

Early Education Curriculum Working group

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This is the official latest version of the new syllabus which will be web based.

Members of EEC working group

Mme T. HUISMAN	: Inspectrice primaire-Présidente
Mme D. MUSILOVA	: Inspectrice primaire
Mme F. MATTOSSI	: Inspectrice primaire
Mme D. PAVLICKOVA	: Karlsruhe (Dir.adj.prim.)
M. H. FISCHBÖCK	: Francfort (Dir.adj.prim.)
M. T. QUERE	: Karlsruhe (ens.mat.)
M. N. MOON	: Alicante (ens.mat.)
Mme J. WEBER	: Culham (Interparents)
Mme E. DEMENDI	: Experte externe

Why a new Early Education Curriculum?

Early childhood development and learning have been the focus of extensive research and initiatives over the past few years and is seen as equal to all other levels of education. Early education is a generic term used to define the first years of teaching and learning. The term “Early Education” is used in documents of the European Union institutions. Early education is a fundamental part of life-long learning.

The new scientific findings put a new perspective and an increased importance on teaching and learning in the Nursery Cycle of the European Schools.

The expanding membership of the European Union states (currently 27) creates a challenge to European schools in providing a state of the art early education. In order to develop and harmonise early education in the European School system, a new curriculum is necessary.

The Early Education Curriculum is a pedagogical tool for people working in early education in the European Schools. As parents are the prime educators of their children, good partnership between parents and the school is essential. The curriculum will help to foster this cooperation.

The fundamental base of this curriculum is the European Reference Framework - Key Competences for Lifelong Learning.

Key competences are those which all individuals need for personal fulfilment and development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employment. Key competences relate to the values, objectives and content of this curriculum.

History of working group

On January 2008 Board of Governors gave a two year mandate to the Working Group Early Education Curriculum to write new guidelines for the Nursery Cycle including the syllabus for the early childhood education in the ES. The existing core document of Nursery Education (1999-D-132) originates from 1999.

At the JTC in October 2009 it was requested to extend the mandate for one and half year mandate to finalize the WEB pages of the curriculum and to implement the new curriculum. The implementation will be done by organizing a symposium like was organized in June 2008. The Deputy Heads of Nursery and Primary, the Nursery coordinators and all inspectors responsible for Nursery education should be invited to this in-service training at the central level. The school level implementation should be carried out by the participants in their own schools. Inspectors should help and guarantee that the ideas of the new curriculum are implemented in a fast and efficient way.

Only after the extension of the mandate has been granted Interparent has been asked in January 2010 to participate in the EEC working group.

Principal and directional work had been finalised and approved by the JTC before Interparent joined the WG.

In summer 2010 all parties (including Interparent) had been asked to give comments to the development so far. They have been worked on over the summer and the latest version had been presented at the JTC in October 2010.

Where is the EEC now?

The last meeting of the full EEC working group took place in Karlsruhe after the JTC in October.

The main focus had been the design and organisation of the future web page as the EEC will be the first web based curriculum.

We also focused on the need to respect for the mother tongue and the role of the EE teacher as had been requested by Interparent.

Please see below the new text which will be part of 4. Learning partners; teachers

“Within the European Schools there is a rich and diverse range of professionals from many European countries. Teachers should take advantage of this and explore educational ideas with these colleagues. Children in the European Schools embrace a European Spirit – celebrating their own culture and that of Europe as a whole; their special multi-lingual development is recognised and supported by teachers.”

“Teachers model appropriate language, values and practices. They support all kinds of play; they praise, encourage, ask questions and interact verbally with children. They use their expertise to work positively and sensitively with children speaking different mother tongues. They do all this whilst ensuring the health and safety of children at school.”

The finalised text is now with the web designer and the latest version will be presented at the JTC in February 2011.

In the summer term 2011 a workshop for Early Education for the implementation of the new curriculum is planned at the ES Mol.