can take place - especially for children from lower socio-economic families. According to Dayanorain (1992:3), the Bridging Module Readiness Classes:

- provide bridging programmes for children not considered school-ready;
- occupy empty facilities; and
- provide a feeder service to grade one so that the schools can have greater control over its intake.

1.4.3 Early childhood development (ECD)

According to the Department of Education "early childhood development" is a new term which is used to refer to programmes for children in the birth to nine-year-old age group (NED, 1992:17). The interim policy document on education also refers to children from birth to at least *nine* years, in order to include learners who may be older but who still find themselves within the development phase (NECC, 1992:25).

The term ECD conveys the importance of a holistic approach to child development and signifies an appreciation of the importance of considering a child's health, nutrition, education, psycho-social and additional environmental factors within the context of the family and the community. It is consistent with an understanding of the development process of children and in line with the international definition.

1.4.4 Education

As pointed out by Du Toit & Kruger (1993:5), the term "education" is of Latin origin and means "to bring up, train, provide schooling for". Van Rensburg, Landman & Bodenstein (1994:366) define education as the conscious, purposive

intervention by an adult in the life of a non-adult to bring him to independence - bearing in mind that educative assistance is the positive influencing of the child by an adult, with the specific purpose of effecting changes of significant value. This influence is seen as being positive in providing assistance towards independence (Vrey, 1990:3). Education is reliant upon adult intervention in the life-world of the child. A child cannot be self-educative, but needs a close, trusting association with an adult to realize his capabilities. This close relationship is not in itself conductive to education. It needs deliberate intervention in the world of the child to bring forth and improve desirable qualities and attitudes (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1988:71).

1.4.5 Formal education

Formal education (basic teaching) is any organised, systematic, teaching activity inside a formal education system (school, college, technikon, university). Du Plooy, Griessel & Oberholzer (1987:178) describe formal education as the education that takes place in a planned way at a recognised institution. Effective formal instruction is carefully planned and prepared and has clearly defined short and long-term objectives. Formal education is characterised by the use of age-graded classes, fixed curricula, a nucleus of trained teachers and the implementation of standard educational methods (Taylor, 1984:139).

1.4.6 Informal education

Behr (1984:322) defines informal education as the education that is given in situations in life that come about spontaneously; for example, within the family circle, the neighbourhood, and so on. It is the spontaneous teaching and learning experiences arising in ordinary life situations. In their reports on education, the Urban Foundation and De Lange commission both describe informal education as spontaneous teaching and learning experiences arising in ordinary life situations (HSRC, 1981:27). Informal education is generally perceived as formative

education, and therefore directed primarily at children and provided within family situations. Taylor (1984:137) states that informal education has an important role to play in supporting the child's formal schooling.

According to Van Rensburg, Landman & Bodenstein (1994:454), informal education (pre-basic teaching) covers the preschool period from birth up to the child's entry into formal education in primary school. In informal education the child is taught via informal programmes and informal activities. For the purpose of this study, informal education is seen as the formative years in the upbringing of the preschool child within the family.

1.4.7 Play

Play is an important avenue through which the child learns - informally and formally (Spodek, 1986:179). Play makes a major contribution to the physical, social, affective and cognitive development of the child and is the natural way in which the child explores his life-world. Cohen & Cohen (1986:11) emphasise the significance of children's play: " Play is an activity which is concerned with the whole of the child's being, not with just a one small part of him, and to deny him the right to play is to deny him the right to live and grow."

There have been innumerable attempts to define play, while intuitively most of us know play when we see it. It is also difficult to specify what it is that helps us separate play from non-play. No clearly definable, observable, mutually agreed upon criteria exist to clarify the term play. According to Anning (1991: 1991:29), the most suitable description of play is "any self-chosen activity engaged in for enjoyment". However, an activity might be considered play in some settings under certain circumstances, but considered as non-play or work in other settings or other circumstances.

De Witt & Booysen (1995:121) say that where children are, they play, and play forms the basis of early childhood. Play can be described as the child's "work" or "task", a reflection of his development, the essence of his life and a window through which his life-world can be observed (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1988:175). According to Spodek, Sarachino & Davis (1991:17), play is an easy, natural way for the child to learn about objects, things and people in his world, and how these things are related. In his play, a child is able to express himself - to create his own world to keep himself busy. Playing is the most natural characteristic feature of childhood and is the child's natural way of developing himself in body and mind and preparing himself for the serious business of life. Althouse (1981:45) says playing belongs to early childhood, and play is the natural way in which the child explores his life-world.

1.4.8 Preprimary educational programmes

Singh (1993:39) states that preschool education is generally accepted as an integral part of the total education system. The idea of preschool education is not by any means revolutionary. Almost every society in which parents need to be away from home for most of the day have devised some form of preschool care. A structured programme for early childhood education in preschool facilities can be seen as academic preparation for formal schooling - a means of bridging informal and formal education.

Short (1992:240) stresses the fact that a structured educational programme in early childhood can be seen as academic preparation for later formal schooling. The child's learning experiences during the preschool years provide an essential foundation for further learning. The nature and adequacy of these early experiences, the issue of school readiness and the extent to which special intervention programmes can improve later scholastic achievement, are however still subject to debate (Singh, 1993:39).

1.4.9 Reception class

According to De Lange (1994:17), the term "reception class' is at present predominantly used in KwaZulu-Natal and indicates a preschool model with strong similarities to, yet important differences from kindergartens. In 1983 the Natal Education Department introduced reception classes on an experimental basis: two in Pietermaritzburg and two in Durban (NED 1992:2). The writer sees reception classes as a means of accepting five-to six year old children unconditionally into the school and providing an appropriately enriched and stimulating learning environment in which to develop each child's individual potential.

The purpose of a reception class can be detailed as follows (NED, 1983:2):

- The approach in the reception class is one of diagnosis, *i.e.* of identifying deficiencies in the child's educational background, and consequent provision of a suitable programme for enrichment and development to enable the child to mature and adjust within a short span of time - one year or less - in order to become "school ready".

- The reception class must not be confused with a remedial class, as the former is essentially concerned with the preparation for an initial programme of formally structured primary education, while the latter deals with problems from participation in the programme.

Within the ten years of compulsory education proposed in the new South Africa, the first year will be designated as the reception class for five-year-olds (ELC, 1993:2). This will provide a transition year between other forms of preschool education (at home or other preprimary institutions) and formal primary school education

1.4.10 School readiness

According to Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg (1988:202), school readiness is the stage reached when the child is cognitively, socially, physically and emotionally ready to undergo formal schooling. School readiness includes school maturity. De Witt & Booysen (1995:156) define school readiness as the child's total readiness to benefit from formal education. It is, however, a more comprehensive term than school maturity since it includes aspects such as emotional, intellectual, social and physical readiness.

Vrey (1990:8) says school readiness refers to a level of independence achieved by the child which will enable him to meet the requirements of formal education with minimal tension. Weiser (1991:1) states that school readiness is a process that commences at birth and goes hand in hand with the child's normal stages of development. School readiness, as opposed to school maturity (a natural process), can be accelerated, and for this reason the child's home environment and educators (parents) play a significant role in his becoming school-ready.

1.5 AIM OF THIS STUDY

The aims of this investigation stem from the statement of the problem and can be formulated as follows:

- to describe the role of reception classes in bridging informal education at home and formal education in school by way of examination of relevant literature; and

- in the light of the findings obtained from the literature study, to formulate certain recommendations which could serve as guidelines for the reception class.

1.6 METHOD OF RESEARCH

Research with regard to this study will be conducted by way of:

- a literature study of available, relevant literature; and
- informal interviews with principals and teachers.

1.7 FURTHER COURSE OF STUDY

Chapter 2 will deal with the life-world of the preschool child.

The historical development of preschool education in the RSA will be discussed in Chapter 3.

In Chapter 4 the focus will be on the existing preschool models in KwaZulu-Natal.

Chapter 5 will present a summary of this study, and will offer certain recommendations.

1.8 SUMMARY

An exposition of the problem, statement of the problem and the aims of this study were given in this chapter. The method of research was explained and certain relevant concepts were elucidated. Lastly, the further course of this study has been set out.

CHAPTER 2

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CHAPTER 2

THE LIFE-WORLD OF THE PRESCHOOL CHILD

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Every child lives in his or her own unique life-world. Just as each child is unique so is the life-world of each child unique. The child's life-world includes everything that has meaning for him or her, not only the geographical world, but all the relationships with objects, ideas, people and himself or herself (Du Toit & Kruger, 1993:15). These relationships may be interdependent and interactive; they are always dynamic and ever increasing and changing. Vrey (1990:21) says this Gestalt of meaningful relationships constitutes the child's life-world. All the child's behaviour and actions should be interpreted within the context of his life-world - all to which the child has attributed significance and which he therefore understands. From birth the child is actively constituting this life-world, using his genetic potentials, aspirations, will and psychological abilities, within his particular cultural context, forming an ever-changing, increasing, interacting whole in which he is involved and to which he attributes meaning (Van Rensburg, Landman & Bodenstein, 1994: 435).

The child is a person in a world of other people, objects, norms, values and ideas in which he orientates himself while becoming an adult (Vrey, 1990:60). The child's orientation is possible only with the help of adults as educators (parents or teachers). Educators unlock meanings for the child, and this attribution of meaning enables the child to constitute a meaningful life-world by forming meaningful relationships (Du Toit & Kruger, 1993:13). A child's readiness to explore his establishment of relations and of a life-world are best promoted by

parents who give a great deal of love and support, enforce educational controls, and respect and encourage their children (David, 1990:80). Such parents give their preschool child adequate preparation for self-actualization.

In this chapter the life-world of the preschool child will be described. Attention will be given to the bases of relationships, the forming of relationships, self-actualization and the conditions for the emergence of school readiness. The latter will include criteria for school readiness and certain factors hindering school readiness

2.2 BASES OF RELATIONSHIP WHICH THE CHILD FORMS

It is essential for the preschool child to orientate himself in relation to his life-world, and for this purpose he must understand the significance of the people, objects and ideas in it for himself (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1988:193). Involvement with this world is possible only if he has formed meaningful relationships and in this way constituted a life-world (Vrey, 1990:67). To understand the development of these relationships, it is necessary to look at the physical, psychological, social and cultural foundations on which they are built (Sachs, 1996).

2.2.1 The physical basis

In the first two years, the child's development and growth takes place extremely quickly, but from the third year growth occurs more slowly and evenly (Weiser, 1991:114; Du Toit & Kruger, 1993:28). The skeleton, muscles and nervous system mature progressively, and the child learns to control his body. De Witt & Booysen (1995:67) say the child's physical development makes it possible for him to become increasingly independent and to act by himself. During the preschool

period the child transcends his initial physical limitations and displays an individual capacity for success that is never equalled again (Du Plooy, Griessel & Oberholzer, 1987:49; Rathus, 1988:65).

The preschool child wants to become someone in his own right and therefore takes an active part in his becoming towards adulthood. This is achieved by means of physical relationships, movement and posture (Read, Gardiner & Mahler, 1987:67). Because the child always functions as a child in totality, it would be only logical to deduce that there is a relationship between his bodiliness, becoming and learning. A child who is physically healthy has a positive approach towards himself and his life-world (Althouse, 1981:18; Robinson-Thurlow, 1997).

Vrey (1990:67) points out that the child's physical state and motor competence determine the quality of relationships demanding physical skill - physical relationships are formed through the learner's participation in the physical environment. Spodek (1986:25) has found that a wide variety of movement experiences provides children with a wealth of information on which to base their perceptions of themselves and the world around them. According to Catron & Allen (1993:103), involvement with the physical environment allows children to engage in self-discovery and self-expression , explore the physical and social environment, establish contact and communication, and experience enjoyment and sensory pleasure.

Physical relationships is the vehicle through which young children experience the exploratory journey towards adulthood (Vespo, 1991:20; Janneker, 1996). The physical basis includes senses and play.

(1) Senses

Senses are an affective pre-cognitive mode of learning and can be defined as the learner's ability to explore his physical environment. Weiser (1991:144) claims that infants and toddlers learn much by sensory observation. The preschooler explores his life-world in a tactile way. Bloom & Beckman (1989:319) state that the sensory experience provide the preschooler with opportunities to identify and learn about the objects in his environment. The young child will use as many of his senses as possible in order to understand his physical world (Catron & Allen, 1993: 241). Infants' sensory capabilities show that they have fairly sophisticated mechanisms for perceiving their physical world with vision, hearing, taste, smell and touch.

Young children with adequate visual perception have no difficulty discriminating between visible objects and, children with adequate auditory perception have no difficulty in discriminating between sounds (Althouse, 1983:212). According to Weiser (1991:40), all learning has its groundwork based in early sensory development and perception. Infants build their store of memory by exploring and manipulating the objects in their environment. Sensory stimulation of the objects in the environment encourages brain development, memory and attention span. In this way the child's world becomes concrete, understandable and interesting, and he is motivated to seek out even more discoveries.

(2) Play

Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg (1988:175) maintain that play is important for the total development of the child. It is through play that the young child discovers his life-world. De Witt & Booysen (1995:128) are convinced that no one can teach the child that which he can learn himself through play. Bottelheim

(1987:75) says that play enables children to practise and consolidate newly acquired mental skills; and play activities, especially make-believe play, lead to the development of abstract thought. Language play helps children to perfect newly acquired language skills, increases their awareness of linguistic rules and furthers social play (Anderson, Clark & Mullin, 1994:443).

Anning (1991:30) says play is important for the child's physical and social development, his physical and mental health, and his cognitive development. According to Catron & Allen (1993:5), play serves many functions for young children, among the most important being that it is the primary mode for learning in early childhood. Althouse (1981:46) stresses that the power of play cannot be ignored: it forms part of the total development of the child. Play encourages interpersonal relations, stimulates creativity and joy in living, and enhances physical development and learning. Through play, the child learns essential preconditions for successful cognitive development which, in turn, will abet a future school career devoid of stress (David, 1990:80; Duminy, Dreyer, Steyn, Behr & Vos, 1991:75).

In early childhood education, play can be used effectively for evaluation. Spodek (1993:116) states that in play children seem to exhibit levels of competence that are often higher than those exhibited in other contexts. Beaty (1984:89) points to the fact that play for young children is not merely entertainment or recreation as it is among adults, but learning. In play, a young child experiments with life and develops an awareness of the world around himself.

2.2.2 The psychological basis

Vrey (1990:67) says that the child's psychological capacity enables him to form relationships. This capacity matures and develops by way of effective

interrelationships with the world in which he grows up. In the psychological development of the child, we need to distinguish between cognitive powers, affective powers and conative powers, and also verbal articulateness.

(1) Cognitive powers

As is the case with his physical development, the becoming and development in the cognitive domain of the preschool child's life takes place rapidly and continually (Van der Walt, 1985:112). The child is intentionally directed at the world by virtue of his being human. He wants to acquire knowledge of the world so that he can give meaning to his life (De Witt & Booysen, 1995:47).

The way that the preschool child gives meaning to his life-world, in other words, the way in which he realises the different cognitive acts of his life, differs considerably from that of other children. Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg (1988: 40) draw on the results of research done by Piaget, and call the two- to six-years stage the period of pre-conceptual functioning. To understand the relationships the child forms, and how he forms them, the following aspects of the preschool child's cognitive powers have to be borne in mind (Vrey, 1990:67):

- The child is still mainly concerned with his immediate surroundings.
- Thought is largely linked with action.
- The child probably thinks in images that represent specific people, objects and situations.
- The child's mode of thinking could be called transductive - from the general to the specific.
- The observation and thought of the child are strongly centred.

- Difficulty is experienced by the child in attending to more than one relation at a time.
- There is little logic or direction in a child's thought.
- The child's thought is strongly animistic.
- The child cannot mentally compare different relations.

(2) Affective powers

According to Bullock (1991:21), the preschool child is still strongly emotionally attached to his surroundings, and his expressions of emotion, such as love, anger, pleasure, frustration and anxiety, indicate intense emotional experience. As the child matures, the intellect increasingly controls the affects, and emotions come under the discipline of reason. The preschool child's emotional life is , however, still very unstable and plays a significant role in the relationships he forms. The following are characteristics of the emotional expressions of the preschool child (Macdonald, 1991: 77-78):

- Emotions are fleeting and variable - a child can rapidly change from crying to laughing.
- The preschool years of the child mark the climax of specific fears. He fears the dark; imaginary dangers; and people and animals that threaten him.
- The child experiences anxiety when the danger is vague, unknown and undetermined. Fear of separation from loved ones is one of the most familiar causes of anxiety in the young child.
- Anger is experienced when the child feels frustrated or inhibited; for instance, he becomes enraged at the interruption of play.
- Love is very egocentric - he loves that which meets his needs and provides pleasant feelings of joy and mirth. Love is expressed physically and spontaneously by hugging, kissing and cuddling.

- The child's feelings of joy usually originate in his social interaction with others - he shows joy by laughing, jumping, clapping hands, etc.
- Jealousy is a normal reaction to real, supposed or threatened loss of the attention or love.

(3) Conative powers

Conative powers are concerned with the basic driving forces which give rise to a person's behaviour (Du Toit & Kruger, 1993:102). In education, where we are especially interested in understanding the behaviour of the child, we want to know the reasons behind the child's behaviour. The conative aspect of development includes needs, tendencies, impulses, aspirations, motives, aims, drives, wishes and the will to achieve (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1988:46). The will is the active striving toward the realisation of a goal.

According to Du Toit & Kruger (1993:103), the preschooler establishes a sense of autonomy and the wills of the child and the parents therefore come into conflict. With increased mobility, some command of language and the ability to think, the preschool child now sets himself goals and has a desire to pursue them. However, many of the child's natural aspirations are curbed as he lives very much in the present and cannot envisage the consequences of his actions. This is the age of "I can do it", "Let me do it", and "No" to any requests. When the child responds with a negative act of the will, he often responds with his whole body, expressing himself by hitting, kicking, throwing objects or remaining immovable (Venketsamy, 1996:34).

Educators should allow the preschool child to pursue reasonable goals and to satisfy his aspirations. Vrey (1990:82) says the preschooler's conative powers are expressed when:

- the child wants to learn and achieve;
- the child wants to go to school independently; and
- the child wants to associate with his peer group and keep his own wishes in abeyance.

(4) Verbal articulateness

Language as a communication medium plays a major part in the forming of relationships and also serves as a medium of self-expression: the child can ask questions and express wishes (Vrey, 1990:72). A child who is slow in learning to talk experiences a good deal of frustration which may be expressed in undesirable ways, while the early talker attracts the kind of attention that results in good social adjustment. According to Monanty & Monanty (1994:68), verbal articulateness plays a vital role in language acquisition. For effective communication (including pedagogic dialogue) to occur, speakers must have enough common knowledge to understand each other's contributions; they must achieve what is sometimes referred to as "mutual knowledge". Schober-Peterson & Johnson (1992:87) say verbal forms enter the linguistic system as means of expressing communicative interest, and therefore, during the early stages (preschool) of language acquisition, the child's linguistic rules are best characterised as realisation rules for the expression of communicative interest. Anderson, Clark & Mullin (1994:461) maintain that dialogue research data that have been gathered for the early childhood speaker suggest strongly that an appreciation of the way such dialogue games should be played are essential for the development of verbal articulateness.

2.2.3 The social basis

De Witt & Booysen (1995:27) state that the social needs of the young child can only be met through interaction with his peers. Bantock (1986:13) sees the preschool child as a being who is extremely sensitive to his human environment: to the interaction he has with other people. For every child when the first thoughts begin to hover and take form, people are there (usually family members) to guide their formation and, when expressed, to value or dismiss them. It is essentially through this process of early social development that the child begins to acquire norms, values, attitudes and skills in the course of social relationships with those immediately around him - mostly family members in early childhood. The family has a powerful influence on the child's social relationships. According to Bullock (1991:16), research has shown that the role of the family is fundamental for the child's social development because the child's earliest experiences have a significant influence on the way in which he ultimately responds to formal schooling.

The child's life-world expands during the preschool years and more and more people enter his experience (Bredekamp, 1987:25). This social world has a strong influence on the shaping of the child's responses to his environment. Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg (1988:215) emphasise the fact that the preschool child's social life is dominated by fantasy and play. Parents and other adults (educators) provide essential educative support in this regard. The child's peer group enables him to practise the norms assimilated from adults (Althouse, 1981:76). The following aspects may be distinguished in the preschool child's fellowship and encounters (Vrey, 1990:71-72):

- The child encounters another person by means of his body.

- Fellowship and encounter become easier if the child's behaviour coincides with accepted social norms.
- The child's readiness to co-operate.
- The child's eagerness to be accepted.
- The child's verbal articulateness.

2.2.4 Cultural basis

Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg (1988:56) describe culture as an umbrella concept embracing all the accepted traditional customs, moral attributes and behaviours practised by a particular cultural group.
A child is born into a specific culture, and everything he encounters in his life-world is culturally determined. The cultural basis provides the child with a sense of belonging and a well-defined self-identity. Bantock (1986:73) states that the care and affection a child receives have a cultural component. The child is cared for and educated in acceptable behaviour patterns and moral norms. The child's behaviour will also typify the subculture to which his parents belong.

De Lange (1994:56) says that the family, as the ontic reality, initiates the child into the intricacies of his society to ensure that cultural values and norms are instilled at an early age. The social basis for forming relationships is mainly realised in the family. Bremner (1992:29) maintains that within cultural relationships the child experiences social skills or socialisation. The entire socialisation exercise is aimed at providing the child with practice in culturally appropriate social and emotional behaviour models.

2.3 FORMING OF RELATIONSHIPS

The term "relationship" implies an association between two referents and the child is busy throughout life with these relationships, giving them meaning and so forming concepts (Vrey, 1990:20). Relationship is a particular mode in which the child, things, ideas, self and God are mutually connected. Such relationships are usually dynamic and interactive and are initiated by the individual (child) through his involvement and the assigning of meaning in his life-world (Venketsamy, 1996:28). Central to such a relationship is understanding - the attribution of significance or meaning through involvement and experience (Schober-Peterson & Johnson, 1991:94).

The relationships formed by the child in his preschool years are of a very dynamic nature on account of the process of the child's becoming (Vespo, 1991:20). The manner in which relationships are formed, as well as the intensity and emotional nature of these, change quickly according to the child's understanding of the world in which he finds himself. For the purpose of a more detailed discussion, the child's forming of relationships is divided into broad categories of the relationship with himself, others, things and ideas, and God (religion).

2.3.1 Relationship with himself

The preschool child's forming of an identity is by nature dynamic. Le Roux (1979:61) says the child's relationship with himself begins in early childhood when he starts to play in such a way as to take the roles of others in his play and carry on imaginary conversation with himself. In doing this, the child develops his feeling of selfhood, self-worth and a self-identity. Du Toit & Kruger (1993:28) say that by playing out roles the young child gradually comes to a fairly well-defined self-identity. De Witt & Booysen (1995:29) state that although the

child cannot express things verbally he knows who he is. His relationships with family members and objects, and his identifications with parents and others, have resulted in a fairly well-defined self-identity. He knows himself - his name, gender, appearance, etc.

The child's self-concept is supplemented by evaluating his burgeoning identity. Vespo (1991:21) says that for the child to arrive at the formation of a self-concept his evaluations of his own identity have to form. Smith & Lowie (1991:76) maintain that acceptance by parents, family and playmates bring self-acceptance which in turn brings self-esteem. A positive self-concept is largely the outcome of loving, caring, accepting education within clearly defined limits (Sonnekus, 1985:93).

2.3.2 Relationship with others

As the child ventures into the world he forms relationships with his parents, members of his family and peers. De Witt & Booysen (1995:29) confirm the important role that the child's first relationship with parents plays in the establishing of further relationships. In the preschool years, the child gradually begins to move from the safety of the family circle to form relationships with his surrounding world (Bullock, 1991:19). The child's involvement with the world therefore emanates from his relationships with parents, peers, family members and others.

(1) Relationship with parents

These relationships are of primary importance to the preschool child and are characterised by love, safety, submission, acceptance and trust (Du Plooy, Griessel & Oberholzer, 1987:84). The polarisation effect of a healthy

relationship is attraction. Rathus (1988: 74) states that, at this stage of his life, the child is still emotionally attached to his parents in such a way that even if rejected by a parent, he will continue to approach him or her for some time. The parent-child relationship is the primary anchorage point for the forming of relationships with others. De Lange (1994:62) maintains that consistent care, affection and support from parents enable the child to initiate relationships within his surrounding world. Smith & Lowie (1991:130) say a poor parent-child relationship can lead to deviant behaviour in the child. A child who feels accepted and secure can leave his parents on occasion with far less tension and anxiety, because he feels safe. The certainty of acceptance experienced in a healthy relationship will encourage the child to venture and explore without fear of separation from the parent (Van der Merwe, 1988:171). According to Shea & Bauer (1985:73), one of the most important characteristics of the preschool child's relationships with his parents is his increasing ability to separate from the parent without anxiety with the result that he can confidently explore his world further.

(2) <u>Relationship with peers</u>

The dynamic way that the preschool child forms relationships is very clear in this respect. Where the infant and toddler are very egocentric, the child of four years and older begins thoroughly to enjoy being with his peers (Schwartz & Pollishuke, 1991:44). The motivating factor in interactions with peers is acceptance by the group. Catron & Allen (1993:193) state that the preschooler is still intolerant toward those who do not pander to him. This intolerance compels the child to learn to adapt to others in order to be accepted. He learns that his own viewpoint and will do not necessarily concur with those of the other children in the group. Preschoolers who are rejected by their peers change the nature of their play and move from one playmate to another.

The preschool child's relationship with peers mainly centres on play (Saracho, 1991:50-51). The relationship the child forms with his playmates teach him the principle of sharing. The urge to be accepted also helps him to control his own feelings and will. Woodhead, Carr & Light (Bremner, 1992:56) report that playing with peers enables the child to achieve such attributes as co-operation and co-existence skills. De Witt & Booysen (1995:122) say the preschool years are the most important time for acquisition and forming of positive relationships with others in society.

2.3.3 Relationship with objects (things) and ideas

The relationships the preschooler forms with objects and ideas in his physical world help him to give meaning to the concepts of space, time and quantity in the physical (concrete) world (Vrey, 1990:74). According to De Witt & Booysen (1995:29), the young child's relationship with objects in his physical world depend on his ability to assign meaning to the concepts of space, time and quantity. The more involved the child becomes with it, the more meaning he can assign to it. The child's understanding of objects depends on the forming of spatial and temporal relationships.

According to Althouse (1981:125), temporal relationships refer to the child's ability to understand the passage of time. The preschool child experiences problems with temporal orientation because he cannot understand that time proceeds at a constant pace, independently of himself, his wishes and his needs; his concept of time relates only to himself, his needs and pleasures. Conception of time is still very diffuse in the preschool years.

Spatial relationships refer to position, size and distance of objects (Vrey, 1990:74). Spatial orientation, especially with regard to position, size and

distance, makes accurate perception possible. A child with problems in spatial orientation has difficulty in distinguishing between left and right, above and below, before and behind, inside and outside. Rieser, Garing & Young (1994:202) say that action and perception are closely linked to spatial orientation.

2.3.4 Relationship with God (religion)

Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg (1988:194) say that because of the preschooler's egocentrism and emotionality, his relationship with religion firstly involves feelings and then facts, and he therefore experiences religion in an egocentric way. Intellectually, the preschooler's concepts may be extremely inaccurate, and conclusions drawn may be mistaken, because the minor details of any experience dominate his thinking and cause wrong associations to be made. Abstract concepts, which abound in the religious sphere, simply cannot be understood by the preschool child (De Witt & Booysen, 1995:29). Therefore the child's relationship with religion is determined and directed by the example set by the parents and the parents' religion is accepted without question (Laban, 1996). The child is dependent upon the educative support of the parents to guide and assist him in forming religious relationships (Seefeldt & Barbour, 1986:91).

From birth to three years, the child can be described as pre-moral and pre-religious (Steven, 1989:121). Although the child already knows short prayers, he does not actually know the meaning of the prayer. From about three years of age, the child's fantasy life takes shape. Bible stories are seen in the same light as fairy tales and fables (Debaryshe, 1993:22).

In the child's becoming towards adulthood the developing of a relationship with religion prepares him for life in his own culture and equips him with knowledge, values and positive attitudes. Grobbelaar (1994:24) claims that a basic

knowledge, love and respect for the child's own religion (faith) should be fostered by educators. The young child's relationship with religion is based on the religious festivals and rituals he experiences. Lee-Corbin (1993:75) points out that the preschooler's relationship with religion affects the child's existence in his deepest being. It is therefore impossible to guide the child to self-reliance without, in one way or another, giving him support in this respect. The child's religious attitude is therefore closely related to the quality of his parents' religion.

2.4 SELF-ACTUALIZATION

The child initiates relationships, and these relationships give him increased control of his world and enable him to actualise his potential. Actualization is reached when the child has achieved the goal he has set himself (De Witt & Booysen, 1995:39). Self-actualization is the attainment of all that a child can possibly attain in every aspect of his becoming and learning. It is reaching the highest level possible for him to reach and is determined by his own abilities (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1988:84). Self-actualization is not achieved passively or without any effort; deliberate efforts to realise potential are required. According to Dodge & Price (1994:1389) and Ringler (1990;44), the following are important needs in the child's self-actualization:

2.4.1 The need for achievement

The child's self-actualization revolves around his need for achievement. A child must experience being in control of at least a part of his external world and being able to achieve success in it. The satisfaction of this need for achievement calls for increasing involvement in tasks and with objects the child encounters. To the child it is very important that other people acknowledge and accept his achievements, because he can then accept them himself and go on to further

achievement. Parents play a major role in fostering achievement motivation by setting high, but realistic, standards for their children.

2.4.2 The need for love and esteem

A child must know that he is wanted and accepted because he is worthy, able, good, competent, has a positive self-concept, and has gained respect of others. The child has to know that the significant others in his life-world love him and consider him and his affairs important.

2.4.3 The need to belong

Togetherness is one of the indispensable educational requirements. Circumstances in which the child is included, accepted by and at one with others in a pleasant relationship of security and trust, give the child a feeling of belonging and the knowledge that he belongs. Belonging is characterised by love, affection and friendship. The child needs support and security. It is support that gives the child a feeling of belonging.

2.5 SCHOOL READINESS

School readiness is the stage reached when the child is cognitively, socially, physically and emotionally ready to move on to formal schooling. School readiness also includes school maturity (Gajadhurr, 1990:12).

The quality of the home environment and parental education have a direct bearing on the child's readiness for formal schooling (De Witt & Booysen, 1995:156; De Waal, 1996). According to Haasbroek (1985 :19), school readiness is a combination of maturity, experiential background and motivation. Important

questions to be asked in this regard are: when is a child ready for this transition? What criteria can we use to ascertain such readiness? In an attempt to answer these questions, the conditions for the emergence of school readiness, factors hindering school readiness, and criteria for school readiness will be discussed.

2.5.1 Conditions for the emergence of school readiness

Before the child enters the school, the primary educators (parents) should have been active in the following areas (Grobbelaar, 1994:5; De Witt & Booysen, 1995;11-12):

- intellectual stimulation:
- practice in social relationships;
- the acquisition and assumption of a positive attitude to work and not only to play;
- the acquisition of school techniques such as being able to hold a pencil and use a book; and
- agility in linguistic expression and communication.

According to Van den Berg & Vergnani (1987: 65) and Donaldson, Grieve & Pratt (1983:114), there should be a definite change from:

- a primitive expression of sound to a cultural command of language;
- restless sporadic activity to sustained concentration;
- an unconcerned social egocentricity to social self-possession and a willingness for social contact;
- impulsive reactions to a measure of self-control;

- passive spectatorship to a desire and willingness to become involved and take a risk; and
- an experience of helplessness to the ability and desire for personal aspiration.

2.5.2 Factors hindering school readiness

Bradley & Caldwell (1990:32) and Monanty & Monanty (1994:34) maintain that, in addition to school immaturity, other factors which hinder the natural transition from home to school include:

- little or ineffective education at home;
- parental neglect;
- poor relationships;
- psychopathic traits;
- physical inhibitions; and
- functional neuroses.

Premature entry into the school may result in psychological and learning difficulties which may have an effect on the child's entire school career.

2.5.3 Criteria for school readiness

Gajudhurr (1990:22) and Vrey (1990:80-82) identify the following criteria as necessary for school readiness:

(1) Chronological age

The criterion for school entrance remains that the child turn six before 30 June (Robinson-Thurlow, 1997). This is based on the finding that the average child is ready for school at the age of six. However, any average implies that a possible 50% of children will fall close enough to this average to ensure their readiness for school. There are always a great many exceptions to any rule. This stipulation applies to both boys and girls despite research which has found that boys are developmentally behind girls.

(2) Physical criteria

Differences in the physique of the preschooler and the school child are not only quantitative, but also qualitative. The preschooler's head is disproportionally large when compared to his body, and the trunk is large in comparison to the limbs, with the forehead markedly dome-shaped. The body appears round and chubby. In the child sufficiently mature for school , the head is not as noticeably large in comparison with the rest of the body, the limbs have grown longer and slimmer, and the muscles and joints are better defined. No longer does the child appear plump and chubby. In order to cope physically with the demands of formal school, the child should (Gallahue, 1982: 39; Honig, 1990:41):

- have firm muscular co-ordination as demonstrated in the holding and use of a pencil;
- have the necessary motor skills to use a pair of scissors;
- have the necessary stamina to perform certain physical tasks;
- have a sufficiently healthy constitution; and
- have normal sensory functioning.

(3) Cognitive and affective criteria

When a child is ready for school, an entirely new orientation to the world should be noticeable, coupled with a different alignment to the world of people and objects. The child is eager to know things and investigate . His attitude to the world changes from a predominantly psycho-affective one to a predominantly gnostic one; that is, from an orientation that is predominantly emotional, imaginative and symbolic to one which is more realistic and rational. His largely uncritical, emotionally-bound attitude gives way to a more independent and objective attitude. He wants to explore, orientate and choose his place in his life-world. He wants to evaluate this world critically and make it his own. He increasingly adopts an egocentric attitude towards his world. According to Felman (1991:47), a teacher can assess the child's readiness for school by looking at the following cognitive aspects:

- What is his attitude to the things around him? Does he give evidence of an objective, impersonal eccentric, detached attitude to objects in his world so that he is able to handle letters, numbers and words?

- Does he have a desire to learn? Can he already "read" the pictures in his picture books? Is he proud that he can count? Has he a genuine interest in what he learns?

- Has he the ability to give his attention voluntarily to something without excessive fluctuation?

- Is he able to remember, to reproduce material accurately, and to memorise?

- Is his concept formation more objective and can he see a casual connection between two sets of data?

- Is he mature enough to be able to participate in formal learning?

(4) Social criteria

The child who is ready for school has undergone important social changes such as (Garouque & Nelson, 1991:102):

- the emergence of competitiveness, along with co-operation; the child in now able to participate in such a context;

- the ability to pass value judgements on the actions of others;
- the definite need for social relationships with people outside the family. The child has a great desire to be accepted and is prepared to make adjustments to realises this acceptance. He therefore controls impulses, such as talking and moving at the teacher's request. He is prepared to adhere to the rules of the school and in the games he plays. He is prepared to share the attention of the teacher with his classmates.

- Praise and reward act as social incentives, with blame and punishment for a wrong action serving as a warning against social rejection.

The above changes indicates that the child is now able to recognise authority and consider the feelings of others.

(5) Moral criteria

The conscience of the child who is ready for school is awakening. A stronger work attitude and a greater task acceptance are revealed. Osborn & Milbank (1987:67) claim that the child is no longer distracted by other activities when he has to complete a task and that his playful behaviour is replaced by working behaviour. A sense of the difference between right and wrong becomes evident.

2.6 SUMMARY

The life-world of a child includes everything meaningful to him - not only the geographical world, but all the relationships with himself, others, objects and ideas, and God. To the child, the forming of meaningful relationships constitutes his life-world, and all his behaviour and actions should be interpreted within the context of this life-world. The child's orientation in the world is possible only with the help of adults as educators (parents or teachers). Educators unlock meanings for the child, and this attribution of meaning enables him to constitute a meaningful life-world by forming meaningful relationships.

To understand the development of the relationships the child forms, it is necessary to look at the physical, psychological, social and cultural bases on which they are built. The physical basis, consisting of the child's physical state and motor competence, determines the quality of relationships demanding physical skills. Involvement with the physical environment allows the child to explore the physical and social environment, establish contact and engage in self-discovery and self-expression , communication, experience, enjoyment and sensory pleasure. The child's psychological capacity, which includes cognitive powers, affective powers, conative powers and verbal articulateness, plays a significant role in establishing relationships. The child's social basis for relationships is his

interaction with other human beings. Preschool years are the time of an expanding life-world as more and more people enter the child's life-world.

Relationships formed by the child in his preschool years are of a very dynamic nature on account of his becoming and learning. The manner in which relationships are formed, as well as their intensity and emotional nature, change quickly according to the child's attribution of meaning to the world in which he finds himself. The child forms relationships with himself, others, things and ideas, and God. As the child ventures into the world, he forms relationships with his parents, peers, members of his family and others. Relationships with parents are of primary importance to the preschool child and are characterised by love, safety, submission, acceptance and trust. The parent-child relationship is the primary anchorage for forming relationships with others.

During the preschool years the child's relationships with peers centres mainly on play. The relationships with his playmates teach the child the principles of sharing while relationships with objects in his physical (concrete) world help him in giving meaning to the concepts of space, time and quantity. The preschooler's egocentrism and emotionality hamper his relationship with religion. This involves both feeling and facts and is determined and directed by the example set by the parents. The parents' religion is accepted without question.

Relationships are initiated by the child and give him increased control of his world and let him actualise his potential; actualization is reached when the child has achieved the goal he has set himself. Important needs in the child's self-actualization are achievement, love and esteem and belonging.

School readiness is the stage reached when the child is cognitively, socially, physically and emotionally ready to enter formal learning, and also includes

school maturity. When a child is ready for school, an entirely new orientation to the world should be noticeable, coupled with a different alignment to the world of people and objects. The child is eager to know things and investigate, and his attitude to the world changes from a predominantly psycho-affective one to a predominantly gnostic one: that is, from an orientation that is predominantly emotional, imaginative and symbolic to one which is more realistic and rational. The young child's largely uncritical, emotionally-bound attitudes give way to more independent and objective attitudes. He wants to explore, orientate and choose his place in his life-world; to evaluate this world critically and make it his own.

The next chapter will focus on the historical development of preschool education in the Republic of South Africa

CHAPTER 3

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF PRESCHOOL EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

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CHAPTER 3

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF PRESCHOOL EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the last few decades there has been a growing awareness of the importance of preschool education in the child's readiness for formal education. The preschool years are regarded as the time when the child is particularly susceptible to the impressions, which to a great extent, determine his later development (Fabian, 1985: 8). For this and other reasons - such as social, emotional, cognitive and physical development -the demand for organised preschool institutions has increased in all countries. On account of its great formative value, preschool education, forms an integral part of the educational system in Western civilization (Spodek, Sarachino & Davis, 1991:27; Vos & Brits, 1990:25).

The history of preschool education can be traced back some centuries. Verster (1989:77) regards Vittorino da Feltra (1378-1446) as the first Renaissance humanist to have had an important influence on preschool education. Although he left no written records, his views with regard to education were recorded by his students, acquaintances and friends, and are of significance to education even today . Martin Luther (1438-1546), a theologian who lived during the Reformation, showed great concern for preschool education, mainly because of the prevailing lack of understanding of young child, and the insufficient time to bring up children properly owing to the long working hours of parents (Kruger, 1993:44).

Friedrich Wilhelm Fröebel (1782-1852) can be seen as a pioneer in planning preschool education in an organised, structured and systematic way, via a purposeful programme (Hurst, 1991:9). Young children should be placed in an environment where they can develop naturally and contentedly, in peace, happiness and safety. He was also concerned about the problems experienced by working parents in the care and upbringing of young children. With these prerequisites in mind, he opened the first planned and organised kindergarten to cater for the children of working parents. This added a new dimension to the concept of schooling (Cohen & Rudolph, 1984:2). Fröebel's views became highly influential in Europe, Britain and the USA and a number of his ideas remains operative in the kindergarten of today.

Maria Montessori (1870-1952) saw "development" in children as the inevitable unfolding of biological process. Her approach was an emphasis on independent growth and learning in a rigidly planned environment, with no place for spontaneous, incidental learning and little scope for language development. Although her methods are inappropriate for modern preschools, many of her ideas have been adapted and modified by early childhood educators (De Lange, 1994:91).

Pauline Kergomard (1838-1925) can also be considered an important figure in the history of early childhood education. She saw the educational value of the family circle (home environment) as the ideal partner to the school, and maintained that an ideal start in life was linked to quality preschool education (Coetzer, 1989:41; Spodek, 1993:16).

The above people are only some of the many pioneers that influenced the preschool education movement in Europe, America and South Africa. According to Kruger (1993:82), the educational system that evolved in South Africa was

shaped largely by the first Europeans who settled here and by their subsequent history. Preschool education In South Africa had a late start. According to De Lange (1994:92), it was only in the 20th century that the plight of the preschooler was recognized and preschool education was introduced. Co-ordination, planning and funding of preschool education has never taken place at national level. It is therefore appropriate to examine the evolution of preschool education in order to find out how and why we have reached the present state of preschool education.

3.2 PROVINCES BEFORE 1994

Research concerning the origin of preprimary education in South Africa is very limited (Bosch, 1985:3; Dayanorian, 1992:16). A possible reason is that, during the early years, the problems associated with preschool education did not attract the attention of researchers and educationists to the same extent as they did overseas. However, in recent years the number of South African researchers in the field of early childhood education has increased. The research carried out in this field has also resulted in the provision of preschool education in white communities reaching the levels of preschool education in European countries (Lenobye, 1978:14). In the case of blacks, coloureds and Indians, little research with regard to preschool education has been conducted so far. Therefore, the discussion of the development of preschool education in the different provinces in the Republic of South Africa prior to 1994, the year a new Government and education dispensation came into effect, will mainly involve the white communities.

3.2.1 Cape Province

It was only during the twentieth century that the nursery school idea really came into its own in South Africa (Biersteker, 1979:1). The value of nursery school

education is acknowledged throughout the Western world and even in the East preschool education is regarded as meaningful and worth while. Nursery school education has also gained a prominent place in the South African education system (Robinson-Thurlow, 1994:Annexure 1:1).

Northman (1983:37) states that the need for nursery school education is strongly felt by the entire community as it is focuses on the development of the whole child. The harmonious development of the child through education in the nursery school is not only the cornerstone of sound mental health but is also important in this period of great political change in South Africa. Nursery schools can play a significant role as re-educative and pedotherapeutic institutions.

(1) Whites

In 1934, the first nursery school in the Cape Town opened its doors to white preschoolers (Behr, 1988:23). During this time working mothers were desperate for preschool institutions or early childhood care facilities. They saw nursery schools as ideal day care centres for their children. In these first nursery schools, emphasis was placed more on custodial care than on any formal, early-childhood education programme. From the outset, the provision of preschool education was in the hands of the private sector; that is, the parents, community and welfare organisations. However, in 1941 the Cape Provincial Administration accepted limited responsibility for financial aid to nursery schools in the province (Verster, 1989:280). The Cape Province took the lead in the training of preschool teachers at the Barkly House Teachers College, initially known as Buxton Preschool Training Centre, and the Graaff-Reinet College of Education (Reilly & Hofmeyer, 1983:20).

According to De Lange (1994:93), the first nursery school outside Cape Town was established by Anne Read in Philipstown in 1957. A government subsidy was paid to this nursery schools as the pupil enrolment exceeded 200. The running of the nursery school, however, was the initiative of the Child Welfare Organisation and others concerned with helping the children of the poor and bringing relief to working mothers at a time when the country was in the throes of an economic depression (Behr, 1984:38).

The first departmental preprimary school was only opened in January 1973 in King William's Town and the first two preprimary school classes, attached to primary schools, were opened in Kimberley and Port Elizabeth. In the same year a second departmental preprimary school was opened in Cradock (Reilly & Hofmeyr, 1983:21).

In the 1992 Annual Report of the Department of Education and Culture: House of Assembly, the Cape Education Department reported an ever-increasing demand for preprimary education (Lemmer, 1994:61).

(2) <u>Blacks</u>

Preschool education for black children is a relatively new concept in South Africa and has no real historical background. The only major historical event regarding preschool education for black children has been the establishing of teacher-training centres for preschool teachers and crèches which were introduced by missionaries shortly after World War II (1939-1945) (Mbatha, 1978:81). According to Davids (1984:17), crèches for black children were also established by black and white people who felt the need for self-help. In some cases creches were founded by parents who sought a place of safety for their children where they could be fed, stimulated, and encouraged to socialise with other children.

Crèches have therefore been the only real educational force for one- to five-year-olds (Sibisi, 1989:3). However, many children could not be admitted because their families were unable to afford the school fees.

Substantial numbers of NGOs have been operating in the Western Cape since the early 1970s, and this region in the Cape Province had the highest rate of access to early childhood educational services during the seventies. In the Eastern Cape, an effective network of support agencies for early childhood education in black communities was developed during the '70s, resulting in rapid growth in educare provision (NEPI, 1992:19).

(3) Coloureds

The formation of the Athlone Group for Nursery Education in 1952 led to the establishment of the Athlone Nursery School and Training Centre in 1952 (Reilly & Hofmeyr, 1983:27-28). This gave impetus to the development of preschool facilities by the private sector in the Cape, and in 1964, when coloured education became the responsibility of Central Government, there was a total of 32 coloured nursery schools in South Africa, 27 of which were in the Cape Province. Subsidies paid by the Education Department gradually increased, and in 1972 an Early Learning Centre was established in Athlone by the Bernard Van Leer Foundation to carry out the following functions (Bosch, 1985:25):

- investigate and develop new approaches and materials for the education of coloured preschool children living in urban low-income communities;

- assist parents and other adults in the community to be more effective educators to children; and

- work with other institutions and organisations in stimulating expansion and improvement of preschool education in disadvantaged communities.

The activities of the Early Learning Centre led to the formation of the Early Learning Research Unit in 1979, whose task it was to assist all the early learning projects and promote early childhood education throughout the province (Reilly & Hofmeyr, 1983:28). The centre fulfilled an important need in the coloured community, and its concern with preventative and supplementary education for disadvantaged children has added an important dimension to the preschool movement in South Africa.

An important milestone in the development of preschool education for coloured children was reached with the passing of the Coloured Persons Education Amendment Act, No 15 of 1980, which made the establishment and maintenance of nursery schools by the Department of Coloured Affairs possible (Lewis, 1978:23; Verster, 1989:286). The passing of this Act, together with the trebling of the subsidy, held much promise for an acceleration in the expansion and improvement of preschool facilities for coloured children (Behr, 1984:248).

3.2.2 Transvaal

(1) Whites

After the first World War (1914-1918), economic depression and drought forced many white farmers to seek employment in cities. This led to an increase in low socio-economic areas. In these areas city councils and welfare organisations took the initiative to introduce health care programmes and preschool care for young

children (De Lange, 1981:24). The first preschool institution to be called a nursery school was established in Pretoria in 1932. This nursery school, administered by a private committee and assisted financially by a grant from the Pretoria municipality, offered care to underprivileged children (Reilly & Hofmeyr, 1989:19). The opening of a second nursery school, the "Goedehoop Kleuterskool" in Pretoria in 1933, was seen as a further project in progressive education (Robinson-Thurlow, 1994:39). This school was under the supervision of principals who held overseas educational qualifications, and the programme followed was based on the holistic development of the child. Middle-class parents also recognised the value of nursery school education and began to establish nursery schools for the benefit of their own children in the main centres of the province.

In January 1965, the Bureau of Education of the Transvaal Education Department (TED) was directed to carry out further investigations into nursery school education in the province in view of a possible take-over of such education by the TED (Behr, 1984:34). Nursery school inspectors and an architect were sent to the UK, Europe and the USA to study trends in nursery school education. Their findings formed part of the Bureau of Education's investigation into nursery school education and, based on these findings, the TED formulated plans for the establishment of provincial nursery schools in the Transvaal.

At the Provincial Administrators Conference of January 1967 the Transvaal Provincial Administration (TPA) motivated the importance of nursery school education as follows: "In the light of a personal investigation this province accepts preschool education as a necessary educational service for all children, between the ages of two years and the attainment of compulsory school age, from educationally deprived homes" (Robinson-Thurlow, 1994:49). The Nicol Commission's report on preschool education in Transvaal in 1939 was in favour of

full control of nursery school education by the province, with subsidy from the central government (Verster, 1989:238).

Acting on the advice from the TED, the following two types of nursery schools were suggested for the Transvaal (Urban Foundation, 1982:11):

- provincial nursery schools in needy areas: buildings to be erected by and maintained by the TPA, and teachers and basic equipment to be provided by the province; fees to be charged in accordance with the parent's means in the different areas; and

- private or subsidised nursery schools: schools in areas where parents could afford to make a substantial financial contribution to receive a financial grant from the province.

According to Robinson-Thurlow (1994:44), there was a rapid increase in preschool education in the Transvaal from 1970 to 1980. By the end of the decade, there were 360 private nursery (preprimary) schools registered with the TED, in addition to the provincial nursery schools. The aim of the TED was to develop an adequate system of provincial preprimary schools in areas of low socio-economic standing, while recognising the majority of private preschools in the province only in terms of registration and granting of nominal per capita subsidies.

(2) <u>Blacks</u>

An important milestone in the provision of preschool education for black children in the Transvaal was in 1936 when the first nursery school was opened in Sofiatown by the Anglican Mission Church (Reilly & Hofmeyr, 1983:22). Apart

from a caring centre for preschoolers this nursery school, together with five others subsequently opened by the Anglican Mission Church, were also used as training centres for black preschool assistants. Financial support to these six "training" preschool centres was given by the Transvaal Native Education Department in the form of teachers' salaries. Nursery school assistants, who trained at these centres under the supervision of qualified teachers, also helped in crèches run by welfare organisations, and in this way educational principles and methods were introduced into other places of preschool care for black children. According to Hartshorne (1993:349), before 1953 the provision of preschool facilities for black children in the province had depended on the efforts of local welfare societies and private voluntary organisations, supported by minimal subsidies from the state. With the enactment and implementation of the Bantu Education Act of 1953, financial support for nursery school institutions was left to the discretion of the individual administration boards, and no uniform system of granting subsidisation was in operation (Sibisi, 1989:12). In 1958 the training of assistants in certain nursery schools ceased and these schools reverted to nursery schools.

In 1969, the Department of Black Education reintroduced training courses for preschool assistants. The first of these courses was offered at the Jubulani Technical College, and similar courses were also introduced at Bafoking College near Rustenburg (Gleimius, 1985:27). The preschool training at these centres was, however, phased out to make way for more advanced diploma courses for preschool teachers. New syllabuses were drawn up by the Department of Education and Training (DET) for this diploma in preprimary teaching.

In the Education and Training Act No. 90 of 1979, the value of preschool institutions for black children were officially recognised (Fabian, 1985:25). This empowered the Department of Education and Training to establish and maintain

community nursery schools by making grants and subsidies available to the owners or governing bodies of registered private preschools which met the necessary requirements. This achievement of educational status, together with the promise of state grants, has been generally applauded, and expectations have been raised (Reilly & Hofmeyr, 1983:27).

In the Transvaal, as well as in the other provinces, huge discrepancies, exist between the white and black sectors in the quality and extent of state financing as regards access to any kind of early childhood care and education programmes. The vast majority of black children in Transvaal, mainly in rural areas, had no access to any preschool facilities while in urban areas only about 25% were cared for by untrained child-minders while the mothers were at work (NEPI, 1992:15).

Throughout the province, a number of welfare agencies assisted with initiating (including building), maintaining and managing educare centres and home-based daycare schemes. The biggest NGO support for preschooling was in Soweto where 40 large centres, serving 5000 children, were administered by them (NEPI, 1992:19). The kind of support offered by NGOs to early childhood education was mainly of a technical nature, with the aim of promoting the development of community-based provision. The extent of community-based educare provision in black communities was therefore related to the development of NGO support services (NEPI, 1993:123-124).

Substantial numbers of NGOs have been operating in the Western Cape since the early 1970s, and in this region black children had the highest rate of access to educare services (Hartshorne, 1993:347). Early in 1980, an effective network of support agencies for preschool care developed in the Eastern Cape, resulting in the rapid growth of preschool education for black children. In other parts of the country NGO support for preschool education was more limited (NEPI, 1992:19).

By 1972, agriculture, commerce and industry were beginning to play a role in supporting educare centres for the children of their employees. Educare services were also provided by some larger public institutions, such as hospitals and universities. These employers provided services, but did not receive any state support. The private sector also provided a limited amount of financial assistance to community educare projects as part of their social responsibility programmes, but there was no generally accepted obligation regarding provision for young children. However, there was a growing interest by the trade unions' movement in the whole issue of child care and preschool education (Sibisi, 1989:19).

Government control in the field of preschool education for blacks had been limited and several educational foundations and international agencies therefore took responsibility for the support and development of educare programmes in South Africa. Their main contribution, however, has been supporting innovative work through experimental projects (NEPI, 1992:20). It is therefore not surprising that in 1991 the majority of teaching and care-giving staff in black preschool centres was inadequately qualified or untrained. Although the common practice of education departments was the employment of trained preprimary teachers in preschool institutions, more than half of the "trained" staff had received their training through informal courses (NEPI, 1992:21).

According to Van Zyl (1991:54), the Report by the De Lange Commission on preprimary education gave rise to the idea of a bridging year before the child entered formal primary schooling. After the release of the De Lange Report in 1983 the DET began experimenting with preprimary classes in the Transvaal, and in 1988 there were 108 such classes. However, by 1990 only one remained because the DET had moved in favour of a bridging period during the first year of primary school, which explains, but does not justify, the phasing out of

preprimary teacher-training. Children who were not ready for formal instruction, and those who were likely to fail grade one, participated in a programme in a separate group or classroom which was conducted by the grade one teacher. Work on this programme started in 1988 and was reported to be functioning in 1230 DET schools in 2117 classes in 1992 (NEPI, 1992:23).

3.2.3 Orange Free State

Research with regard to preschool education in the Orange Free State focused mainly on white children. Discussions on the history of preschool education in this province will therefore concern mainly white children. During and after the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902), an attempt was made to introduce organized preschool education, as known in Britain at that time, to the Orange Free State (De Lange, 1994:95). English teachers had to take charge of instruction, since this form of education was both unfamiliar and unacceptable to the Afrikaans-speaking farming community of the province. This new movement in early childhood education died a sudden death. Its disappearance was however short-lived as poverty forced the authorities to reconsider disadvantaged children. The Orange Free State then took the lead among the provinces and made official provision for nursery schools in the form of Education Ordinance No. 15 (Article 30) of 1930 (Verster, 1989:281). According to the stipulations in this ordinance, financial support was to be given to nursery schools in the lower socio-economic communities.

The first two kindergartens, attached to orphanages, were established in 1937. The nursery school movement in the Orange Free State followed a very slow course because the community largely consisted of farmers who felt very little need for this form of education. In 1974 a four-year course in preprimary education was introduced at the Bloemfontein College of Education. By 1975, a

total of 46 provincial nursery schools were in operation in the province (Behr, 1984:29).

3.2.4 Natal

(1) Whites

Natal, always very much under the British flag, received direction in preschool education from Britain where a strong movement was afoot (De Lange, 1994:96). Infant schools were consequently very successful in this province. Kindergartens did not receive a favourable response from the mainly English community, but nursery schools were very popular and started as early 1932 (Mbatha, 1978:53). An institution named "Tree Tops" was established in Durban and was initially utilised for teaching movement-to-music, but soon developed into a full-scale nursery school. By the end of 1939 this phase in the education of children included 14 nursery schools and thereafter gained momentum (Dekker & Van Schalkwyk, 1989:31). The provision of these nursery schools was in the hands of welfare societies and private voluntary organisations. In its report on nursery school education in Natal, the Wilks Commission (1946) did not feel that nursery schools should receive any subsidy from the state, but that they should be allowed to make use of classrooms attached to state primary schools in certain localities. The Wilks Commission also recommended that mother tongue should be the medium of instruction, but agreed that parents should have the final say (De Lange, 1990:51).

Official recognition of the importance of preschool education to less privileged children was made in 1941 by the Natal Education Department (NED) (HSRC, 1983:36). Departmental records reflect that Dr H. G. McConkey made a serious plea for nursery schools to utilize existing empty classrooms at provincial primary

schools (NED, 1983:22). According to Dayanorain (1992:21), the period from July 1956 to September 1963 marked the official introduction of nursery schools in Natal. Although it is generally acknowledged that the ideal place for the preschool child is a family home, it is not always possible in our country, or in other countries, as many mothers have entered the job market. As a result working mothers were desperate for preschool or child-care facilities. This led to the formation of the Natal Nursery School Association and the founding of nursery schools for white children (Behr, 1984:35).

At a meeting in Pietermaritzburg on 15 September 1963, the Director of Education at the time requested that the per capita grant to bona fide nursery schools be increased, or the salaries of teachers in approved posts, be paid by the Department of Education, Arts and Science. This was, however, not acceptable to the government as "it would invite the opening of too many nursery schools, by too many organisations" (De Lange, 1990:54). The delegation for preschool education further requested a more definite and uniform set of standards to be embodied in a provincial regulation so that nursery schools would know what to aspire to. Mr Emary (a delegate from Durban) presented a draft of standards which was approved by the Nursery School Association of Natal and also met with the approval of the Nursery School Association of South Africa (Taylor, 1984:139). It was strongly felt that, while existing nursery school institutions (unless they were registered with the NED) could not be forced to comply with the new set of standards, they should be "banned" from using the name "nursery school" if they refused to do so. Preschool institutions registered with the Natal Education Department were obliged to follow the set requirements. The protection of the name "nursery school" had become very important to the Education Department, and Mr Humphrey James (a delegate from Durban) even inquired about the possibility of legislation against the unauthorised use of the name (De Lange, 1990:55).

An increased grant in aid to preschools, based on numbers was accepted in 1955 by the NED. Schools could qualify for an "A" certificate in which case a per capita grant of £20 per annum would be received. Teachers and other staff members were entitled to become contributors towards the Natal Education Department Pension Scheme (Behr, 1988:43). Nursery schools registered with the NED were non-profit-making institutions, and established exclusively for the education of preschool children (NED, 1983:8). Once schoolgoing age had been reached, children had to attend a public school. In 1956 it was decided that the average attendance of preschool children per annum would determine the grant in aid paid to preschool institutions. This would be paid quarterly at a per capita rate of £10 (±R20,00). Nursery schools mushroomed in the Durban and Pietermaritzburg areas and the feeling became stronger that the Central Government should be solely responsible for nursery schools (Singh, 1987:23).

The National Health Services Commission stated in their report of 1955-1957 that the nursery school is an off-shoot of the modern conception of education. Its approach is educational rather than custodial (HSRC, 1983:37). Space for nursery schools was very limited, and local authorities and welfare organisations battled to find suitable accommodation for their activities. In a meeting with the Director of Education in 1959 it was suggested that, where circumstances demanded, use should be made of infant or junior schools to accommodate nursery schools.

According to Robinson-Thurlow (1994, Annexure 36:1), in 1960 the Schumann Commission recommended that nursery school education should be made the responsibility of the provincial education departments and be regarded as an integral part of the provincial education system. In April 1969, the Minister of National Education announced that preprimary education would become the responsibility of the provincial education department, and the provincial ordinances were amended to allow for the establishment of such schools - Natal

Ordinance 46/69 of April 1969. In June 1969 there were 13 nursery schools in Durban, five in Pietermaritzburg and five in the rest of Natal receiving grants.

According to Marcum (1992:57), a memorandum was tabled at the Administrators Conference of 1969, suggesting that reception classes be attached to primary schools - one year prior to admission to primary school. There was a strong feeling that the children with the greatest need for preschool education were those from deprived homes - children lacking a stimulating and enriched educational environment. On 4 October 1969, in a policy statement with regard to nursery school education, the Director of Education in Natal stated that Reception classes would be primarily for (HSRC, 1981:45):

- the promotion of school readiness in children;
- to help children who, according to tests, are not yet ready, but are eligible for admission to junior primary school; and
- bridging the gap between the home and the school.

In March 1970, the nursery school phase entered an era of rapid development when the government announced the availability of funds, on a rand for rand basis, for suitable accommodation for preprimary education (Urban Foundation, 1982:61). Early childhood education was further promoted by the introduction of a three-year diploma in nursery school education at teachers' training colleges, together with an increase in salary subsidies for nursery school staff.

During the 1972 conference of the four provincial administrations, the following resolutions were adopted (Biersteker, 1979:59):

- preprimary education would not be made compulsory;
- preprimary education would not be free;

- the provinces would have autonomy regarding the establishment of preprimary schools; and
- existing subsidised nursery schools would not compulsorily be taken over by the provinces.

In 1972 three of the Natal Education Department's Colleges of Education began training teachers for the preprimary phase of education. In 1975 the Provincial Ordinance was amended, and regulation No. 378 was promulgated (Naidoo, 1978:71). According to this ordinance, the following four types of preprimary institutions had to be registered from July 1975 (HSRC, 1981:23):

- Provincial preprimary schools. Only two of these schools exist and are in every sense under full provincial control. These preprimary schools are also in close proximity to two colleges of education where preprimary teachers are trained.

- Provincially controlled preprimary schools. The majority of preprimary schools fall into this category. The province appoints and pays the teachers while management committees from the community are responsible for accommodation, equipment and other expenses.

- Subsidised preprimary schools.

- Private preprimary schools.

This new deal for preprimary school education led to a rapid increase in the number of provincially controlled preprimary schools, as well as reception classes attached to primary schools (Lewis, 1978:43).

(2) Blacks

The majority of black children in Natal enter grade one not having reached the expected level of school readiness for formal school work (Naidoo, 1994:13). The Grassroots Festival Trust, a Durban-based group concerned with preschool education, has found the provision for early childhood education in the black community to be hopelessly inadequate (Sachs, 1996). At a time when the mind of the child is most open to learning,almost a generation of black toddlers is being brought up, deprived of the kind of intellectual stimulation necessary for formal schooling (Chetty, 1997).

Research done by Dayanorain (1992:31) showed that black areas in KwaZulu-Natal lack adequate preschool facilities, for example Kwa-Mashu had 10 preprimary schools, Inanda had 4 preprimary schools and Umlazi had 15 preprimary schools. As a result of this shortage in preschool facilities the majority of preschool children in these large black townships do not have access to early childhood education. According to Gleimuis (1985:21) a shortage of qualified teachers exists in black preprimary schools in KwaZulu-Natal. Most of the teachers employed in preprimary schools are trained in workshops organised by the small number of qualified teachers.

Before 1994, preschool education in the black communities in KwaZulu-Natal was funded mainly by welfare organisations, the private sector and parents (Gleimuis, 1985:23). The De Lange Report (1981:3) states that all preprimary schools for blacks are private schools that provide education for children up to the age of six years. The Department of Education and Culture allocated funds for children only when admitted to primary schools.

According to Sibisi (1989:3), there were only two circuits with registered preprimary schools in 1985, namely Kwa-Mashu and Umlazi. However, owing to

inadequate funding, these schools were not fully equipped. Crèches were established in black communities by black (and white) people who recognised the need for early childhood education. Most crèches in Umlazi and Kwa-Mashu were founded by parents seeking a place of safety for their children while they were at work. In black communities crèches have therefore been the only real "educational" facilities for one- to five-year-olds, even though many children could not be admitted because their families could not afford the fees.

In 1987, the Department of Education and Training (DET) implemented a school readiness programme for the first 12 weeks of primary schooling (Naidoo, 1994:39). This readiness programme was in full operation in 1990 and helped children to be more "ready" for formal school work in their first year in primary school.

(3) Indians

According to Van der Walt (1985:21), the development of preschool care and education services for Indian children has been very slow because of cultural factors, and the Education Department, which regarded the backlogs in formal education as a priority. The inclusion of preprimary education as part of a regular school system was only provided for in the Indian Education Act, Act No 61 of 1965 (Dayanorian, 1992:13). In the Indian Education Amendment Act, Act No 39 of 1979, a preprimary school is defined as a school for education of Indian children above the age of two years who have not yet attained the age at which they maybe admitted to an ordinary school. In the same Act provision is made for the establishment and maintenance of preprimary schools and for the awards of grants in aid or subsidies and loans to such schools.

It had been policy of the Division of Education to subsidise private preprimary schools, rather than have them established by the state. In 1977 there were five such schools and by 1983 this figure had risen to nineteen (Behr, 1984:227). Private and grant-aided preschools are required to register with the Department of Internal Affairs: Directorate of Indian Education. Crèches are required to register as "places of care" with the Department of Internal Affairs: Directorate of Welfare in terms of the Children's Act No 33 of 1960 (Reilly & Hofmeyr, 1983:68). An application for registration must be accompanied by a certificate from the local authority to the effect that buildings, general health facilities and services comply with the required standards set by the department. Playgroups are conducted by individuals in their private homes and are registered. The Directorate of Indian Education encouraged community efforts in the establishment of school readiness classes by allowing the free use of school premises (Naidoo, 1978:58). Subject advisors on preschool education, school principals and junior primary school teachers guide the personnel in charge of these preschool classes. No financial assistance is available, and there is no formal system of control (Reilly & Hofmeyr, 1983:68).

Bridging Module Readiness Classes (BMRC) were introduced on an experimental basis in Indian schools in Natal in 1984 (Govender, 1996). These classes were based within regular primary schools and catered for five-year-olds who were due to enter grade one the following year. The main purpose of these classes was to provide an environment in which physical, social, emotional and cognitive development, aimed at the attainment of school readiness, could take place. These classes were especially designed for children of parents from the lower socio-economic group - a disadvantaged milieu. Parents were required to pay only a school fee, set by the school's "school fund committee". Professionally qualified educators were in charge of these children, and their salaries were paid by the Education Department: House of Delegates (Singh, 1993:15). Preprimary

school teachers' work was supervised by the Head of Department of the Junior Primary phase. A well-structured programme, designed by junior primary subject advisors, was followed in the preschool readiness classes.

Research conducted by Singh (1993:155) on the effectiveness of preschool education, by means of six subtests in measuring school readiness, showed that pupils who attended a Bridging Module Readiness Class had attained the highest mean score. However, as a result of economic pressure, the qualified teachers who were responsible for BMRC classes were replaced by teachers with NGO training only (Chetty, 1996).

At present there is a growing demand for preschool care and education services within the Indian community. Education authorities are aware of the effectiveness education in bridging informal and formal education, and are interested in promoting its development.

3.3 INTER-PROVINCIAL MOVEMENT

3.3.1 Rationale

The end of the thirties saw a considerable number of nursery schools in existence in all four provinces (Verster, 1989:34). Their problems were such that the necessity for co-operation between the provinces became paramount in order to render a better service, and this led to the conviction that all efforts should be consolidated (De Lange, 1990:97). In order to initiate co-operation between the provinces, the first National Conference on Preschool Education was held in Pretoria in 1934. One of the requests at this conference was for state support to place nursery schools in all provinces on a more satisfactory basis. Five years later, at a similar conference in Pretoria, 95 interested parties, representing 65

institutions, founded *The Nursery School Association of South Africa*. This was to become the most influential association involved in early childhood education in South Africa (De Lange, 1994:97). One of the founders of the association, Dr Ruth Arndt, felt that the interest of all preschoolers, irrespective of colour or race, was at stake. The objectives of the association was spelled out in its handbook which also contained standards and practical information for the establishment of nursery schools (Behr, 1984:35). The association exercised its influence in laying a sound foundation for nursery school education and went to great lengths to update its handbook to keep up with a changing educational world. The standardisation of preschool education in all four provinces brought about a uniformity that was most advantageous to the preschooler. Extensive pressure was put on the newly-formed association to inspect premises and issue certificates. The latter enabled an institution to qualify for a provincial per capita grant (De Lange, 1994:97).

3.3.2 Whites

The Nursery School Association of South Africa was predominantly English and endorsed the philosophies of the British preschool movement (De Lange, 1994:98). It was therefore mainly catering for white preschool children. The Afrikaans-speaking community also felt that the English-orientated nursery schools were a threat to them, because they saw the outcome as being a loss of identity. This problem was, however, solved when the University of Pretoria introduced a course for the training of Afrikaans preschool teachers in 1940 and *Die Transvaalse Vereninging vir Kleuteropvoeding* saw the light in 1944. Thereafter the Transvaal became pivotal in Afrikaans preschool education, while Natal took the lead in the English equivalent (Behr, 1984:36).

According to Robinson-Thurlow (1994:Annexure 3), as from 1945 all four provinces received compensation from the State Treasury for expenses incurred from grants to nursery schools. The state felt that this financial support justified inspections to ascertain that adequate standards were being met and maintained in registered preschools. In 1948 the Nursery School Association of South Africa expressed concern at the mushrooming of unregistered nursery schools, as this jeopardised the standards of excellence maintained by registered nursery schools. By 1953 the number of registered nursery schools in the four provinces had increased to 153 (Davids, 1984:93). Nursery schools, though state-aided, were not included in the four-phase education system and the demand for preschool was such that welfare organisations and private institutions still had to be involved.

In the National Education Policy Act (No 39 of 1967), a new policy for preschool education was announced (De Lange, 1994:98). Nursery school education for white children became the responsibility of the various provincial departments of education and thus fell under the control of the directors of education. Preschool education was viewed as non-compulsory, but needing to be available to all children between the ages of three and six years. Private organisations could establish nursery schools, but registration with the department of education of the province was compulsory. No registration was permanent, and continuance of a preschool institution was dependent upon periodic inspections of facilities and staff (Robinson-Thurlow, 1994:Annexure 3).

According to Behr (1988:5), the Ordinance No. 17 of 1969 defined preschool education as "education provided for the purpose of promoting the harmonious development of the young child in respect of his spiritual, physical and intellectual welfare, as well as his social, aesthetic, moral and religious moulding". Nursery school education was not compulsory and parents were held responsible for the fees. Provincial control of nursery schools did not prevent many institutions from coining profit at the expense of parents.

In 1975 the term "preprimary" was volunteered as substitute for "nursery" school (Haasbroek, 1985:29). It had became apparent that void had developed between preprimary education and the custodial function of crèches and daycare centres. The Natal Nursery School Association advocated the name in an attempt to clarify the respective aims of preschool institutions. "Nursery schools" therefore officially became "preprimary schools" in 1975, and welfare organisations and private entrepreneurs could no longer be involved, as education was the responsibility of the provincial administrations of the four provinces. Preschools had thus come to the crossroads: educational or custodial. Four types of preprimary schools were identified in 1975 (Behr, 1988:58):

- provincial preprimary schools;
- government-aided preprimary schools;
- provincially-controlled preprimary schools; and
- private preprimary schools.

(1) <u>Provincial preprimary schools</u>

These schools were established, maintained and subsidised by the Provincial Administration and served as centres for practical teaching experience. Both stationery and equipment came from the budget of the provincial administration.

(2) <u>Government-aided preprimary schools</u>

Preprimary schools in this category received per capita grants from the provincial administration to which these schools had to be registered with their respective departments. Teachers' salaries were not included in the grant, and these schools were responsible for their own maintenance and equipment. Regular inspections could be made by the education department.

(3) Provincially-controlled preprimary schools

These schools had their teaching staff paid by the provincial administration and received aid with the establishment of school buildings. After the initial grant towards the erection of facilities, schools were responsible for maintenance, equipment and stationery. Buildings had to conform to standards set by the department of education, and the school received regular visits from the inspectorate, which resulted in high standards of education.

During 1980 a syllabus for school readiness was introduced in these schools and has been found to be very successful. The number for preschoolers in these schools was set as not exceeding 120, with the pupil-teacher ratio 20-1, and later 25-1.

(4) Private preprimary schools

The various provinces could subsidise these schools voluntarily and at their own discretion. When subsidised, the subsidy was determined by the quarterly pupil intake average and the parent body income. These schools then received a quarterly per capita grant. Private preprimary schools receiving aid were not permitted to show any financial gain.

An interesting phenomenon is that, despite of the divergencies among the four provinces, progress was made in all spheres of preschool education (Marcum, 1992:101). The Orange Free State opted for provincially-controlled preschools only, while the Cape Province gave preference to subsidising preprimary schools and attaching preschool classes to existing infant schools. The Transvaal encouraged private preprimary schools and subsidised these institutions. These three provinces differed from Natal where support and interest encouraged rapid

expansion of provincially-controlled schools, and consequently a team effort between parents and the Education Department.

By the year 1974 it was evident that, in all four provinces, preschool education had come to stay. Distinctive throughout were two basic decisions, namely that (Behr, 1984:34):

- preprimary education shall not be compulsory; and
- preprimary education shall not be free.

According to Lemmet & Squelch (1993:21), the South African preschool model can be described as open, informal, progressively modern, child-centred and integrated, that is, a combination of the European and American models flavoured by South African needs and aims, such as a synthesis of a variety of philosophies and theories.

3.3.3 Blacks

Before the implementation of the Bantu Education Act in 1953, the provision of preschool facilities for black children had been dependent on the efforts of local welfare societies and private voluntary organisations, supported by minimal subsidies from the state (Reilly & Hofmeyr, 1983:22). However this financial support from the state was left to the discretion of individual provincial administration boards, and no uniform system of subsidising was in operation.

Before 1953 subsidies for preschool education for blacks were also available through the Department of Social Welfare (Ruperti, 1976:84). These subsidies were payable to crèches in the form of maintenance subsidy of nine pence per child per day, and a building subsidy not exceeding £2500 paid on a £ to £ basis.

The child subsidy was exclusively for children of working mothers. From its inception, the preschool movement for black children had a strong welfare and custodial orientation. This, however, gradually changed after 1953 (year of the implementation of the Bantu Education Act) since financial support was given to six training centres for black preschool teachers by the Transvaal Native Education Department and two by the Natal Native Education Department (Bosch, 1985:34). Qualified teachers were responsible for the training of nursery school assistants in these centres until 1958, when this training was terminated and the centres reverted to daycare centres for black preschool children.

From the beginning of 1969, the Department of Black Education (previously Department of Native Education) reintroduced training courses for black preschool assistants in the Transvaal, Natal and Ciskei (Verster, 1989:256). New syllabuses, which made provision for advanced diploma courses, had been prepared for preprimary school teachers by the Department of Education and Training.

The Education and Training Act No. 90 of 1979 saw the official recognition of the educational potential of preschool institutions for black children (Reilly & Hofmeyr, 1983:27. This empowered the Department of Black Education to erect and maintain community nursery schools by making grants or subsidies available to owners or governing bodies of registered private schools which met the necessary requirements. This achievement of educational status, together with the promise of state grants was generally applauded by black people, and raised their expectations.

Huge discrepancies, however, existed between the white and black sectors in the quality and extent of state financing regarding access to any kind of early childhood education (Fabian, 1985:85). The vast majority of black children,

mainly in rural areas, had no access to any preschool facilities, while in urban areas about 25% were cared for by untrained child-minders while the mothers were at work (NEPI, 1992:15). Among the eleven education departments responsible for black education during the eighties, only two provided support for substantial numbers of preschool children; namely, Bophuthatswana and Lebowa. State-supported provision in these two homelands has been increasing steadily since the 1980s, whereas Natal withdrew support for preprimary school education as of 1992 (NEPI, 1992:18).

The extent of community-based educare provision in black communities is related to the development of NGO (non-governmental organisation) support services (Davids, 1984:65). Agriculture, commerce and industry play an important role in supporting educare centres for children of their employees. Educare services are also provided by some larger public institutions, such as hospitals and universities. Employers providing early childhood care do not receive any state support. The private sector also provides a limited amount of financial assistance to community educare projects as part of their social responsibility programmes, but there is no generally accepted obligation regarding provision for young children. There has, however, been a growing interest within the trade union movements regarding the issue of early childhood education (NEPI, 1992:19). Government control in the field of preschool education for black children has been minimal, and several educational foundations and international agencies therefore took responsibility for the support and development of educare programmes in South Africa. Their main contribution, however, has been supporting innovative work through experimental projects (Coetzer, 1989:28).

It is therefore not surprising that in 1991 most teaching staff in black preschool centres were inadequately qualified (NEPI, 1992:21). Although the common practice of education departments is the employment of trained preprimary

teachers in preschool institutions, more than half of this "trained" staff received their training through informal courses. These courses are usually not relevant or adequate for preschool education (NEPI, 1992:21). There are relatively few black preprimary schools registered with the eleven departments of education compared with white preprimary schools, and the pupil-teacher ratio ranges from 22:1 (Transvaal) to 59:1 (Lebowa).

According to Van Zyl (1991:54), the findings of the De Lange Commission on preprimary education resulted in the recommendation of a bridging year before the child entered formal primary schooling. After the release of the De Lange Report in 1983, the Department of Education and Training (DET) started experimenting with preprimary classes, and in 1988 there were 108 such classes. However, in 1990 there was only one left because the DET had shifted in favour of a bridging period during the first year of primary school, which explains, but does not justify, the phasing out of preprimary teacher-training. Children who are not ready for formal schooling and are likely to fail grade one participate as a separate group in a "school readiness" programme, conducted by the grade one teacher. The bridging year was introduced in 1988 and reported as functioning adequately in 1230 DET schools in 2117 classes in 1992 (NEPI, 1992:23).

3.3.4 Coloureds

There is very little research data available concerning the development of early childhood education for coloured children within the four provinces. According to Bosch (1985:27), the Cape Province, with the highest coloured population of the four provinces, made the first movement regarding preschool education, with the formation of the Athlone Group for Nursery Education in 1952 which led to the establishment of the Athlone Nursery School and Training Centre in 1952. This resulted in the establishment of 32 coloured nursery schools in South Africa by

the private sector, 27 of which were in the Cape Province. In 1964 coloured education became the responsibility of Central Government, and the subsidies paid by the Cape Education Department gradually increased.

In 1972 an Early Learning Centre was established in Athlone by the Bernard Van Leer Foundation. This led to the formation of the Early Learning Research Unit in 1979 whose task it was to assist all the early learning projects and promote early childhood education for coloureds in all four provinces (Fabian, 1985:78). The centre fulfilled an important need in the coloured communities, and its concern with preventative and supplementary education for disadvantaged children has added an important dimension to the preschool movement in South Africa.

An important milestone in the development of preschool education for coloured children was reached with the passing of the Coloured Persons Education Amendment Act, No 15 of 1980, which made the establishment of education in, and maintenance of nursery schools by the Department of Coloured Affairs possible (Verster, 1989:286). The passing of this Act, together with the trebling of the subsidy, held much promise for an acceleration in the expansion of preschool facilities for coloured children, and an improvement in their standards (Behr, 1984:248).

3.3.5 Indians

The inclusion of preprimary education as part of a regular school system for Indians was only provided for in the Indian Education Act (Act 61 of 1965). After the passing of this Act, the policy of the Division of Education had been to subsidise private preprimary schools, rather than have these schools established by the state (Behr, 1984:227). At the beginning of 1977 there were five private

Indian preprimary schools, and this number had increased to 19 by 1983. Private and grant-aided preprimary schools were required to register as "Places of Care" with the Department of Internal Affairs: Directorate of Welfare in terms of the Child Act No. 33 of 1960 (Reilly & Hofmeyr, 1983:68). An application for registration had to be accompanied by a certificate from the local authority to the effect that buildings, general health facilities and services complied with the required standards set by the department.

The Indian Education Act was amended in 1979 (Act No. 39 of 1979) to make provision for the maintenance of preprimary schools and the awarding of grants, subsidies or loans (Naidoo, 1978:58). In this amended act, a preprimary school was defined as a school for the education of Indian children above the age of two years who had not yet attained the necessary physical and psychological developmental stage characteristic of children of their age.

After the amendment of the Indian Education Act, the Directorate of Indian Education encouraged community efforts in the establishment of school readiness classes by allowing the free use of primary school premises (Reilly & Hofmeyr, 1983:68). Subject advisors in preschool education, school principals and junior primary school teachers gave guidance to the personnel in charge of these preschool classes. No financial assistance from the government or provinces was available to these classes, and no formal system of control exists. The Bridging Module Readiness Classes (BMRC) that were introduced on a experimental basis in Indian schools in Natal in 1984 were introduced to the other provinces (cf. 3.2.4 (4)).

3.5 SUMMARY

On the basis of available literature, an attempt has been made to gain a global overview of the development of preschool education in South Africa before 1994. The philosophy of a nation determines the education of its children, and South Africa joined the West and adopted the European outlook on early childhood education. Preschool care for young children initially had a physical implication, but in time the need arose to include mental care and intellectual growth. The nursery school movement in all the provinces in South Africa progressed beyond casual daycare to educative intervention by qualified teachers. Initially local authorities, and committed individuals play the most important role in providing preschool education. After continued attempts from all interested parties, the government and provinces became financially involved in this phase of education.

Social and political factors in South Africa have resulted in significant discrepancies between the preschool facilities available to the children of the different population groups. Not only was there a huge difference between the quality and extent of financing for white, black, coloured and Indian preschooling, but also with regard to access of any kind of early childhood care and education programmes. The vast majority of black, coloured and Indian children have no access to proper preschool education programmes, and those who do attend a preschool facility are in many instances cared for by untrained child minders.

One of the most crucial problems in South African education is to address some of the unique problems concerning early childhood education among the diverse population of the country, problems such as the availability of preschool education for preschoolers of all race groups, the shortage of professionally qualified preschool teachers, and the absence of a uniform standard of care and

administration. Too many children are trapped in large junior primary school classes, not ready for the demands of formal schooling and therefore forced passively to endure their first year of schooling, and consequently to experience failure.

The existing preschool models in KwaZulu-Natal will be the focus of discussion in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

THE RECEPTION CLASS AS PRESCHOOL MODEL IN KWAZULU-NATAL

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CHAPTER 4

THE RECEPTION CLASS AS PRESCHOOL MODEL IN KWAZULU-NATAL

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Preschool education has already been accepted as an integral part of the total education system by educational authorities (Reilly & Hofmeyr, 1983:124). According to the National Education Policy Investigation Team (NEPI), the De Lange Commission has highlighted the importance of preschool education for disadvantaged children in their report on preschool education (NEPI, 1992:14). The high cost of the conventional three years of preprimary school education enjoyed by many privileged children was criticised in the report. A recommendation of a one-year, or at the most two-years, bridging programme to prepare children for primary school was made in the report. The government's response to this suggestion was that the state was unable to finance comprehensive preprimary education and that the initiative for any model of preschool education should be the responsibility of the community and the private welfare sector. The government, however, did advocate that consideration be given to the financing of school readiness (bridging programmes) for the neediest children (NEPI, 1992:15).

The majority of South African children have not had the benefit of exposure to adequate early childhood development programmes. Behr (1988:45) states that the situation at present is inadequate, fragmented, unco-ordinated, unequal and generally lacking educational value. According to Dayanorain (1992:32), statistics indicate that only 6% of black children under the age of six years have

access to Early Childhood Development services and therefore have an abrupt introduction to formal education. Lack of preschool facilities and inadequate learning conditions in the majority of lower primary classes result in frustration, poor learning and school failure.

In their research findings, the Educational Renewal Strategy (ERS) also acknowledges the value of preprimary education in improving children's performance in primary school - particularly children from a disadvantaged background who are usually not school-ready when reaching school-going age (ERS, 1992:64). The ERS recommends that the South African Council for Education (SACE) develop a national strategy for preprimary education. The reception year is seen as a bridging year and should be integrated with the first phase of formal schooling. The White Paper on Education, published by the Committee on Education and Training in a new democratic South Africa, has included a reception year in the ten years of free and compulsory education for all children (RCTG, 1995:1).

In this chapter the preschool models presently existing in KwaZulu-Natal will be discussed. In order to examine these existing preschool models in the eight geographical regions in KwaZulu-Natal, it is necessary to distinguish between governmental and non-governmental involvement in this phase of education and the quality of existing services. It should, however, be noted that when reference is made to an education department the former education departments are implied and not the present single unitary education department of the new education dispensation in South Africa.

4.2 EXISTING PRESCHOOL MODELS

The development of preprimary education models for blacks, coloureds and Indians was very slow compared to that for whites, mainly because of the massive backlog in formal education (Gleimuis, 1985:34). According to Singh (1994:12), in 1990 about 16% of white children under six years of age were in preschool centres. The percentages for other groups were: coloureds (3,5%), Indians (1%) and blacks (0,4%). In 1994 the percentages had increased to: whites (21%), coloureds (10%), Indians (23%) and blacks (3%). It must be stated that no official statistical information with regard to numbers of children in preprimary schools throughout the entire Republic of South Africa was made available *after* 1990.

According to the Reception Class Task Committee (RCTG) in KwaZulu-Natal, the following preschool models existed during 1995 in the eight regions under the KwaZulu-Natal Education Department (RCTG, 1995:8):

- registered preprimary schools which include state preprimary schools, state subsidised and private preprimary schools;
- preprimary schools not registered with the department;
- readiness classes at primary schools for five-year-olds; and
- reception classes, which include the Bridging Module Readiness classes of the ex-House of Delegates (HOD) and Bridging classes of the ex-Department of Education and Training (DET).

At the beginning of 1995 school year, 233 preprimary schools were registered in KwaZulu-Natal (cf. Table 1). These schools included the state preprimary schools, state-subsidised and private preprimary schools in all eight

regions. The eight geographic regions in the province of KwaZulu-Natal are as follows (RCTG, 1995:31):

- the North Durban region;
- the South Durban region;
- the Port Shepstone region;
- the Pietermaritzburg region;
- the Ladysmith region;
- the Vryheid region;
- the Ulundi region; and
- the Empangeni region.

Table 1 Registered preprimary schools in Kwazulu-Natal (1995)

REGION	KZNDEC	Ex-DET	Ex-NED	Ex-HOR	Ex-HOD	TOTAL
1	4	2	30	12	28	76
2	2	2	24	2	0	30
3	6	1	9	1	2	30
4	0	11	20	3	7	41
5	8	2	10	0	0	20
6	4	2	7	0	0	13
7	6	1	1	0	0	8
8	0	0	14	0	1	15
TOTAL	30	21	115	18	38	233

Although the number of registered preprimary schools in Table 1 seems substantial, it does not in any way reflect the degree of availability of preschool education to all the children in KwaZulu-Natal. The nature and function of each of these preprimary education models will be focused on in the following discussions.

4.2.1 Registered preprimary schools

Registered preprimary schools are provincially controlled, the staff is employed by the Education Department and an elected parent body is responsible for acquiring equipment and maintaining the buildings and premises. Children aged from three to five are admitted to these schools (Singh, 1993:12).

Preprimary schools are educational in their approach and children attend school for four hours daily, normally from eight o'clock to twelve o'clock. The programme offered at the school during these four hours is planned to culminate in school readiness. It involves a slow but stimulating process which will allow the child leeway to make his or her own discoveries within an encouraging environment. The programme is subjected to regular scrutiny by advisors from the Education Department and high educational standards are maintained in these preprimary schools (De Lange, 1990:27-28).

According to Singh (1993:13) there are four categories of registered preprimary schools, namely:

- private preprimary schools;
- provincial (departmental) preprimary schools;
- provincially/departmentally *controlled* preprimary schools; and
- subsidised preprimary schools.

(1) Private preprimary schools

Private preprimary schools are run by individuals or private organisations and are registered as such with the Department of Education and Training (KZNDEC). These preprimary schools cater for children in the age group three to five years.

Robinson-Thurlow (1994:19) distinguishes between the following private preprimary schools:

- private preprimary schools which are conducted on a non-profitable basis and receive a subsidy from the government;

- private preprimary schools which have been in existence since 1980 and receive *no* subsidy as they have been unsuccessful in their application owing to financial difficulties experienced by the education department; and

- private preprimary schools which have elected to remain financially independent and are owned by individuals or groups and run as businesses on a profitable basis.

The National Education Policy Investigation Team (NEPI) does not consider the privatisation of preprimary schools a viable option for increasing access to preschool education (NEPI, 1993:122). In fact, privatisation is viewed as being largely responsible for the present unacceptable state of preschool provision in the province.

Teachers from private preprimary schools regularly attend workshops organised by various resource and training agencies (RTA) in early childhood education (Chetty, 1997). The RTAs developed the capacity to provide educare training, support services and appropriate curriculums and materials. These agencies are also involved in research and evaluation activities in preprimary education. Financial support for the RTAs would be provided by the state by means of a contract for services rendered - funds to be based on a subsidy for trainees.

Additional funds for the RTAs were also forthcoming from the private sector (Hindle, 1994:16).

According to Reilly & Hofmeyr (1983:28), a system of grants in aid of preprimary schoolswas very limited and has not resulted in a significant increase in properly organised preschool models. In her research, Singh (1987:35), states that several registered private preprimary schools are managed by community-based and religious organisations which have no experience of the actual nature and quality of the programmes being instituted for preschool education. She further points out that despite of the development and progress that occurred in the provision of registered preprimary schools between 1981 and 1987 there is still an immense need for improvement in this area of education.

(2) Provincial (departmental) preprimary schools

These preprimary schools were initially run on the same basis as government schools. Buildings were erected, owned and maintained by the previous Natal Education Department (NED), and all teaching and administrative staff were provincially employed. Stationery and other supplies could be drawn from the department's stores. A per capita fee had to be paid to the department each quarter out of the fees charged to the parents (De Waal, 1996).

With the staff retrenchments in the preprimary phase at the end of 1991, provincial preprimary schools had staff cut-backs proportional to those experienced in provincially and departmentally *controlled* preprimary schools. At present only the principal and one teacher in each school are employed and paid by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and Culture. The department also retains responsibility for the buildings and administrative expenses.

There are currently two departmental preprimary schools and both are linked to a teachers training college in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. The "Port Natal Pre-primére Skool" is attached to the Durban Teachers' Training College, and Stepping Stone Preprimary School to Edgewood College of Education (Govender, 1996).

(3) Provincially/departmentally *controlled* preprimary schools

These schools are registered with the provincial education department and are non-profit associations. Initially all teaching staff were in the direct employment of the NED, with the same conditions of employment as teachers in the compulsory phases of education. All buildings, equipment, secretarial and domestic wages (and any other costs), remained the responsibility of the school association, usually the parent community (Robinson-Thurlow, 1994:20).

Following a series of staff cut-backs in 1984, 1989 and 1991, the NED employed only the principal in smaller schools (less than 84 pupils) and the principal and one teacher in larger schools (85-160 pupils) (NED, 1992:18). Fees charged were retained by the school to meet expenses. These schools, from the time of their introduction in 1975 until 1986, were classified as *provincially controlled* preprimary schools. However, with the demise of the Natal Provincial Council and Administration in 1987 and the centralisation of "White own affairs education", the term was changed in official correspondence to *departmentally controlled* preprimary schools (Robinson-Thurlow, 1994:21). Ninety-three departmentally controlled preprimary schools were operating in Natal in 1987. Presently, these schools are registered as private schools, but classified as departmentally controlled preprimary schools to denote the salary subsidies they receive.

(4) Subsidised preprimary schools

These schools were registered as non-profit associations and also received a small quarterly subsidy from the Education Department (Robinson-Thurlow, 1992:22). All the staff were employed directly by the school and the fees charged were retained by the school towards expenses. Two subsidised preprimary schools were registered in 1984, but had their subsidies withdrawn at the end of 1992 and are presently registered as private preprimary schools.

4.2.2 Preprimary classes at primary schools

According to a report by National Education Co-ordination Committee, preprimary classes for five-year-olds have been set up at departmental primary schools using preprimary trained teachers (NEPI, 1992:22). In 1988, the DET in the then province of Natal, also experimented with preschool facilities at primary schools, and 108 such classes were established at selected primary schools. The programme was, however, not successful, and by the end of 1990 there was only one such a class left. This programme proved to be viable only in primary schools with decreasing enrolment (HSRC, 1992:54). According to Singh (1994:17), school readiness classes were also established at departmental schools, and by 1994 there were 91 schools in the greater Durban area offering preschool education to the children in this area.

Within the eight regions in the province, 150 community based preschool centres were also established at primary schools to operate after normal school hours (RCTG, 1995:27). These school readiness classes involved daily two-hour programme, normally conducted from 12:30 to 14:30 in the classrooms of junior primary children. These classes offered a low-cost alternative to departmental readiness classes. Community organisations employed teachers to conduct these

school readiness classes (after normal school hours) for five-year-olds. The department assists the community in this venture by paying a wage subsidy to these teachers (Singh, 1994:41). These teachers, however, have generally had no formal, academic or professional qualifications in the field of preprimary education. Some received in-service training from the Chatsworth Early Learning Centre and the Durban and Coastal Society for Early Childhood Education. Primary school principals and junior primary teachers assist in the supervision of the preschool programme offered in these school readiness classes. In a report by NEPI in 1992, a large number (66%) of Indian five-year-olds attends some form of preschool education in 1992 (NEPI, 1992:23).

Table 2 represents a summary of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education's involvement in the provision of preprimary education regarding the community-based preschool centres at primary schools after normal school hours (RCTG, 1995:27).

Table 2. Community-based preschool centres at primary schools (run after hours) in 1995

REGION	NUMBER OF Preschool CENTRES
1	65
2	66
3	2
4	11
5	6
6	0
7	0
8	0
TOTAL	150

4.2.3 Provision of preschool classes

All the former departments of education in the province were involved in the provision of preschool education. According to Singh (1987:39), the following classes formed part of the preschool models offered by the different education departments:

- Reception Classes;
- Bridging Module Readiness Classes; and
- Bridging Classes.

These models of preschool education resulted from the De Lange Commission's 1981 report on preschool education (De Lange, 1990:61). In ex-NED reception classes an initial amount of R6 000,00 per school was allocated for equipment, and thereafter the schools received a slightly increased monetary allocation to provide for further requirements. Qualified teachers were in charge of these classes. Initially it was thought that these classes would subsequently be introduced to most primary schools in low socio-economic areas, depending on the success of the experiment and the needs of the schools. The main purpose of these classes was to provide an environment in which physical, experiential and psychological development is stimulated so that children are willing and better able to cope with the demands of the formal school situation (NED, 1992:33).

The Reception Classes, Bridging Module Readiness Classes and Bridging Classes made excellent progress and achieved good results, and many schools opted for these models of preschool education. In 1987, it was estimated that within the next decade all five-year-olds in the province would be accommodated in department- or state-subsidised and private preprimary school facilities (Singh, 1987:39). However, towards the end of the eighties, economic pressure in the

country forced drastic cutbacks in the education budget. Preschool education became unaffordable and in 1990 it was decided that preprimary classes, despite their success, would be discontinued. Schools were, however, at liberty to privatise this phase in the child's education or run preschool classes using teachers with NGO training whose salaries were subsidised by the respective departments. Previously-employed preprimary teachers would be accommodated in the junior primary phase, depending on the availability of suitable vacancies (Heese & Badenhorst, 1992:126). In some of the former education department's in KwaZulu-Natal those management councils that had a serious interest in preschool education were able to find the means to maintain and continue the Reception Classes, Bridging Module Readiness Classes and Bridging Classes for five-year-olds at primary schools. The variety and innovation of these initiatives, however, resulted in large discrepancies between white and black preschool education. This led to two extreme conditions: from a highly sophisticated, well-resourced preschool model on the one hand to disadvantaged poorly-resourced preschool education on the other (Vos & Brits, 1990:112).

Reception Classes, Bridging Module Classes and Bridging Classes are currently provided at many different venues. Some form part of the state's Model C preprimary schools or subsidised primary schools (private schools), but many are in informal education centres run by communities and staffed by unqualified adults (RCTG, 1995:4). Since the cutback of educational funds in 1990, state support for preschool education has been minimal and has targeted largely urban areas and certain population groups. Even where the state has subsidised preprimary education the communities still have to play a major role in this venture (RCTG, 1995:4).

In the light of the KwaZulu-Natal Education Department's current involvement in preprimary education it appears to be emphasising the importance of school

readiness as a prerequisite for success in formal school learning. What needs to be focused on in preschool education is the total development of the child, so that he will be able to face the future with confidence and be competent to cope with the challenges encountered at school and throughout life (Teachers Centre, 1994:3-4). Early investment in the total development of the child can bring improvement in the quality of life of the child.

The real educational challenge of KwaZulu-Natal is that of implementing a suitable system of preschool education for all the early childhood educands in the province, a preschool system that will bridge the gap between informal and formal education in laying the foundation for all future formal learning.

It is estimated that in the eight regions of KwaZulu-Natal there are, in total, 530 Reception Classes, Bridging Module Classes and Bridging Classes. Table 3 shows the distribution of the latter three preschool models in the province of KwaZulu-Natal in 1995 as obtained from statistics released by the Reception Class Task Group (RCTG, 1995:27).

Table 3 Distribution of Reception Classes, Bridging Module Readiness Classes and Bridging Classes in KwaZulu-Natal in 1995

REGION	Ex-NED	Ex-DET	Ex-HED	Ex-HOR	Ex-HOD	TOTAL
1	32	20	9	7	66	134
2	33	16	2	0	46	97
3	17	7	2	1	9	36
4	4	29	4	2	37	76
5	22	17	2	2	4	47
6	1	19	1	0	1	22
7	49	5	0	1	0	55
8	44	7	2	0	7	63
TOTAL	202	120	22	13	170	530

4.2.4 Non-governmental involvement in preschool education

A network of non-government resource agencies in the provision of preschool education have developed in most parts of the province since 1980. According to NEPI (1992:18), these agencies are the following:

- Training and Resources for Early Education (TREE);
- The Chatsworth Early Learning Centre (CELC);
- The Valley Trust Resource Centre (VTRC);
- Durban & Coastal Society for Early Childhood Education (DCSECE);
- Urban Foundation Preschool Education Centre (UFPEC); and
- Community Education Development Trust (CEDT).

The aim of the above agencies is to offer direct educare and other forms of educational facilities to preschool children. They also provide non-formal training facilities for teachers and a variety of other support services for early childhood education programmes (ELC, 1993:12). Although most of the agencies operate on a non-racial basis, mainly Indian and black communities are served, as that is where the need is the greatest. The most non-governmental organisations depend almost entirely on funding from the private sector, trusts, foundations, church organisations, the corporate sector and foreign aid (Short, 1991:247).

The following Early Childhood Centres form part of the involvement of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in preschool education (Robinson-Thurlow, 1994:23):

- educare institutions;
- crèches:
- play groups; and

- educare centres.

(1) Educare Institutions

Educare institutions vary greatly in quality in terms of the provision of education and care for children of preschool age. Some provide only basic care (safety, supervision, nutrition) while others offer educational programmes to encourage intellectual and social development. Qualified teachers are seldom found in these institutions as they do not meet the requirements for registration with the Education Department, but have to register with the Department of Health and Welfare. The major concerns of the latter department are adequate nutrition, safety and hygiene, although they are also aware of the need for intellectual stimulation during early childhood education.

(2) Crèches

Crèches cater for children from birth to six years of age. Those organisations are generally referred to as "places of care" for preschool children. Very few, or no, educational programmes are offered. Most crèches also offer after-care services which are normally used by mothers who work full-day. The majority of crèches are privately run on a profit-making basis, although some are organised by welfare groups on a non-profit basis.

(3) Play Groups

Play groups usually cater for children in the two-to-six age group. After- school facilities are also available for older school-going children. A variety of creative activities is offered and equipment for outdoor play is available. This type of preschool care is essentially custodial in nature, but educational stimulation and

quality of supervision vary greatly between play groups. These play groups are normally used by working mothers, but quite often non-working mothers also send their children to a play group for a couple of mornings per week so that they can socialise with other children,

Play groups are privately owned and run for profit. Some play groups, however, do offer "school readiness courses", but may use incorrect methods and teach only certain skills formally; for example reading and writing. This "partial" preschool education by unqualified persons is likely to hamper the child's all-round development.

(4) Educare Centres

Educare centres were initially established in predominantly black communities for the preschool children of working parents. In these centres, the children receive full daycare, which includes a midday meal. No formal preschool educational activities are offered in these centres, and they are in many ways similar to crèches. The "teachers" in educare centres are usually not formally trained or received only informal training.

Many of the educare centres were established by the community under the supervision and with financial assistance of non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Educare centres are run on a non-profit-making basis and with initiatives from the communities they serve. There are, however, some educare centres that are privately owned and run as a business on a profit basis. Parents have to pay fees, but most of the money is used for food, equipment and staff salaries (Gajadhur, 1990:90).

According to Table 4 the eight regions in KwaZulu-Natal had 1910 Early Childhood Centres (ECCs) in 1995 (RCTG, 1995:27) . These centres were unregistered with, but traceable via, the Department of Education.

Table 4 Number of ECC centres in KwaZulu-Natal in 1995

REGION	TREE	VTRC	DCSECE	CEDT	CELC	TOTAL
1	248	107	0	0	0	355
2	132	121	59	1	10	323
3	322	7	0	3	0	332
4	212	21	0	2	0	235
5	155	38	0	4	0	197
6	100	0	0	2	0	102
7	226	39	0	0	0	265
8	73	23	0	5	0	101
TOTAL	1468	356	59	17	10	1910

Research findings released by the Reception Class Task Group in 1995 showed that the number of five-year-olds in KwaZulu-Natal reflects the need for more adequate preschool education (RCTG, 1995:28) .

4.3 THE RECEPTION CLASS

4.3.1 Rationale

According to De Lange (1994:110), environmental deprivation results in inadequate preparation for formal education as it inhibits progress and augments the unnecessary expenditure incurred by repetition of classes. The relationship between scholastic achievement, socio-economic background and lack of facilities with trained teachers, is evident in South Africa. Short (Singh, 1993:54)

says disadvantaged children in low income urban communities is likely to persist for many years. The early years of schooling determine to a large extent whether or not a child becomes a successful learner both in and out of school.

The high percentage of repetition and the drop-out rate in schools in the disadvantaged (low socio-economic) communities need to be greatly improved. A new approach to education and learning is needed in South African schools. A solid foundation for successful formal education and learning can be laid by establishing reception classes that are accessible to all five- to six-year-old children (Sachs, 1996). Possible achievements of reception classes are (Short, 1992:56):

- an enriched play and activity-based curriculum which emphasises continuity with the home and community and, at the same time, recognises the value of the child's own knowledge and experience;

- introduction of the reception class as the first year of the formal foundation phase; and
- development by educators in Early Childhood Education of a pedagogy based on an interactive approach to learning, with the following aims:

  - to develop the child's curiosity;

  - to develop confidence in basic linguistic and cognitive skills; and

  - to achieving fundamental literacy and numeracy skills.

4.3.2 Programme

The programme to be followed in preprimary reception classes should be a school readiness programme suitable for five- to six-year-olds. The aim of a school readiness programme is to assist the child in meeting the requirements set by the school for the newcomer: to make the child ready for formal schooling.

(1) Aims of a school readiness programme in the reception class

The global aims of a school readiness programme are (NED, 1992:1):

- the development of a positive self-concept and image of the child as a learner, with a positive attitude to formal schooling and active participation in his learning;
- the development of adequate fine and gross motor skills necessary for formal learning;
- the development of adequate emotional and social skills for functioning as a member of a group;
- the development of keen sensory perceptions;
- to develop the motivation required for achievement; and
- to enable the child to enter the concrete operational stage in most areas of cognitive development.

In order for these aims to be achieved, the task of the reception class teacher would include the following (Grobbelaar, 1994:17-18):

- to create a warm, caring environment, where the teacher is aware of each child's needs;
- provision of planned learning experiences which expose the child progressively to the relationships and concepts necessary for formal learning to occur;
- stimulation and encouragement of individuality, creativity and sound social relationships;
- emphasis on the motivation required achievement; and
- continuous assessment and recording of levels of development throughout the programme.

(2) <u>Outline of the school readiness programme</u>

In the reception class, the teacher has a specific role to play rather than a set task to perform. In the school readiness programme all the activities planned for the children should lead to growth and development of abilities in language, mathematics and pre-reading skills. The key to this approach is "experiential learning" stimulated by the teacher's verbalising and questioning, leading to concept formation and problem-solving, and finally to graphic representation (Reilly & Hofmeyr, 1981:3).

According to De Lange (1990:8), the reception class teacher must be constantly alert and able to identify the level at which individual children are operating in order to be able to plan and present activities which will extend the children and lead to more complex interaction with materials and formation of abstract concepts. The immediate aim of the school readiness programme is to integrate the child into the more structured environment of the reception class and to develop the appropriate social and language skills required for formal learning (De Lange, 1994:217). Table 5 represents an abridged outline of the school readiness programme prescribed by the KwaZulu-Natal Education Department for preschool education in the reception class (NED, 1992:3).

Table 5 Outline of a school readiness programme

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE
Concept of the self	Self-concept	Activities related to exploring child's appearance
Family relationships	Concept of a family	Draws family and cuts out pictures
Exploration of attributes	Concepts of colour, shape, etc.	Identification and selection
Spatial relationships	*Language of space*	Complete obstacle course and descriptions
Exploration of relationships	Concepts of size, length, mass, etc.	Experimentation with objects establish differences
Exploration of mathematical concepts and relationships	Language of mathematics	Activities revising concepts of size/height, etc.
Temporal relationships	Time of day	Pictures of day and night
Consolidation	*Memory training*	*Memorising activities*

Table 5 is a brief summary of what a reception class programme entails. Annexure A contains a detailed learning programme for school readiness in a reception class.

4.3.3 Accreditation

In the Interim Policy for Early Childhood Development of 1996, guidelines are proposed for the accreditation of preschool teachers who at present fall outside the scope of the norms and standards for teacher education as stipulated by the Committee on Teacher Education Policy (COTEP). Initially these interim guidelines will be applied specifically to accredit providers of preschool education outside the formal schooling system (DEC, 1996:15). These interim guidelines will also serve as the basis for the development of national guidelines for all Early Childhood Development (ECD) provision for children from birth to at least nine years of age. Accreditation will take place at two levels, namely (DEC, 1996:17):

- Teachers will be accredited for the interim period on the basis of required knowledge, skills and abilities. The next step will be to begin the process of articulating the knowledge, skills and abilities within the existing policy on teacher education and then within those competencies proposed by the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

- The second level will require the development of criteria for the accreditation of training institutions. Guidelines for these institutions will take the following into consideration:

  - the programme offered by the institution;
  - the knowledge, skills and experience of training staff; and
  - teaching, methodology, resource utilisation and access to resources. Institutions must participate continuously in

in-service programmes for ongoing development and lifelong learning.

The guidelines provided will constitute the basis for accrediting both preschool teachers and institutions that provide training for them.

4.3.4 Funding

The implementation of reception classes has been planned as a three-year project by the Committee for Early Childhood Development with financial input by the private sector (DEC, 1996:13). The Department of National Education will provide funds only for the first year and the provincial education departments will then have to provide the funds for the following two years. KwaZulu-Natal has been allocated R4 389 000,00 for community-based services in the 1996/1997 financial year (DEC, 1996:14). The suggested subsidy of R2,00 per child per day could indicate that subsidies would be paid to community-based services according to enrolment.

Thirty sites per region have been earmarked for the funding of preschool facilities. An annual subsidy of approximately R15 000,00 per site , with an average of 35 children per teacher, would apply. The keeping of registers and records of fees, or any other form of contribution, would be required as evidence of enrolment as part of capacity building for community-based services. Management committees in consultation with regional advisors will be expected to present a forecast as to how the subsidy will be allocated. This financial planning should include the following (DEC, 1996:14):

- remuneration of staff; and
- equipment and materials needed for curriculum delivery.

Financial forecasts will have to be sanctioned by the Early Childhood Pilot Project Management before subsidies are released to services. It is suggested that subsidies be paid on a quarterly basis. Over the next few years there must be a transformation of the provincial budgeting requirements to include and integrate reception class education. By means of phased-in process, the department of education must take primary responsibility for educating five- to six-year-old children. A system of partnership with parents, communities, NGOs and business must be established by the department (DEC, 1996:14-15).

The reception class pilot project is aimed at initiating the beginning of a national reception class programme accessible to all five- and six-year-olds.

4.4 CRITERIA FOR PRESCHOOL MODELS

According to Reilly & Hofmeyr (1983:75) and Schwartz & Pollishuke (1991:56), the following criteria can *inter alia* be selected as indicators of quality preprimary school education:

- adequately trained staff;
- teacher-pupil ratio;
- physical provision which includes equipment;
- parental involvement;
- availability of necessary support services; and
- quality and effectiveness of management and supervision.

4.4.1 Training of staff

The history of the provision of preschool education in South Africa has been characterised by vast discrepancies between the various education departments

(now replaced by a single department). These differences were also apparent in the training opportunities available for preschool education. At present the highest percentage of trained preprimary school teachers in South Africa are white (De Lange, 1990:61). More than a decade ago, Reilly & Hofmeyr (1983:76) pointed out that the percentage of qualified black, coloured and Indian preprimary school teachers was very unfavourable compared to their white counterparts. The position could be regarded as critical. With state, or state-subsidised preprimary schools virtually non-existent for blacks, coloureds and Indians, there was very little motivation for these race groups to set up formal training structures (Kruger, 1993:23).

According to Lemmer (1994:55), owing to the shortage of qualified preprimary school teachers, and the lack of provision of buildings, much use is made of the services provided by communities, churches, NGOs and other private institutions. In many communities, the latter took the initiative not only to build or establish preschools, but to train teachers (Singh, 1987:45). They were also responsible for making teacher aides and other untrained personnel available to preprimary education. According to NEPI (1992:87), the problems that need to be addressed are the present simplistic associations of formal teacher training at the tertiary level with preprimary schooling (a conventional education policy perspective) formal training at secondary level with the provision of day care services (a traditional welfare perspective); and non-formal training with community-based educare. These distinctions serve to maintain the present disparities in the field of early childhood education. Formal and non-formal training opportunities at secondary and tertiary level need to be part of an integrated and co-ordinated system subject to the same overall system of accreditation.

The University of South Africa offers a Higher Education Diploma in preprimary education. Colleges of education for teacher training, such as Springfield College

in Durban and Edgewood College of Education in Pinetown offer diplomas in preprimary and junior primary education (Singh, 1987:44). Similar training was also introduced at technical colleges recently. In 1992, The National Education Policy Team suggested that initial teacher training at the tertiary level could be a minimum of two years pre-service (NEPI, 1992:89). This two years of training could qualify students for employment as assistant teachers so that they could gain essential practical experience in preprimary education. Further qualifications could then be obtained by part-time studies or distance education. Therefore in respect of the formal training of preprimary school teachers use can be made of less expensive training methods such as distance education and part time study (Van Zyl, 1991:74). Non-formal paths, such as in-service training and team-teaching arrangements with teams consisting of teachers trained at different levels, could also be utilised to improve the standard of preschool teachers (Naidoo, 1997).

However, according to NEPI (1992:90), limited human resources for the provision of proper training services for teachers of all race groups remains a serious problem, especially in the educare sector. The prospect of providing effective in-service training to upgrade teaching competence poses a formidable challenge. It would be of advantage to use NGOs to provide the in-service training which will be needed to improve the quality of early childhood education and consequently improving both preprimary and junior primary education. Valuable work is being done by NGOs in providing appropriate training , curriculum and material development activities and support to local early childhood programmes. Certain aspects of the work allocated to NGOs would be state-funded, either by way of training post subsidies or on a per capita basis per trainee (NEPI, 1992:90).

4.4.2 Teacher-pupil ratio

An appropriate teacher-child ratio is considered by most preschool educators to be one of the most important determinants of an effective preschool programme (Reilly & Hofmeyr, 1983:77). The younger the child, the more adult support and guidance are needed and thus the more favourable the teacher-pupil ratio should be. Van Zyl (1991:16) states that between 1979 and 1987 the birth rates for whites, coloureds and Indians decreased, while the birth rate for blacks did not follow a similar pattern. Children from a disadvantaged environment are also more in need of individual attention and therefore important for emphasis to be placed on a low teacher-pupil ratio for the adequate development of milieu-deprived children. Singh (1987:46) states that group size is a significant factor in the effectiveness of preschool programmes.

According to NEPI (1992:21), preprimary schools controlled by the provincial education departments have been staffed at teacher-pupil ratios ranging from 1:13 to 1:23. In the preprimary schools registered with the departments responsible for black education the teacher-pupil ratio varied considerably. A research report compiled at the request of the Urban Foundation showed that the teacher-child ratio in the preprimary schools in the Durban and Pietermaritzburg areas ranged from 1:20 to 1:30; in the Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage areas an average of 1:35; in the East London and Ciskei areas 1:29; and in Lebowa 1:59 (Lemmer & Squelch, 1993:80).

Louw (1989:121) and Reilly & Hofmeyr (1983:80) identify a variety of factors as being responsible for the high teacher-pupil ratio in the disadvantaged communities:

- lack of financial resources for teachers salaries;
- lack of suitable equipment and accommodation;

- shortage of qualified black, coloured and Indian preprimary schools teachers;
- lack of adequate training facilities for preschool teachers; and
- lack of effective regulation through enforcement of registration requirements for preprimary schools and teachers.

According to Van Zyl (1991:17), the average annual growth of 4,4% in student and pupil numbers (DNE, 1990:24) makes it obvious that the state alone will simply not be able to finance an education system which meets the aspirations of all the citizens of the country.

4.4.3 Provision of preschool facilities

The former provincial education departments offered preprimary schools the option of per capita subsidies and grants for buildings and equipment. Although the House of Representatives, House of Delegates and DET provided per capita subsidies for approved preprimary schools, this was very low and seriously inadequate (Van der Walt, 1985:23). The DET not only froze the granting of new subsidies in 1989, but subsidy amounts decreased from R19 546,00 to R15 938,00. The House of Delegates also offered assistance to preprimary schools, subject to a number of conditions regarding buildings and equipment (NEPI, 1992:24). In order to obtain registration for a preprimary school, certain standards had to be met. According to Singh (1987:46), these standards were the following:

- buildings to comply with the local health bylaws;
- school to be open to inspections by departmental inspectors; and
- professionals to assess the suitability and hygienic standards of the premises.

Grobbelaar (1994:32) suggests that the building of new classrooms for reception year education in the grounds of primary schools should be seen as more than simply extending educational facilities. These classes should be part of a vibrant community reconstruction and development programme. They should serve as community centres having wider roles than reception class education. Another consideration that deserves mentioning is that the classroom for the reception class need not conform to the stereotyped rectangular classroom, but could be built according to the needs of the community, which could contribute in terms of labour and material and in this way also reduce the cost. Such buildings would, however, have to conform to the basic physical criteria of other classrooms, namely (RCTG, 1995:32):

- the required space per child in a school;
- the prescribed safety requirements of school buildings;
- adequate lighting and ventilation; and
- sufficient temperature control.

The physical provision of preschool education in South Africa is inadequate in terms of the goals of preprimary education in fostering social emotional and cognitive development of the child in a stimulating and enriched learning environment (Singh, 1987:46). The suitability of the physical environment has a positive influence on the quality of the educational programme for preschool children (Naidoo, 1994:55).

4.4.4 Parental involvement

Educationists regard parental involvement as an essential element in the successful establishment of adequate preschool models in South Africa in order to meet the needs of young children (Reilly & Hofmeyr, 1983:85). The major source

of funds for preschool facilities, especially in black communities, is from the general public, mainly by way of fees paid by parents (NEPI, 1992:28). According to Dayanorain (1992:29), it is estimated that parents pay about 80% of the ongoing operational expenses of community-based preschools.

Parental involvement in the preschool education is very important as this education equips the child to deal with the skills needed in his formative years of schooling (Baldwin, 1993:401). Lack of school readiness may in many instances be traced back to the family home (Dodge & Price, 1994:1388). The child's school readiness can be hindered by lack of parental involvement, incomplete families, or incompetent parents that are unable to fulfil their educational responsibilities (Lee-Corbin, 1993:76). Failure to comply with school readiness requirements will not only have a detrimental effect on the child's entry into formal schooling, but on his total attitude towards school and school work (Hartshorne, 1993:144).

The reception class can be an ideal way of linking the primary school with the community and bringing parents into the life of the school. Parental involvement in the child's early education can have positive effects for the child throughout the school years and not just at reception class level (Lemmer, 1994:57). According to Reilly & Hofmeyr (1983:85), the quality of parental involvement in preschool models in South Africa is largely determined by the following five factors:

- the effectiveness of the principal in motivating parents;
- the leadership potential in the community;
- the tradition of the preschool centres in the community;
- the attitude of the community towards preschool centres; and
- the socio-economic factors in the community.

Some preschool centres have a history of active parental involvement which is perpetuated from year to year. It these instances it seems that parents take pride in the preschool centre and wish to use its tradition established. In general, parental involvement in preschool education in South Africa is focused on the rendering of service and on strengthening the parental role in the becoming and learning of their children (Lemmer & Squelch, 1993:115).

4.4.5 Available support services

The effectiveness of early childhood education programmes in promoting the sound, total development of the child depends to a large extent on the effective integration of physical care, education, medical and dental care, and orthopedagogical, psychological and social services (Reilly & Hofmeyr, 1983:88). According to Dekker & Van Schalkwyk (1989:13), early supporting services for a child accomplish a specific task in the interest of education because supporting services are essentially educationally qualified. Bullock (1991:22) defines supporting services as organised assistance provided so that the education process can proceed smoothly. The Child Care Act of 1987, as amended in 1991, is a legal instrument sanctioning the services rendered to all children in need of care in the Republic of South Africa (Kruger, 1993:27).

At present there is a variety of support services that operate on a non-racial basis. They serve mainly in black communities where the need for adequate preschool education is the greatest and play a critical role in supporting the development in educare (ECDC, 1995:51). These support services include the following (NEPI, 1992:32):

- advice and information on preschool education;
- development of preschool education materials;

- management training for committees;
- non-profit making shops for preschool equipment and supplies;
- money-making ventures; for example, recycling of waste material;
- renewal workshops and developmental work; and
- non-formal in-service training in educare.

At present, the Early Learning Centre in Chatsworth is involved in support and consultancy services to preschool classes with regard to the following (ELC, 1993:1):

- the manufacturing of educational materials in support of the preschool curriculum;
- suitable curriculum design;
- establishment of parent-teacher committees; and.
- training of preschool teachers.

According to Singh (1983:47), Training and Resources for Early Education (TREE), an organisation that works alongside health and welfare agencies, provides a supportive service to the existing preschool centres.

4.4.6 Management and supervision

Reilly & Hofmeyr (1983:87) say that the quality of management and supervision of preschool models in South Africa vary considerably and depend on the expertise, experience and responsibility of office bearers, as well as the degree of stability able to be maintained over an extended period. Management committees of subsidized private and community preschools are subject to a certain amount of control from departments with which the centres are registered.

In registered preschools, there is a measure of shared control at school level. It can, however, quite often be associated with considerable tension when subject advisors sometimes give commanding and rigid instructions to be followed (Hindle, 1994:58). Schools that are subsidised by welfare also have certain standards laid down and are subject to inspection.

Many preschool centres are, however, not registered and are community-controlled by democratically elected committees. Lack of regulations in these schools creates problems with regard to quality control (NEPI, 1992:5). Regular inspections by inspectors who are respected as authorities appear to be highly valued and conducive to the successful functioning and improvement of standards at preschool facilities. These inspectors must, however, be authorities in their field where they function in a guidance and leadership capacity rather than an inspection capacity (Singh, 1987:45). As soon as a reception class is registered, it becomes subject to the jurisdiction of the KZNDEC advisory services (Hindle, 1994:37). The advisory services will be responsible for ensuring that a developmentally appropriate curriculum is put in place and maintained for the reception class. As reception class education will be new to many teachers, sound, effective support and guidance will be needed, especially during the first few years.

4.4 SUMMARY

Preschool education should form an integral part of the total education system because it can be of great importance to deprived preschool children. The Educational Renewal Strategy (ERS) also acknowledges the value of preprimary education for improving children's performance in primary school - particularly the children with a disadvantaged background who are usually not school-ready when reaching school-going age. The reception class must be seen as a bridging

year in that it should be integrated with the first phase of formal schooling. The White Paper on Education, published by the Committee on Education and Training in a new democratic South Africa, has included a reception class in the ten years of free and compulsory education for all children.

The development of preprimary education models for blacks, coloureds and Indians was very slow as compare with that for whites, mainly because of the massive backlog in formal education. Preschool models existing for mainly white children in the eight regions under the KwaZulu-Natal Education Department were: registered preprimary schools, unregistered primary schools not, readiness- and reception-classes at primary schools for five-year-olds.

Registered preprimary schools are provincially controlled, and the staff is employed by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and Culture (KZNDEC) while private preprimary schools are run by individuals or private organisations and are registered as such with the KZNDEC and receive only a subsidy. Reception classes, bridging module readiness classes and bridging classes also made excellent progress with good results, and many schools opted for these models of preschool education.

Non-governmental involvement in preschool education includes a network of non-government resource agencies whose aim it is to make direct educare provision for preschool children in the form of non-formal training facilities for teachers and a variety of other support services for early childhood education programmes. Although most of the agencies operate on a non-racial basis, mainly Indian and black communities where the need is the greatest are served. Most non-governmental organisations depend almost entirely on funding from the private sector, trusts, foundations, church organisations, the corporate sector and foreign aid.

The quality of preschool care and educational models depends on a complex interplay of factors; for example, adequately trained staff, teacher-pupil ratio, physical provision, parental involvement, availability of necessary support services, and quality and effectiveness of management and supervision.

CHAPTER 5

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CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this final chapter a summary of the previous chapters will be given by referring to some of the most important findings of the literature research. This will be followed by certain recommendations and a final remark.

5.2 SUMMARY

5.2.1 Statement of the problem

The problem addressed by this study concerns the role reception classes play in bridging informal and formal education. Political, economic, social and demographic factors in South Africa point to the necessity for adequate preschool education (reception classes) to ensure that the young child entering primary school will be ready for formal schooling. Provision of preschool education in South Africa exhibits a very fragmented structure in that it is offered by a large number of state and private organisations. A variety of preschool models has mushroomed in South Africa, and the success of the various programmes offered has been blindly accepted because of the non-compulsory and informal character of preschool education. Questions that were answered in this study were *inter alia* the following:

- adequate preschool education resulting in school readiness is an essential pre-requisite for formal education and the complete development of the child;

- for the educationally neglected preschool child, the reception class offers the opportunity to become school ready and to enter primary-school successfully; and

- the reception class can serve as a model for bridging the gap between informal education at home and formal education in school.

5.2.2 The life-world of the preschool child

Every child lives in his or her own unique life-world. Just as each child is unique, so is the life-world of each child unique; it includes everything that has meaning for him or her, not only the geographical world, but all the relationships with objects, ideas, people, and himself or herself. The child is a person in a world of other people, objects, norms, values and ideas in which he orientates himself while in process of becoming an adult, an orientation which is possible only with the help of adults (parents or teachers) as educators. Educators unlock meanings for the child, and this attribution of meaning enables the child to constitute a meaningful life-world by forming meaningful relationships. A child's readiness to explore his establishment of relationships, and of a life-world, is best promoted by parents who give a great deal of love and support, enforce educational controls, and respect and encourage their children.

It is essential for the preschool child to orientate himself in relation to his life-world, and for this purpose he must understand the significance of the people, objects and ideas in it for himself. Effective involvement with this life-world is possible only if he has formed meaningful relationships and, in this way, constituted a life-world. To understand the development of these relationships, it is necessary to look at the physical, psychological, social and cultural foundations on which they are built.

The becoming of the preschool child is achieved by means of physical relationships, movement and posture. A child who is physically healthy has a positive approach towards himself and his life-world. This physical state and motor competence determine the quality of relationships demanding physical skills. The child's psychological capacity matures not only by development, but by effective interrelationships with the world in which he grows up. Psychological development comprises the child's cognitive, affective and conative powers and verbal articulateness.

The child's social basis for relationships is his interaction with other human beings. The preschool years are the time of an expanding life-world as more and more people enter his experience. Everything the child encounters in his life-world is culturally determined, embracing the accepted traditional customs, moral attributes and behaviours practised by a particular cultural group. The social basis for forming relationships is realised mainly in the family.

A relationship is a particular mode in which the child, things, ideas, self and God are mutually connected. Such relationships are usually dynamic and interactive and are initiated by the individual (child) through his involvement with, and assigning of meaning in, his life-world. Central to such a relationship is understanding: the attribution of significance or meaning through involvement and experience. The relationships of preschoolers are of a very dynamic nature owing to the process of the child's becoming. The manner in which relationships are formed, as well as their intense and emotional nature, change quickly, according to the child's understanding of the world in which he finds himself. Relationships are formed with parents, peers, family members and others. The preschooler gradually begins to move from the safety of the family circle to form relationships with his surrounding world. His involvement with the world therefore emanates from his relationships with parents, peers, family members, and others. These relationships are of primary importance to the preschool child

and are characterised by love, safety, submission, acceptance and trust. The parent-child relationship is the primary anchorage point for the forming of relationships with others. The child is dependent on the educative support of parents to guide and assist him in establishing relationships.

School readiness is the stage reached when the child is cognitively, socially, physically and emotionally ready to enter formal schooling. School readiness includes school maturity. The quality of home environment and parental education has a direct bearing on the child's readiness for formal schooling. School readiness is a combination of maturity, experiential background and motivation. Criteria necessary for school readiness are chronological age, physical development level, cognitive and affective advancement, social orientation and understanding of morality.

5.2.3 Historical development of preschool education in South Africa

The development of preschool education in the South Africa has its roots in European countries. Early theorists of early child education abroad have made a lasting impact on the education of the preschool child in our country. Young children should be placed in an environment where they can develop naturally and contentedly, in peace, happiness and safety. With this in mind, the first kindergarten was opened in a planned and organised way as a method of catering for the children of working parents. This added a new dimension to the concept of schooling.

Early theorists and pioneers like Vittorino Da Feltra (1378-1446), Martin Luther (1483-1546), Pauline Kergomard (1838-1925) and Maria Montessori (1870-1952), to name but a few, influenced the preschool education movement in Europe, America and South Africa. The educational system that evolved in South Africa was therefore shaped largely by the first Europeans who settled here from abroad

and by the events of their subsequent history. Preschool education In South Africa had a late start, and it was only in the 20th century that the plight of the preschooler become such that preschool education was introduced. The value of nursery school education is acknowledged throughout the Western world, and even in the East pre-school education is regarded as meaningful for young children. Nursery school education has also gained a prominent place in the South African education system.

The nursery school movement began to take root in South Africa early in 1930. The initiative came from child welfare and similar organisations concerned with helping the children of the poor and bringing relief to working mothers at a time when the country was in the throes of an economic depression. The first children's institution to be called a nursery school was established in Pretoria in 1932 to cater for underprivileged white children. In 1934, the First National Conference on Preschool Education took place in Pretoria, and a request was made to the state for support in order to place nursery schools on a more satisfactory basis under a single body of control. Five years later, in 1939, the Nursery School Association of South Africa was established.

Preschool education for black children is a relatively new concept in South Africa with no real historical background. An important milestone in the provision of preschool education for black children was in 1936 when the first nursery school was opened in Sofiatown by the Anglican Mission Church. Apart from being a caring centre for preschoolers, this nursery school, together with five others subsequently opened by the Anglican Mission Church, were used as training centres for black preschool assistants. Financial support for these six " training" preschool centres was given by the Transvaal Native Education Department in the form of teachers' salaries. Preschool facilities for black children has depended on the efforts of local welfare societies and private voluntary organisations, supported by minimal subsidies from the state.

In 1948 the De Villiers Commission declared itself in favour of a system of preschool education supported by the state. Nursery school education should be a state, rather than a private, enterprise. From 1949, the four provinces received compensation from the State Treasury Department for expenses incurred by nursery schools (grant in aid) and were further compensated for the buildings of nursery schools. A new policy for nursery school education was announced in 1967 in the National Education Policy, Act no. 39 of 1967. Nursery school education for white children would become the responsibility of the four provincial administrations under the control of the various directors of education. Nursery school education was not compulsory, but should be available to all children between the ages of three and six years. The four provinces were given the power to establish and maintain nursery schools in areas where they were warranted and where the enrolment did not drop below 20 children. Fees were compulsory and were determined by the provincial administration. The universities of Pretoria and South Africa and some teacher training colleges introduced courses in preprimary education.

In the Education and Training Act No. 90, of 1979, the potential of preschool institutions for black children was officially recognised. This empowered the Department of Education and Training to establish and maintain community nursery schools by making grants and/or subsidies available to the owners or governing bodies of registered private preschools which met the necessary requirement. Huge discrepancies, however, exist between white and black sectors in the quality and extent of state financing for any kind of early childhood care and education programmes and the vast majority of black children have no access to preschool facilities.

The private sector played a major role regarding preschool facilities for coloured children with the formation of the Athlone Group for Nursery Education in 1952, which led to the establishment of the Athlone Nursery School and Training Centre

in 1958. In 1964, when coloured education became the responsibility of Central Government, there was a total of 32 coloured nursery schools in South Africa, of which 27 were in the Cape Province.

The development of preschool education for Indian children has been very slow because of cultural factors and the policy of education departments to regard the backlogs in formal education as a priority. The inclusion of preprimary education as part of a regular school system was only provided for in the Indian Education Act, Act No 61 of 1965. In the Indian Education Amendment Act, Act No 39 of 1979, provision was made for the establishment and maintenance of preprimary schools and for the awards of grants in aid or subsidies and loans to such schools.

In 1984 The Bridging Module Readiness Classes (BMRC), attached to primary schools, were introduced on a experimental basis in Indian schools in Natal, and soon after also in the other provinces.

In 1975 the term "nursery" was replaced with "preprimary" by the Nursery School Association because it had become apparent that a considerable void had developed between preprimary education and the custodial function of crèches and daycare centres. "Nursery schools" therefore officially became "preprimary schools" in 1975, and welfare organisations and private entrepreneurs could no longer be involved, as education was the responsibility of the provincial administrations of the four provinces. Four types of preprimary schools were in existence at the time of the official name change in 1975, namely:

- provincial preprimary schools;
- government-aided preprimary schools;
- provincially-controlled preprimary schools; and
- private preprimary schools.

5.2.4 The reception class as preschool model in KwaZulu-Natal

The development of preschool models for blacks and coloureds was very slow compared to that for whites and Indians in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, mainly because of the massive backlog in formal education in the rural areas. In 1990, the percentages of children under six, attending preschools were: whites 21%, coloureds 10%, Indians 23% and blacks 3%. According to the Reception Class Task Committee (RCTG) in the province, the following preschool models existed during 1995 in the eight regions under the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and Culture; namely, registered preprimary schools, unregistered preprimary schools, reception classes for five-year-olds at primary schools, bridging module readiness classes and bridging classes. As at the opening of the 1995 school year, 222 preprimary schools were registered in KwaZulu-Natal.

In 1987, education authorities in the province estimated that within the next decade all five-year-olds in the province would be accommodated in state-subsidised or private preprimary school facilities. However, towards the end of the eighties, economic pressure in the country forced drastic cutbacks in the education budget. In some of KwaZulu-Natal's education departments those management councils who regarded preschool education as indispensable, were able to find the means to maintain and continue the reception classes and bridging module readiness classes for five-year-olds at primary schools. The variety and innovation of these initiatives, however, resulted in large discrepancies among the different population groups as far as preschool education was concerned. This led to two extreme conditions, from a highly sophisticated, well-resourced preschool model to disadvantaged poorly-resourced preschool education.

Since the cutback of educational funds in 1990 communities have had to play a major role in this venture. This has resulted in the development of a network of non-government agencies providing resources for preschool education in

KwaZulu-Natal. Although most of the agencies operate on a non-racial basis mainly Indian and black communities are served, since this is where the need is greatest. Most of the non-government organisations depend almost entirely on funding from welfare agencies, the private sector and foreign aid. The major source of funds for preschool facilities, especially in black, coloured and Indian communities, is from the general public, including parents, who have to contribute to the ongoing operational expenses of community-based preschools.

The relationship between scholastic achievement, socio-economic background and lack of facilities with trained teachers is as evident in KwaZulu-Natal as in the rest of South Africa. The early years of education determine , to a large extent, whether or not a child becomes a successful learner both in and out of school. A solid foundation for successful formal education and learning can be laid by establishing reception classes that are accessible to all five- to six-year-old children. The global aims of a school readiness programme: are the development the child's self-concept and his image as a learner, the development of adequate fine and gross motor skills necessary for formal learning, and the development of adequate emotional and social skills for functioning as a member of a group.

The implementation of reception classes has been planned as a three-year project by the Department of National Education to provide reception class education to five- to six-year olds. The Department of National Education will provide funds only for the first year, and the provincial education departments will have to provide funds for the following two years. KwaZulu-Natal has been allocated R4 389 000,00 for community-based services in the 1996/1997 financial year. The suggested subsidy of R2,00 per child per day could indicate that subsidies would be paid to community-based services depending on enrolment.

5.2.5 Aim of the study

Specific aims (cf. 1.5) were formulated to determine the course of this study. These aims were realised through a literature study and informal, unstructured interviews with principals and teachers of preprimary and primary schools. On the basis of the aims and findings of this study, certain recommendations are now formulated.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.3.1 Provision for reception classes

(1) Motivation

Preschool education in reception classes is inaccessible, ineffective, fragmented, unco-ordinated, unequal, and lacking in sound educational value for the majority of children in the Republic of South Africa. The present preschool system caters for only the minority of children under six years. This is owing to the long history of neglect, including unequal treatment of different race groups, geographic location and funding bases.

The lack of adequate preschool education, whether at home or as a phase of formal education, has as its outcome inadequate preparation for formal learning. This may lead to frustration, poor learning, school failure and repetition, and a possible high drop out rate. An effective school readiness programme in a reception class will facilitate a link between the home and the school and help create an effective milieu for the successful informal education of preschoolers (cf. 4.3.). The implementing of reception classes on the premises of existing schools means that education facilities will be extended. Such additions will benefit from an established infrastructure, such as a media centre, swimming

pool, school hall, play grounds, etc. Preschoolers will be given the opportunity to become familiar with the larger formal environment of the primary school. Preschool children will have access to all services that are available to the preprimary or primary schools, including physical, psychological and educational assessment, and remedial services (cf. 4.2.2). They will be included in any feeding scheme and will be safe within the boundaries of the school. The linking of reception classes to primary schools would bridge the gap between informal and formal education.

(2) Recommendations

Provisions of an effective school readiness programme in reception classes, accessible to the majority of South African children under five years, is a realistic and positive approach towards the assumption of educational responsibility for preschool children.

The recommendations are:

- The state and educational authorities should include a reception class as an integral part of the ten years of free and compulsory education for all children in South Africa. The reception class model should be accepted as equivalent to any other phase within education.

- Reception classes should be attached to all existing preprimary schools, primary schools, places of child care and community-based centres.

- Reception class provision should be combined with the services of the Department of Health, Welfare and Population Development in

order to provide other essential services, such as family planning, control of diseases, etc. to all families with children in South Africa.

- A directorate for Early Childhood Education should be established within the Ministry of Education and Training, with the following responsibilities:

  - the development of policy guidelines for early childhood care and education for children from birth to six years;

  - the development and implementation of a suitable preschool educational programme;

  - the training, qualifications and employment of preschool teachers; and

  - employment of specialist advisors and planners to maintain a sound educare practice.

5.3.2 Resources and support services

The introduction of a compulsory reception class in the education system would require additional resources and support services in order to make it a success. If the aim of reception classes includes the early identification of:

- children with learning disabilities;
- educationally neglected children; and
- children with special educational needs, etc.

then existing resources and support services might be totally inadequate (cf. 4.3.5). A flexible reception class that will allow for preventative and remedial intervention should considerably ease the task of the foundation phase teachers by ensuring that they have a relatively homogeneous group of children to teach. It makes it possible for the grade one teacher to start immediately with the basic learning areas in the foundation phase, maximising the time spent on literacy and numeracy skills. The reception class model would reduce school failure during the period of primary education as well as at higher levels in the education system. (cf. 4.3.1). It should reduce expenditure on education in the long term by lessening the need for costly remedial programmes at later stages in the child's education.

Successful implementation of a compulsory reception class will depend on the availability of resources and support services. Government alone cannot carry the financial burden of additional education expenditure, and the private sector will therefore have to play an important role in early childhood education.

(2) <u>Recommendations</u>

In order to make preschool education available to all children, the government and private sector will have to make a significant contribution regarding resources and support services.

The recommendations are:

- The reception class model for five- to-six-year old children should be accepted, extended and become a matter of general policy at the parents' place of employment.
- Facilities for a reception class model should be increased and improved by the private sector and the government. The state

should make loans available to welfare organisations and non-profit making organisations on a rand-for-rand basis for the purpose of establishing reception class facilities.

- A comprehensive reception class resource centre should be established in each educational district to provide the following services:

  - in-service training for unqualified or inadequately qualified preschool teachers; with inset programmes leading to a certificate in reception class education;

  - refresher courses for teachers;

  - psychological and social services to identify learning and health problems at an early stage, and provision of educational counselling services for parents and child care workers;

  - courses in management and administration of reception classes; and

  - library with lending facilities for reception classes in each school district.

- Tertiary education institutions should be utilised in the training of preprimary school teachers in:

  - the implementation of a full-time programme for the professional training of teachers for reception classes;

- offering training for junior primary school teachers to include special courses for reception class teachers in this programme to save expenses; and

- study facilities in the form of bursaries, loans and study leave to be made available for reception class training on the same basis as for all the other types of teacher training.

5.3.3 Parent guidance and involvement programmes

(1) Motivation

A child is ready for formal schooling reaching the stage when he is cognitively, socially, physically and emotionally ready. The educational milieu in many homes is not conducive to prepare the child adequately for successful entrance into formal primary school education (cf. 2.5.1). The quality of the home environment and parental education have a direct bearing on the child's readiness for formal schooling. Parents must lead, help, support and accompany the child on the road to school readiness through intellectual stimulation, practice in healthy relationships, skill in linguistic expression and communication, mastering of school techniques, and the development of a positive attitude to work and not just to play (cf. 2.3.2 (1)). Both parents play an important, albeit different role, in assisting the child towards school readiness.

A variety of factors in the family might hinder the natural transition from home to school education (cf. 2.5.2). A substantial number of black, coloured and Indian parents are inadequately educated or even illiterate. They are therefore forced to develop their own child-rearing strategies (corresponding to their level of education or literacy) and omit to develop certain elementary codes of conduct in their children that modern society expects from them (cf. 3.4.2 (b)). These

parents also have to keep up with a rapidly changing society, and this makes it extremely difficult for them to give sufficient guidance and assistance to the child. Children in these families receive little, ineffectual, education in the home - parents neglect their educational responsibilities in preparing the child for formal schooling. Poor family relationships, psychopathic traits, physical inhibitions and functional neuroses in the home also have a negative effect on the child's school readiness (cf. 2.5.2). Poor socio-economic conditions at home and a large number of children (over-crowding) may also hinder the parents in educating the child adequately for school.

It is therefore obvious that there is an urgent need for some form of education, training and guidance for parents with insufficient education or who are illiterate. In this respect, schools could, and should, play a more prominent role, especially in the provision of training programmes for parents, in which the educative role of parents and the teaching role of teachers could be synchronised and made more interrelated.

(2) Recommendations

In order to assist parents to establish a realistic and positive approach to their educational responsibility towards their preschool children, the following recommendations are offered:

- Training programmes for parents should be instituted at schools to assist them in their educational role in pre-paring their young children for school.

- Extended adult basic education courses should be available to teach parents to read and write and familiarise themselves with the educational demands of a modern society.

- In order to reach as many parents as possible, use could be made of various media (television, radio, newspapers and popular magazines) and should be generally funded by the RDP. Effective media-based parent guidance programmes, demonstrating ways of interacting with young children, should be encouraged and promoted.

- The establishment of schools as community learning centres should be given the highest priority. At such centres the parents should be offered, *inter alia*, courses in adult literacy and courses in effective parenting.

- Parent-teacher organisations (PTOs) should be established. They should aim to improve the education, health and safety of children in the local communities.

5.3.4 Further research

Early childhood education in the new education dispensation in South Africa calls for an immediate expansion of preschool provision - especially for the majority of children from disadvantaged environment. The expansion and successful implementation of an effective preschool system will require extensive research in order to establish the needs of all South Africans in this regard.

Within the realm of socio-political change, a new education dispensation and the emergence of multicultural education, a new field of research has opened up. It is therefore recommended that further research be conducted with regard to preschool education taking the above-mentioned factors into account.

5.4 FINAL REMARK

The aim of this study was to investigate the reception class as a means of bridging informal education within the family and formal education in the school situation. It is hoped that this study will be of value, particularly to parents, educational authorities and other stakeholders, with regarding to the importance of a reception class as model for enabling the child to achieve school readiness. It is also hoped that the recommendations in this study will be implemented and contribute towards urgently needed improvements in preschool facilities for our children.

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Annexure I

NATAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Learning through activity

(A school readiness programme for 5- to 6-year-olds in the preprimary reception class)

GLOBAL AIMS:

On completion of this programme *the child* should have:

1 developed a positive self-concept and image of himself as a learner, with a positive attitude to school, participating actively in his own learning;

2 developed adequate fine and gross motor skills necessary for formal learning;

3 developed adequate emotional and social skills for functioning as a group member;

4 developed keen sensory perceptions;

5 developed achievement motivation; and

6 entered the concrete operational period in most areas of cognitive development;

In order to achieve these aims *the teacher* should:

1 create a warm, caring environment, where she is aware of each child's needs;

2 provide planned learning experiences which expose the child progressively to the relationships and concepts necessary for formal learning to occur;

3 stimulate and encourage individuality, creativity and sound relationships;

4 stress achievement motivation; and

5 continuously assess and record levels of development throughout the programme.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES:

The following objectives may be used as a check-list to assess the child's overall "school readiness":

Can the child:

- conform to requests and demands from authority figures
- complete a set task which is within his capabilities
- work independently of others where necessary
- show application, concentration and motivation to do a task well in a variety of situations
- use his own initiative
- accept challenges and attempt new activities
- be self-reliant
- show acceptance of success and failure with emotional equilibrium
- control his behaviour with reason
- co-operate in small and large group situations, thus displaying active participation
- give and take, and does he show a reasonable decline in ego-centrism
- display adequate gross motor co-ordination with no outstanding weaknesses
- display adequate fine motor co-ordination
- demonstrate adequate hand-eye and foot-eye co-ordination
- demonstrate a definite left or right dominance
- display adequate perceptual and cognitive skills
- understand what is required of him in order to achieve success in his tasks

The success of the programme depends on the teacher's knowledge and understanding of the child's "levels of operation" as defined by Piaget.

1 In learning about dealing with their environment all children function initially on:

   i the motor level
   ii the verbal level
   iii the level of symbolic representation

2 The teacher must be constantly aware and able to identify the level on which individual children are operating in order to be able to plan and present activities which will extend the children and lead to more complex interaction with materials, and the formation of abstract concepts.

I The physical motor level

At this stage the *child is involved physically* with his environment and three stages are identified.

1 **The child uses his own body to experience and construct concepts:** i.e. he "gets the feel" through his own body e.g. in and out of a room or jumping up and down. When this concept has been assimilated, through bodily movement, the child is ready for the second stage.

2 **The child uses his own body and objects to experience the concept:** e.g. he climbs in and out of a *box* or up and down a *ladder*. He is still involved in physical bodily movement but he is also involved with an object *in relation to his own body*. When he has mastered this concept he moves to the third stage.

3 **The child uses an object/s together with other objects to experience the concept:** e.g. he places a toy animal in or out of a pen, or moves a toy car along a road. He is no longer *directly* using his body to experience a concept but is manipulating objects in his environment to understand the concepts to which he has been exposed.

II The verbal level

1 At this stage the verbalisation and interpretation of actions play a vital role. The teacher verbalises and provides a verbal stimulus and encourages the child to respond both physically and verbally e.g. "go climb up the jungle gym and come down the slide".

2 The child responds by verbalising before he does it (e.g. " I am going to climb the ladder") or as he performs the action ("I am going up the ladder') or he interprets it just after completion ("I went up the ladder"). Finally he interprets from *memory* - the next day or at news time ("I went up the ladder this morning"). This is a more complex construct because time has lapsed between completion of the task and verbal discussion.

3 The child spontaneously verbalises about an action or event without verbal stimulation from the teacher.

III The level of symbolic representation

This is the final level of operation as applied to this programme and is the start of the concrete operational period. at the preprimary level symbolic representation takes a graphic form.

The teacher who is familiar with these developmental levels will ensure that the children experience the concepts progressively, through the stages

described above. It should be borne in mind that all development is integrated and does not occur in isolation.

Please note:

1 The basic activities suggested in Column 3 of the programme are intended as a guide and are in *no way* prescriptive. The teacher is expected to extend and develop her own activities and aids.

2 The basic activities have been designed progressively to meet specific objectives. Therefore, activities developed by the teacher must be selected with specific objectives in mind.

3 The activities should be seen as an interrelated web of relationships. The levels have been isolated for teacher's convenience in planning the activities.

OUTLINE OF THE PROGRAMME

1 General orientation

2 Concept of self

(i) Body image
(ii) Laterality
(iii) Midline
(iv) Senses - including sound and texture

3 Family relationships

(i) Families at home
(ii) Families at work

4 Exploration of attributes
(i) Colour
(ii) Shape

5 Spatial relationships

(i) language of space (including positions in space)
(ii) Child's own body space
(iii) Midline
(iv) Left/right orientation
(v) Directionality
(vi) Different spatial viewpoints
(vii) Distance apart (separation)
(viii) Symbolic representation of spatial relationships in drawings, pictures, etc.

6 Exploration of relationships

(i) Size
(ii) length
(iii) Height
(iv) Mass
(v) Volume
(vi) Capacity

7 Exploration of mathematical concepts and relationships

(i) The language of mathematical concepts
(ii) relationships
(iii) Classification
(iv) 1 - 1 correspondence
(v) Seriation
(vi) Experience of numbers (towards number)

(vii) Counting experiences (say number etc)
(viii) Ordering

8 Temporal relationships

(i) Time of day
(ii) Sequence of time
(iii) Days
(iv) Months
(v) Seasons
(vi) Holidays
(vii) Speed
(viii) Position

9 Consolidation (combination and refinement of cognitive skills including):

(i) Memory training
(ii) Problem solving
(iii) Closure
(iv) Figure/ground
(v) Gestalt
(vi) Constancy of shape
(vii) Classification
(viii) Development of imagination
(ix) Auditory training
(x) Language extension
(xi) Sequencing
(xii) Matching

UNIT 1 : GENERAL ORIENTATION

GLOBAL AIM: To integrate the child into the more structured environment of the reception class. To develop the appropriate social and language skills required for formal learning.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
The ability to: - hold a crayon and paintbrush correctly - manipulate scissors - follow simple instructions - take turns - share equipment - share the teacher's attention	I. General Orientation	The activities in this section will depend on on the specific needs of each group. Familiarising the child with the educational games and their rules. Introducing the child to the "group teaching" approach.	Puzzles, construction toys: Games, perception apparatus. Sense-training toys etc. Creative activity materials as per equipment list. Senso-pathic media. The music programme. The developmental play programmes. The Language programme.	± 1-3 weeks

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UNIT 2 : CONCEPT OF SELF

GLOBAL AIM: To develop the child's understanding of himself as a unique individual and to build up his sense of self-worth and achievement as the basis for confident learning.

The acquisition of a positive "self-concept"	II.	The "Self-concept" Knowledge about "me"	Any activities related to exploring the child's appearance.	Full length mirror	± 1 week
The ability to make a graphic representation of himself, which approximates a degree or reality.		What I am, how I look, how I feel about myself and how others accept me.	Making self-portrait. Responding to verbal cues. Verbalising and describing his appearance.	Colour photograph of each child. Game: "Simon Says".	
- the ability to:	1.	Concept of body image	Instruct the child to	Full lenth mirror	± 2-3 weeks
- (express an) awareness of body and body parts.	1.1	Language relating to body image	On instruction the child	Fizzog Body Imagery Game Face puzzle	
- name body parts	1.2	Body parts	° Locates and names body parts on himself	Boy puzzle Girl puzzle Ethnic face and body puzzles	
- locate body parts	1.3	Function of the body parts	° Child locates and names body parts on cardboard figure.	Large body puzzle Face it Jumbolino	
- understand functions of body parts					
- co-ordinate the visual and tactile movement.	1.4	Hand-eye and foot-eye co-ordination	One child in the group outlines another. The rest of the group paints in the parts of the body, naming them as they do so. Cut out and mount on wall. ° Children suggest function of body parts	Large charts - illustrating boy/girl Child-size jointed cardboard figure with body parts in proportion. "Dan the funny man" Clay	

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
		• Children enact major functions e.g. kicking, clapping etc.	Crayons Paint Paper	
		• Children use clay to model a figure in action.	Developmental play ring "Do this - do that" game	
		• Children make "My book Book about Me".	Body image cards. (Self-corrective).	
		• Children discuss apperance, noting differences.	"Fill in missing parts" game.	
		• Throwing, catching, kicking, cutting, threading activities.	Bean bags, balls, skittles, baskets, etc.	
		• Any activities involving movements on both sides of the body- (together - separately alternately)	Link up with Developmental Play programme	± 1 week
The ability to: - to understand that the body has two sides. (At this stage awareness of two sides is all that is required).	2. Laterality - the concept that the is bilaterally symmetrical and has two sides which function in a variety of ways.	Movements are executed with eyes open - then closed Balance Beam activities	Walking beams	

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
- to grasp the relationships between the two sides.	2.1 The components of the two systems. two ears, two arms etc. (The words "Left" & "right" are not used at this stage).	Stepping Stones Game Any activities involving crossing the midline. Any activities crossing the midline and learning a visual trace.	Developmental Play programme Chalk board circle	
	2.2 Exploration of gravity with body parts.			
	2.3 The concept of the midline as "zero" of the origin of movement.			
The ability to:				
- locate sensory organs - understand function of sensory organs - describe characteristics of sensory organs - use sensory organs in recognition and discrimination	3. The five senses and their functions • Sight - Eyes • Hearing - ears • Touch - hands/skin fingers • Taste - mouth/lips tongue • Smell - nose	• Child locates and names sensory organs on himself/on a partner/on a doll/a puzzle/a picture. Then he draws them • Child looks at himself in mirror and draws what he sees, with emphasis on sensory organs.	Large charts 1 for each sense Mirrors Puzzles (face) Craypas Paper Dominoes-texture	± 5 weeks

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA		CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
- identify objects that can be perceived through the different senses	3.1	The language of the senses. The organs of the 5 senses.	Activities related to identifying various foods by taste/smell/feel • Child makes a print of his hands and feet and cuts them out.	"Face-it" game Fingerpaint Scissors Cards/dominoes/lotto matching organs to stimulies Covered tray of suitable articles. Smelling cannisters	
The ability to: - notice changes in stimuli - to co-ordinate his body and limbs in relation to his sense of organs. - identify what can be perceived through each sense modality.	3.2 3.3 3.4	The knowledge that hands work together as a pair in support of each other in various degrees of unity. The use of hands and eyes as a team. Extension of the modalities e.g. Ears Shapes of ears of different animals Noses Animal noses/ eg trunk	Child makes a book of the sense organs and what they perceive. "Kim's Game" Sight - making glasses Adaptaion of Kim's Game for smelling and touch - any activities related to feeling textures. In a group of 6 a child shakes die and selects appropriate card eg. die shows picture of mouth the child selects picture card of ice-cream posts in relevant box.	Posting game: 6 or more cards for each sense. Die showing hand, mouth, eye, nose, ear and face. - Flannel/board of "Making faces Kit" Songs eg. "Little Peter Rabbit", Finger rhymes. Projector-hand shadows. Texture "bridges" Centres of Interest Wall charts.	

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
	Skin: Different skin coverings/ hair/hide/ scales/etc.	Paint finger nails		
	Mouth: adaptation to feeding eg. fish/birds/ buck/carni-vores etc.	"Lipstick" activity - kissing paper and drawing face around imprint of lips.		
	Fingers: Point/pinch/ pick up/etc.	Fill in the missing parts in blank faces with only one modality on the faces as a guide.		
	Hands: Hold/shake/ feel, clap etc.	Fitting on different sized gloves, socks etc.		
The ability to - recognise familiar sounds out of context - match sounds - discriminate gross and fine differences in pitch, volume and tone - estimate sources of sound.	4. The Attribute of Sound	Children identify sounds A "listening walk" Children match instruc-tion to sounds. Once child is sent out of room. Article is hidden. Children hum loudly or softly as child moves closer or further away from article.	Tape of familiar sounds Games with water cannisters Tape of percussion music Article hidden in room Musical stories Hearing cannisters Post box game of "Soft-loud" sound pictures	± 2 weeks

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
		Children respond to pitch and tone of music using various body movements.	Integrate with music programmes.	
		Children lie on floor with eyes closed. Teacher plays tambourine and children point in direction of sound.	Tambourine	
		1 Child in centre of ring with eyes closed. Children pass bells around ring behind backs On signal child in centre points to location of bells.	Bells	
The ability to: - differentiate between a variety of textures - identify familiar objects by touch only	5. The Attribute of Texture	Children touch picture and describe feel.	Large texture pictures. Feeling bag	± 1 week
		Children match textures	Texture dominoes	
		Children feel and identify objects.	Texture box Tactile bridges	
		Children select pairs by touch alone.	Two bags filled with identical objects.	

UNIT 3: FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

GLOBAL AIM: To establish awareness of himself as a social being in a web of social relationships.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA		CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
The ability to:					
- identify himself as member of a family group - name family members - discriminate between the sexes in roles, clothing etc.	1.	The concept of a family and related language What is family? Parents Siblings Grandparents My Relatives Clothes Sex Roles My Friends Animal Families - Related vocabulary of all the above aspects.	Child draws his family Child cuts out and pastes magazine pictures to represent his family Child sorts clothing into categories Child divides paper in half He draws members of family on left-hand side of page and selects and cuts out a related picture to be pasted on the right-hand side of the page.	Family inset board puzzle Photograph album of the family Kate and Tom Kit "Happy Families" game Family lotto Paper Crayons Magazine pictures (suitably selected) Scissors Glue Suitable clothing for sorting Dan's clothes His, Hers and Theirs cards - suitable cards illustrating the possessions unique and common to the sexes.	3-4 weeks

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
- to name the rooms in his home and their furnishings. - to describe his environment his family, himself - to differentiate the occupations of people and their sex roles	2. Families at home Activities at home The house and rooms Dwellings The Garden/My Town/ My School/Our Pets The house the rooms Animal homes	Draw picture of "your home" Child cuts out magazine pictures of articles in the kitchen/bedroom etc. and sorts and pastes these into "rooms". Ditto for the garden Building houses with Lego blocks, Tinker Toy, etc.	Wall paper book, pictures of different rooms in the Pictures of types of dwellings, animal and human Puzzles Mia Casa	
	3. Families at work Occupations Sex roles Special clothing People who help us The policeman	Activities sorting/ drawing clothing. Matching clothing to work activity	The Centre of Interest Themes: of people who help us "People at Work" puzzles Pre-reading Workshop	
The ability: - to name the characteristics of the occupations - to discriminate the clothing worn by various occupations	The baker The nurse The doctor The dentist The garbage collector The postman The fireman The traffic policeman Servants	"People who help us" visit the school in rotation and talk to children Story compiled by the children about eg. "Our visit to the dentist/ hospital/fire station the florist, the	Section Leggo shops Self-corrective cut cards of tools and trades Occupation puzzles Pre-reading Workshop	

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
	The teacher The farmer The soldier etc.	hairdresser etc.		
		Baking to link with Baker. Flower arranging to link with florist etc.		
	Animals that help us: e.g. chickens			
- to understand various cultural concepts relating to his country.	4. Games we play (Recreations)			
	The food we eat/ things we eat with			
	Money The telephone etc.			

UNIT 4: EXPLORATION OF ATTRIBUTES

GLOBAL AIM: To stimulate and encourage the child to compare one object to another so that the attributes of shape and colour are made significant.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
The ability to: - recognise and name basic colours - discriminate similarities and differences in colour - understand principles of colour mixing - sort and match colours	I. The concept of Colour Red Yellow Blue Green Purple Orange Brown Black White Pink Grey Intensity of Colour 1.1 Colour related to objects 1.2 Creative use of colour 1.3 Colour in the home 1.4 Colour in nature	*Children identify colour* of objects and name other objects of the same colour Child selects correct crayon and draws an eg. green ball Each child is given a disc and finds an object of the same colour in the classroom. A child is the "seeker" he is given 1 coloured disc. The other children are given 2 discs each and hide them in each hand. The seeker approaches each child in turn and collects discs of his colour from them.	Colour towers Colour Balloons Girocolour Kaleidoshape Sechsmaster Shapes Game Learning to reason Attribute blocks Faber and Formen Colourama Graded peg board Puzzles (see list) Duck game Construction game (see list) Laces and Beads Octons Simex Rondi Coloredo Large "colour" illustrations showing different objects of the same colour, eg. green: tent, trees, knitting, frog, leaves, grasshopper.	± 3 weeks

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
		Children experiment with paint and make prints of resulting colours.		
		Activities involving colour sorting and matching.	Paper Crayons	
		Activities relating to mixing eg. string pulling straw blowing, finger painting.	"colour hunting" Coloured discs in a variety of colours.	
		Colour collage using creative materials	Colour dominoes	
		Threading beads to match a pattern.	Hide and Seek Colour discs. Colourless finger paint and shakers containing primary colours.	
The ability to: - perceive and name shapes - discriminate similarities and differences in shape (using visual and tactile modalities)	2. The concept of Shape N.B. each shape is to be taught separately in the order given below.	Children handle apparatus which is relevant eg. Sechsmeister (Use similar activities for each shape) Teacher presents shape, introduces name and discusses characteristics.	Large Wall Charts depicting different shapes Construction games (see list) Puzzles Kaleidoshape Sechmester Shapes Games Learning to reason	3 weeks

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
	2.1 A circle A semi-Circle A Sphere	Children identify circular objects in a room	Circle cut out of heavy cardboard	
		Children identify circles in picture.	Articles in room with circular shape.	
		Children draw around circular template, cut it out and make a picture using it.	Large illustrations showing circles Template, crayons	
		Children draw circle, colour it in and cut it out. Using wool they make a bunch of balloons.	Scissors, cardboard, craypas Shape dominoes	
		Extension activities include semi-circle and sphere eg., make a "pom-pom".	Paper plates or circles cut out of card with holes punched around edge. Wool. Needles.	
	2.2 A Square A cube	Children fold paper into 4 squares - draw 2 different objects in designated sqaures eg. draw flower in top left-hand square.	Square paper Crayons	

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
	3. A Rectangle A Cube	Fold sqaure into 2 rectangles cut paper in half. Children then stick rectangles onto a large piece of paper in a creative collage.	Sqaure patterned paper eg. wallpaper Scissors, glue, large piece of paper.	
	4. A Triangle A cone	Fold square into half and cut into 2 triangles, children paste 1 triangle onto paper and create a picture of clown with triangular hat.	Sqaure paper, scissors, Crayons, glue, paper	
	5. An Oval An Egg	Children decorate blown eggs.	Eggs, crayons	
	6. Different shapes eg. squiggles, spirals, etc.	Children create different shapes. Activities using "concentrix" apparatus. Children fish for shapes using magnets. Children create shapes in groups eg. 3-form triangle. Shapes created with elastic bands on nail boards. In pairs children outline shapes on each other's backs.	Finger paint Pipe cleaners Shape dominoes Shapes cut from masonite for sorting Magentic fishing game cardboard shapes	

UNIT 5: SPATIAL RELATIONSHIPS

GLOBAL AIM: To establish awareness of spatial orientation and direction within himself

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
The ability to: - understand and use the terminology of spatial orientation correctly.	The Language of Space 1. near/far under/over in front of/behind next to/away from in between/on top of inside/outside above/below etc.	Child complete an obstacle course following the teachers' verbal instructions Children describe verbally position of objects on wall pictures, puzzles and on Begrippentaal apparatus.	Constructive Games Opposites Differex Concept diagram Shau/Genau/Shape up Puzzles "Begrippentaal" Pre-reading workshop kit.	
	2. The child's own body in space. Carrying out instructions using the "language" above.	Child pastes box onto paper and draws an object in relation to it, according to the instructions, eg. next to the box.	Outdoor equipment. (Drums) Zulucraft equipment	
- cross the lateral	3. Midline - revision	Any activity involving movement across the midline eg. Paint horizontal lines on paper from left to right. "Circle" chalk board activities and any activities where the movement leaves a visual trace.	Flannelboard pictures Series of pictures depicting a seal and one or more balls - ie. seal on top of ball Cardboard box, paper, glue, kokos	

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
- demonstrate smooth L-R land and eye - to distinguish between his left side and his right by interpreting the feeling between the two sides - control the identified side of his body independently of his other side.	4. Left/Right orientation using words "left" and "right"	Child names pictures in order, moving eyes from left to right without moving his head. Children trace the trails on left - right charts Children traced the trails on left-right Children draw a similar picture (with one animal and its home)	Large Wall Charts - Eight simple picture cards side by side Left-right puzzles Left-right charts with wool Large illustrations depicting animals on left, their homes on the right, linked by sandpaper trails Large paper, kokis, paint, Chalk board Begrippentaal	
The child's ability to: - project his laterality on the environment through movement, description and graphic representation	5. The concept of Directionality	Children physically follow a route of arrows around the classroom, or garden, on completion they verbally describe the route. Children draw a simple map of the classroom (bird's eye view) (by 4th term)	Arrows Paper, crayons	
- perceive and verbalise relationships between objects.	6. Different spatial viewpoints	Making 3 dimensional constructions.	Development play programme	

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
	7. Distances apart and the	Activities which will graphically represent positional relationships between various objects.	Farm animals and buildings Road maps and cars Noah's Ark and animals Begrippentaal	
	8. Symbolic representation of spatial relationships ie. drawings, pictures etc. verbalisation.	Illustrating concepts in a "story book" made up by themselves.	Pre-reading Workshop Kit	

UNIT 6 : EXPLORATION OF RELATIONSHIPS
SIZE, LENGTH, HEIGHT, MASS, VOLUME, CAPACITY

GLOBAL AIMS: To provide experiences which will lead to and understanding of the concept of size as an essential attribute of all material. To provide measuring activities which will lead to the more refined concepts of length, height, mass, etc.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
The ability to: - see the relationship between 2 similar objects of different size. - use correct terminology - understand the changing relationships which occur because size is relative. - to understand and demonstrate that size is relative. - to seriate objects in order size.	1. The concept of size: The language of size: - big/small - fat/thin - wide/narrow - thick/thin etc. 1.1 The concept that size is relative 1.2 The changing vocabulary of size and the use of comparatives eg. big, bigger, biggest etc. 1.3 The concept that objects can be classified by grouping to size. 1.4 The concept that size is measurable	Children experiment to establish differences in size - with themselves and then with objects. Children sort and match cards according to size. Children compare sizes of hands/feet/shoes/ gloves etc. Children divide page in half and cut out two similar objects of differing size and paste one on each half of page to show big/small Children model a fat and thin person. Children sort and match belts of different widths. Children jump over the space between two ropes a wide and narrow river. Teacher lights candles of varying thickness. Children observe them burning and discuss.	Boxes of various sizes Size cards eg. apples or balls on firm cardboard Concentrix Shoes/gloves/socks etc. of varying sizes. Magazine pictures Scissors, glue, paper Pyramid toys Nesting boxes Play dough Blocks, Tinker toy Construction toys Belts Ropes Two candles of the same length. 1 thick and 1 thin Woollen plaits of varying lengths.	

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
		Children make sandwiches and discuss thick and thin ones. Children match thick, thin plaits round cardboard faces. Children in groups sort belts, ribbons of varying widths and match these to silhouette board.	Slices of bread and margarine. Graded peg board Graded acre inset puzzle (trucks) Rolf tile puzzle Graded jigsaw (elephants) Construction Games Concept diagram Begrippentaal	
The ability to: - see the relationship between 2 similar objects of different lengths. - understand that length represents the horizontal plane. - use correct terminology.	2. The Concept of length, - The Language of length long/short longer/longest etc. 2.1 The varying relationships for length are explored as for "size" above.	Children paste wool onto paper, using correct terminology. Children divide paper in half and draw a long picture on one side and a short picture on the other, eg. short snake/ short snake. Children build long/ short/shorter "roads" with blocks. Children build long/ short Lego strips, tall/low towers.	Glue. Piece of wool. Blocks - Tinker Toy etc. Construction Toys Paper. Crayons Construction Games Blocks Concept diagram. Paper plates, brown, black, yellow wool. Lego	

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
- see the relationship between 2 similar objects of different height. - understand that height represents the vertical plane. - use correct terminology.	3. The concept of height - language of height tall/short high/low etc. 3.1 The varying relationships for height are explored as for "size" above.	Children draw own silhouettes, then cut out and seriate along the wall. Teacher marks each child's height on a wall chart. Children compare and discuss. Child makes a tall-short candle using waste materials eg. toilet rolls. Children match cards of height relationships.	Height chart Blocks Tinker Toy Carlton rolls, toilet rolls, glue, crepe paper, scissors. Begrippentaal High/low cards (Self-corrective cut) Construction games Concept Diagram	
The ability to: - see the relationship between 2 similar objects of different mass ie. perceive differences in mass kinaesthetically and observe differences in mass using a scale. - use correct terminology.	4. The concept of Mass and the language of Mass. 4.1 The various relationships are explored as for "size" above.	Children hold bags of sand in outstreched palms and discover properties of mass. Children weigh objects using balancing scales. Children compare objects of differing mass by holding in each hand. Discuss. Children weigh each other and fill in mass on a wall graph.	Scales Objects Bags of sand Histogram wall chart showing mass.	

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
- understand that empty/ full are absolute terms. - demonstrate this concept in a practical manner. - estimate similarities and differences in volume. - use correct terminology.	5. The concepts of Volume and Capacity. The language of Volume. full/empty more/less deep/shallow etc. 5.1 The relationships are explored as for "size" above.	Activities filling different containers with water and sand. Children experience and discuss their findings. Children paste bottles onto large piece of paper and colour in to represent full and empty Verbalising activities using wall and picture charts to consolidate concepts.	Jugs, containers, litre measures, coloured water. Bottle shapes cut out of paper, large piece of paper, glue, crayons. Concept Diagram Begrippentaal. Puzzles Wall charts Pre-reading Workshop	

UNIT 7 : EXPLORATION OF MATHEMATICAL CONCEPTS AND RELATIONSHIPS

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
The ability to - sort and match according to number - group items distinguishing differences or likeness on the basis of one or more common characteristics - understand correspondence up to 6, with appropriate verbal symbols. - classify and sort according to number in a set.	1. The Language of Mathematics : quantity words and comparative words eg. like-unlike, equal to, big/less, more/smaller than/little the same, different etc. 2. The concept of relationships between objects. Differences between objects. Likeness between objects. 3. Classification - according to concrete visible characteristics eg. colour, shape, size etc. 4. 1-1 correspondence (up to 6)	Activities revising all previous concepts of size/height, etc. with a bias on mathematical relationships and concepts. Sorting into categories, handling objects - then graphically representing them. Pictures of clothing for each season sorted into groups. Discuss reasons for identifying in a certain way. Sorting mixed containers eg. will hold water - will not hold water. Let children choose and sort. Discuss reasons for choices. Activities related to grouping according to attributes and characteristics previously dealt with in the	Sets of items that have the attribute being dealt with eg. wide/narrow ribbons, short/long socks. Begrippentaal Concepts Diagram Speeltuin Sets of pictures of clothing for all Season puzzles. Sequence strips. Assortment of glass, vase, funnel, bowl, sieve, sponge, plastic bag, paper bag, basket spoon, fork etc. Froebel animals, people etc. Beads Sechsmeister Large wall charts illustrating individual numbers (1-6 eg. wheels on vehicles, tricycle 3 wheels etc.) Furry animals Sorting cards - minimum six per number.	

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
	4.1 Matching objects 4.2 Matching "as many as: 4.3 Matching pairs eg. animals to the food they eat.	programme eg. soft, hard, shapes, animals, colour etc. Teacher presents relevant wall chart and children discuss. Find similar examples environment. Matching shapes on flannelboard Children sort cards which match the concept. Matching clothes pegged on a wash line. In small groups children select the correct number of hats to establish 1-1 correspondence. Setting tables Children illustrate number stories.	Hats, aprons Cups and plates for setting places at table. Flannelboard/shapes, colours/pictures. Stories, paint, paper Domino natura Hi-ho cherry Duck game 3 to match Jumbolino Construction games (see list) The Games	
The ability - to understand that objects are permanent even if they cannot be seen at the moment.	5. Identify and constancy of objects 5.1 Permanence of elements eg. water/ice/ steam.	Activities hiding an object and finding. Experiments with water ice, steam.	Beaker and beads Suitable equipment for the experimental activities.	

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
- to understand that an object retains identity	5.2 Permanence of objects eg. sun, moon.	Activities which emphasize the disappearance and re-appearance of phenomena eg. sun, moon, stars, rain, seasons, wind, etc.	Suitable books, wall charts. Pre-reading Workshop	
	5.3 Permanence of objects that change their appearance and attributes.	Activities, using for eg. eggs - which can be raw, boiled, fried, scrambled but still remain egg.		
- understanding irreversible changes as a result of action taken. - describe a sequence of changes in an element	5.4 Noticing and labelling the changes in a process of action eg. making scrambled eggs "First we do this, next we do ... etc."	Making popcorn A potato can grow, peeled, be boiled, mashed, fried, etc. yet still remain "potato". Repetitive verbalisation of the action eg. "Look what I'm doing now".		
- realise the numbers can be arranged in a fixed interval serial order. - compared and order objects and materials according to a particular dimension eg. size, quality or quantity.	6. The concept of Seriation - seriation 6.1 The language of seriation - shortest to longest, largest to smallest etc.	Children arrange bottles in increasing or decreasing order - any items that can be seriated to size, height, any dimension selected by teacher.	Beads in bottles Family inset board Concept Diagram Seriation puzzles Crayons Paper with circles drawn on it ie.: Nesting boxes/baskets/ cups. Concentrix apparatus	

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
	6.2 Spatial ordering First, next, last. Eventually according to position.	Children order beads/ blocks/mosaics in a row. A small group of children run a race. The others identify 1st., 2nd and 3rd placed. Draw a picture of the race.	Russian nesting dolls Paper, craypas	
	6.3 Ordering events, eg. sequence of getting dressed, eating a meal etc.	Activities with Tom & Kate models. Any other activities involving ordering and position.	Begrippentaal Tom & Kate Charts	
	6.4 Ordering with words of relative size eg. longer/shorter, fatter/thinner, bigger/smaller.	Activities where the child chooses between two different lengths eg. 2 pieces of string. "Which one is longer?" etc.		
	6.5 Ordering to quantity and number.	Arranging same sized containers with increasing quantities eg. water levels in jars, increasing number of beads in a jar, eg. 1 bead, 2 beads, 3 beads etc.		

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
The ability to: - use small number words with meaning - count by rote up to 10 - relate a number word to a quantity up to 6. - do tally counting up to 6 - use the language of the relationships in conservation - abstract numbers up to 6 - conserve substance and number	7. Experience of numbers 7.1 Small number words - one, another one, two etc. Understanding the oneness of one, twoness of two etc. 7.2 Beginning rote counting ie. recite numbers in the right order. Concept of "what comes next". 7.3 Concept of "How many?" Tally counting. Appropriate responses up to 6. Matching number words to a set of objects one by one to find a value for the group. 8. Conservation 8.1 The Language of conservation the same, how many, like this, as much as, more, less, etc.	Activities leading to an understanding, of number eg. "give me a bead," now give me "another bead". When above is understood "two" may be introduced etc. Games and rhymes where sensory input matches. Counting objects in a well spaced row. Counting and transferring from one container to another. Finally counting a jumbled group. Children use tally counting to establish whether a group has more/less/same as another. Children experiment with pegs, arranging them in various combinations and comparing sets by mapping. Rote counting is revised frequently in activities. Final stage is tally counting.	Number rhymes, songs and finger plays. "Peter plays with two hammers" etc. Counting games and rhymes. Games using Speeltuin. Pegs (6) per child) Peg-boards Skittles "Begrippentaal" Puzzles Beads, blocks, pegs, crayons, Froebel counters. Clay, water, jars etc. Concepts Diagram	

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
	8.2 Transforming - by merely changing the appearance of an object eg. Ball of clay. Water in different jars. Arrangement of objects.	Modelling the same quantity into different shapes. Activities using only 3 objects eg. row of 3 beads. Teacher asks "how many?" Then spreads row out - repeats question - "How many?" when "three" replied to both the proceeds to ask if the row is "still the same?" - Responds appropriately to "No - Yes" replies etc. until child grasps that same number implies same quantity. Activities similar to above, using beads and jars to consolidate concept.	Attribute shapes and circles. Peg boards Lego blocks and base Blocks Beads and jars Froebel Sorters Pre-reading Workshop - talking pictures	
	8.3 Abstraction of numbers up to 6.	Activities checking abstraction of number up to 6 eg. which bottle has 4 beads? Can you find another with the same number? How many beads in that bottle? (Pointing to another).		

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
	8.4 Transforming by adding or subtracting from a quantity. Extend to quantity and number by using beads in jars.	Two identifcal jars with water. Pour same out of one. "Is there less?" "Are they still the same" etc. Reversing the process by adding.		
	8.5 Abstraction of small numbers against conflicting cues.	Activities using small objects in different configuration eg. 4 Lego blocks in a tower or spread out in a train. A set bunched together in a triangle or spread out in a larger square. A set of beads on flat plate or in a narrow tube. Teachers asks appropriate questions. Initially only the same objects are used in a set eg. all beads, all blocks, all marbles etc. At a later stage these may be combined. Activities leading up to Piaget's conservation principles and then consolidating.		

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
	8.6 Consolidating of abstraction and transforming of quantities by using mapping and tally counting.	Activities on the following example: Teacher lays out row of 5 red blocks. Asks "how many are there?" After correct response, offers blue pile and instructs "Give me the same number of blue blocks". Child use mapping and then tally counting. **2nd Stage** "And now make it so that you have more", then "less".	Various materials - beads, blocks, discs, Froebel figures/animals etc.	
		Activities are repeated in various game forms eg. animals in pen, cars on road, apples on tree etc.	Noah's Ark Farm yard and animals Cars on roads etc.	

UNIT 8 : TEMPORAL RELATIONSHIPS

GLOBAL AIM: To create an understanding of the natural sequence of time in the child's environment through an awareness of the beginning and end of time intervals in the ordering of events in relation to the child himself.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
The ability to- - understand the natural sequence of time and the beginning and end of time intervals. - express an awareness of the natural sequence of day and night. - represent time verbally and graphically as a sequence of events. - use correct terminology - graphically represent time as a sequence of activities. - understand time by relating to concrete representations. The Clock.	1. Time of day 1.1 Sequence of day/ night/morning/evening etc. 1.2 The language of time. Today/yesterday/ tomorrow/early/late/ a short while/soon/ long ago etc. 1.3 Sequence of events and time at home/ school. 1.4 The language of time orientation events eg. bed time, breakfast time, school time, playtime, snack time, etc. 2. Sequence of timing. This morning/tonight last night nearly - never, now - not now, just now, first, next, last, everyday, all day.	Pictures of day and night. Children discuss similarities and differences in the two scenes, eg. light, dark, clothing, activity/ sleeping etc. Children discuss the day as a sequence of events. Activities related to the time of day. Getting-up time. Tidy up time, breakfast time. Children divide into smaller groups, choose a time of day/and activity at home and illustrate it. Teacher writes underneath each picture. These pictures are then displayed in the correct sequence - the order decided by the children.	Two wall pictures of a scene, one depicting day, the other night. Paint, paper, etc. Two child characters - Kate & Tom - cardboard figures with appropriate clothing and wall charts. Puzzles showing activities/seasons. Sequence pictures Rolf sequence tiles Sequence inset puzzles	± 2 weeks

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
- name days of the week in the correct sequence. - Name important months for the year eg. the month of birth.	2.1 Measuring time on hour glass, clock, stop watch. How these are used daily. 2.2 Observations of physical changes occurring within time limits, eg. growing beans. Changes in height from babyhood. 3. Days. The concept of a week. 3.1 What is a day? Names of days The weekend. 4. The months and concept of a year. 4.1 The calendar - a measure of passing days.	Children make a book of events in the day. Children run/clap in response to instruction to start and stop. "It is time to start" "It is time to stop etc. Children make and draw own sequence cards. Children in pairs illustrating an event at school. Teacher writes underneath eg. snack time, wash time. Children arrange these in the correct sequence Experiences with timing mechanisms. Children make a "Time" scrap book cutting out magazine pictures, illustrations, daily events in relation to "time.	Link up with Developmental Play and Music Rings Link up with Centres of Interest. Poems, stories, songs, using days and months. Pictures depicting each day of the week. Large wall calendar (teacher made) weekly. A calendar of seasons (pictorial) A calendar of events (pictorial) Large wall calendar Wall charts and graphs of mass, height to illustrate changes and "time".	

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
The ability to: - express an awareness of the natural sequence of the seasons. - name and describe the natural characteristics of the seasons and their effect on man.	4.2 The names of the months 4.3 Important days/events in the year: Christmas, Republic Day, Easter day, etc. with the appropriate symbols, eg. Christmas tree, flag, easter eggs etc. 5. The Seasons and their names. 5.1 Observation of seasonal changes as year progresses. 5.2 Participation in special experiences and events which emphasise these as a series of recurring events. 5.3 Weather related to Season.	Children are made aware of their "special month" as their birthday comes around. Picture on calendar. Special album of family photo's. Activities linking time to age. Activities related to experiences in the environment eg. fruit ripening, eggs hatching into chickens, etc. The children are made aware of the seasons as the year progresses. After discussing characteristics of the seasons the children each draw an associated article of clothing for a season. The chart is then displayed with the related pictures. Seasons are associated with growing plants. Marking special days/ events on a wall calendar e.g. Activities which emphasize seasonal changes	Photograph album "My about Me" and "How I change as I grow" Photo's of grandparents. A circular chart depicting the season. Weather chart. Kate & Tom's clothing for the seasons and the weather. Centres of interest and nature tables and displays. Pre-reading Workshop Charts. Collections of objects linked to seasonal changes eg. pods, seeds, guards. Spring-budding branches,	

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
		and special events eg. Harvest Festival. Sorting of fruits, seeds, leaves. Visit to a farm, park, gardens.	flowring bulbs. Silk worms, etc.	
		Making a book of a visit to, or the observations on a nature walk. Activities which emphasise participation eg. smelling blossoms, feeling new leaves.	Photographic record taken on nature walk - to compare for eg. the same tree in spring, summer, autumn, winter.	
The ability to-	7. Speed and Rate	Children respond to music varying speeds.	Music rings Stories Paper	
- demonstrate an understanding of the concept of time through movement.	7.1 The language of speed Fast/slow. Comparatives. How fast? How slow -	Children scribble on paper according to speed of music.	Music Crayons Egg timers	
- identify differences and similarities in speed auditorially	7.2 How animals move	Activities which experiment with objects moving at different rates of speed - cars, rolling balls and games, using these concepts:	Centres of interest Traffic puzzles Bean bags, balls Skittles Wall charts Spinning tops, pin wheels gyroscope	
- the ability to understand the relation between time and rate.	7.3 Observation of moving objects - cars, planes, steam roller, trains,	Verbal reinforcement	Toys that move on wheels	
		Games where the rate can be varied eg. follow my leader, running, ball rolling.	Toys that rolling balls, spools, ball bearings, rods.	

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
		Song sung slowly or fast	rings.	
	8. Position related to speed	Instruments which are played at varying tempos	Things that drip or flow eg. water/startch/paint/ glue/oil/silver sand etc.	
	8.1 Language of position- first/second/third/ last etc.	Simple games racing against time.	Large apparatus which provides moving experiences - drums, swings, wielie-walie.	
			Link up with Developmental Play.	

UNIT 9 : CONSOLIDATION

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
The ability to- - recall the main facts as well as the sequence of a story. - recall 3 consecutive instructions and carry them out - recall and then repeat a series of: handclaps unrelated words notes making a muscial phrase - recall a specific set of objects no longer visible - recall and describe details of a visual stimulus no longer visible - recall a sequence of events performed actively, inferring the ability to mentally represent these events.	1. Memory Training and sequencing	These activities are self-explanatory. See specific objectives Kim's game Recounting excursions Recalling activities	Learning to reason Colorama Junior memory Como crece Lottino Begrippentaal Concepts diagram What's in a square Pictures of simple problems eg. split water, broken glass, fire, etc.	± 6 weeks

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
- use logical, reversible reasoning as against transductive reasoning.	2. Problem solving	Set everyday problems for the children to solve, eg. How do you get out of a locked room? Discuss causes and consequences of possible actions, eg. breaking a window may be dangerous.	Immediate Environment	
The ability to- - use available resources in order to solve a problem. - assess the possible causes and consequences of an action. - make inferences using available information.	A variety of simple problems eg. "how can I reach an object that is too high?	Children make inferences using the presented material	Large detailed illustration, eg. road safety pictures.	
- perceive the whole when presented with an incomplete form.	3. Perception Closure - visual	Teacher extracts a picture slowly from envelope, encouraging children to identify object.	Large simple pictures in envelopes.	
		Child fills in missing details.	Incomplete outline of person.	
	- auditory	Teacher claps sequence She then repeats part of the sequence and the children complete it.		

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	4. Figure/ground perception (Visual and auditory)	Children find a preselected object in a details picture.	Large detailed illustration. Re-Reading Workshop	
- discriminate between figure and ground in a 2 dimensional and 3 dimensional scene		Children find a specific object in a toy box.	Toy box	
- distinguish specific sounds against a background of noise.		Children play and identify instruments. Taped music is then presented, children respond when a specific instrument is heard.	Percussion instruments Taped music - Differex Shau Genau Shape Up	
The ability to-				
- perceive the whole within the pattern of its assembled parts	5. Gestalt	Children construct a manniken using the various pieces. These are pasted onto paper. Fizzog 200 cards Kitten cards Plateful puzzle	Cardboard shapes representing the parts of the body, paper, glue	
- recognise forms and symbols in the environment regardless of size or angle from which they are perceived.	6. Constancy of Shape	Children match objects	Dominoes depicting objects from different angles, eg. Geominoes Symmetrix Begrippentaal	

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
- classify according to: one attribute two attributes function	7. Classification	Children first group objects according to specified attributes - then match and sort cards.	Objects Cards Section Lotto Shops "Mia Casa" Concept diagram	
- express thoughts, ideas and feelings verbally, graphically and physically in an imaginative manner.	8. Development of imagination	A group story Children, guided and stimulated by the teacher, make up a story which the teacher writes down. The children illustrate the story and make a book. They then dramatise the story.	Paper Paints	
The ability to- - make fine discriminations between phonetic sounds. - analyse and synthesize sound patterns.	9. Auditory Training	Teacher selects phonetic sound eg. "S" - children identify all toys beginning with sound.	Large detailed illustration eg. Toyshop Pre-Reading Workshop Charts.	
The ability to- - use grammatically correct language. - respond in full sentences.	10. Language extension	These activities are self-explanatory. See Specific objectives. Extensive use of "Story Books" made by the children.	Reading Readiness Kit as per equipment list.	

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/ EVALUATION CRITERIA	CONTENT	BASIC ACTIVITY GUIDE	AIDS AND EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	APPROX. TIME ALLOC.
- use language fluently and expressively.				
- write his name - state his address and telephone number.	11. Social training	The teacher evaluates how the child writes his name, taking particular note of letter formation.		
- find his way around the Junior Primary School		The child says his name, address and telephone number. He verbally describes his house, then draws a pictures of it.	Tape Paper Kokis	
		The children are taken on a guided tour of the school (over a number of of days).	"Treasure Hunt" Small objects eg. pencils, sweets.	