

University Department of Human Development
SNDT Women's University, Juhu Campus

Best Practices

Department of Human Development manages regular school as Laboratory Nursery School

1. Title of the Practice

SNDT Laboratory Nursery School as an experimental school of the Department of Human Development

The Department of Human Development has laboratory which is known as SNDT Laboratory Nursery School. This is actually experimental laboratory school in which theory and practical are combined to assure effective teaching-learning process at preschool education level. The students of both Masters in Human Development and Masters in Early Childhood Education, as well as students from Post Graduate Diploma in Early Childhood Education are placed as interns.

2. Objectives

- 2.1. To provide structured opportunities to implement knowledge of theories of human development and preschool methodologies in the laboratory nursery school.
- 2.2. To develop the skills in students to create and implement the lesson plan focusing various concepts at three levels of the laboratory school.
- 2.3. To create developmentally and age appropriate teaching aids as well as activities.
- 2.4. To equip students with the skills for effective management of preschool activities such as festivals, field visits, daily classroom activities, sports events, recreational activities, conduction on rhymes and story session and other activities related to music and movement.
- 2.5. To give them hands-on training in curriculum development.
- 2.6. To get the students acquainted with additional concerns such as parental involvement, disciplining children, behavioural concerns in children.
- 2.7. To develop the observational skills and learn ways of interacting and handling children's behaviour.

3. The Context

To reach the objectives of various curricula, the timetable for the students is set in such a way that they are able to logically put knowledge of theory into practice in preschool set-up.

- 3.1. In the process of continuous preschool participation, the department students are made part of the activities such as writing lesson plans, developing teaching aids, worksheets and various activities. Students are also guided to make creative charts and periodically

decorating the bulletin boards which creates a stimulating environment for children in the nursery.

- 3.2. The challenge here is to build the context between knowledge of theory and implementation of practice of the same. Also the concern here is to assure developmentally and age appropriateness practices.

4. The Practice

As stated earlier, the nursery school as a laboratory set-up is available for the department students. This is a unique set-up found to be beneficial for students to learn about the theories and practice theories while learning them. The continuous preschool participation which is a kind of internship provided to students on campus itself. The internship in the laboratory school is planned by following rotations, giving equal opportunities to all the students to get hands-on experiences. This laboratory set-up also creates an opportunity for the department students to become creative and lead the learning process.

In a week there are seven interns placed in the nursery along with one supervisor and two teachers and there are 30 children so the average ratio is found to be 1:3, which is the ratio closed to 1:1 attention benefitting children more.

The challenge here is to manage the time and accommodate the teaching-learning process for the department students which is also affecting the children's learning. Further the semester workload becomes more heavy because it also consist the organization of field visits, festivals celebration, sport events, workshops etc. Such training enables them to become self-confident and provide effective professional leadership. The research orientation further sharpens their insight into innovative ways of learning and unique ways of interacting with the children.

If the vacant posts are filled in more experienced teachers with local research orientation could be further beneficial to enhance the best practice. Due to lack of research experience teachers, the preschool participation practices are becoming limited. Nevertheless the current permanent faculty member and temporarily appointed visiting faculty members try to overcome the above stated limitation and try to put in extra efforts in continuing this practice in a more effective way.

The nursery school itself is a model kind of set-up following the play-way method. The parents have been responding to preschool activities positively. The fee charged is considerably low in comparison to other preschool set-ups around. The parental cliental is mostly from socially economically lower strata. The children have been provided food/meal thrice in week by the school. There is no official specification related to uniform, this approach focuses on comfort clothing for children which is also financially less taxing for parents.

At the end of each term (two terms), subjective and qualitative assessment is conducted which are focusing on positive traits of the children. Each child's assessment is shared with the parents which ends with an appreciative and positive note of the children by the supervisor and teachers.

5. Evidence of Success

The nursery school has been recognized by EducationWorld, an organization which addresses the issues related to preschool education such as effective pedagogies and methodologies. This organization also runs a magazine documenting concerns and issues for better preschool education. This organization carries out yearly ranking evaluation of various preschools, for the same, the organization seeks the necessary information relating to best practices followed in the preschools. The S.N.D.T. Laboratory Nursery School submitted the data and in the year 2016 was ranked 15th, in the year 2017 was ranked 13th, 2018 was ranked 8th and in 2019 was ranked 11th under the category of Mumbai's most preferred proprietary preschools.

6. Notes (Optional)

The nursery school has the potential to be portrayed as a model preschool set-up.

Photographs of Activities in the Laboratory Nursery School







