

HOPE AFRICA

C O L L E C T I V E

Early Childhood Curriculum Overview

While we will be using the accredited *Shapes* curriculum, accredited with the Department of Education and currently being used in dozens of high quality ECD schools throughout the Western Cape, we will also be employing some of our own vision, values, and motivations to bring about the highest quality of learning. This document is an overview, with the practical learning for each day found in the curriculum itself.

Guiding Principles

- The curriculum will empower the child to learn and grow
- The curriculum will acknowledge the holistic way children learn and grow (body, mind and spirit).
- The curriculum will be taught from a Biblical world view
- Young children learn through reciprocal relationships with people, places and things

Goals

The children that graduate from our ECD at age 6 will demonstrate the following qualities:

- Curious – interested in the world, other people and places, how things work, able to question and make hypothesis,
- Creative – that each child would sample many different ways of expressing themselves and find one or many that suits them. Not afraid to experiment
- Confident – has a sense of self worth and understands their Christ loved identity, that they are unique created by a God who loves them.
- Healthy – in the holistic sense of body, mind, and spirit
- Competent – on a par with their cohorts of the same age who come from much wealthier circumstances. Recognises self as a competent learner.
- Resilient – children who don't give up and shut down when the going gets tough or when they don't get it right the first time, but who persist to achieve a result.

Values

- God centered

Each week would revolve around a topic and all topics would be taught from a Biblical World View eg. Topic – Me. I am made by God, special and unique Ps 139. Prayer at the start and end of the day.

Grace said before eating. Celebration of Christian festivals . Books and songs which tell Christian stories. Possibly a quiet time around rest time in the afternoon.

- Family involvement

This might not be cultural but is something that needs to be developed (research). Welcome any parent who turns up. Try to keep parents informed. Be very careful to report children's successes as well as problems. Invite parents into special functions. Find out parents strengths and invite them to share strengths with class (ie story telling, singing, making things) Invite parents to help care for the school.

- Loving and supportive, positive environment

Our ECD should be a place where children feel safe and loved and where they are keen to be. It will also be a place of character development where children are encouraged to be kind and patient with each other, to be diligent in any task, to be curious and engaged and to think about others.

- Bi-lingual

While recognising that the majority of instruction will initially need to be in Xhosa we would like our centre to be bilingual with English and Xhosa greetings, songs, stories, instructions and vocabulary introduced.

- Inclusion- provision for children with disabilities

- Quality activity and instruction drawn from evidence based research

We want to be a centre that determines what we do based on the current research and thinking of what is best for children. We also want to determine our own best practice through action research.

- Structured learning through play

Our day will be structured with blocks of time designated for various activities but provide variety and choice within that structure. There will be activities which have teacher supervision and involvement and activities where children have free choice.

- Real activities and equipment as much as possible

Activities like baking, gardening and carpentry. Equipment which reflects the kinds of things seen and used in the real world as much as possible.

- Recycling as much as possible

Using recycled materials as much as possible. Recycling any waste paper, food scraps etc.

- Individual student affirmation

Star of the day. Work through all the children and each gets a turn at being star of the day. Teacher affirms them for their terrific smile, great climbing ability etc and that child is the teacher's helper for the day, gets to be first in line etc.

- Positive discipline

A place where desirable behaviour is commented upon and where the correct behaviour is always explained and demonstrated. Time out space as a last resort.

- An attractive, welcoming, safe and engaging environment

Outside – paved area for balls, scooters, bikes, greenery for shade and beauty, coloured murals, rubbish bins, jungle gym (or some sort of climbing equipment) playhouse, balls, bikes, scooters, bats
 Inside – central mat area, plenty of display space for children work, imagination area (dress up, shop, kitchen, office desk) creative area (pencils pens crayons, scissors, glue, paper, paint, card, found materials), literacy (library corner with bean bags, pillows) numeracy (number board, counters, blocks, rods, scales, rulers, peg boards, sequencing material, jigsaws), science table (insects, nests, caterpillars, chemical reactions, magnets) building area (blocks, lego, carpenters table, etc) music area.

- Healthy mind and body

Children get a snack mid -morning of possible fruit and water, a healthy and nutritious lunch and a snack mid-afternoon. Immunisation and health checks promoted. Health lessons ie. Cleaning teeth, blowing nose etc. We will work with parents in regards to regular health and dental care, receiving annual physicals, immunisations, vision and auditory screenings. The children will also have access to social workers and mental health professionals to deal with trauma and grief.

Content (what the children are to learn)

- **Faith Discovery**

The gospel message

The life of Jesus

Bible characters (old and new testament)

Godly living

- **Literacy, language and Communication**

Bi-lingual. Children become familiar with both English and their home language (Xhosa) and learn to listen and speak confidently in both languages.

Alphabet and letter knowledge

- a) Recognise and name some upper/lower case letters of the alphabet, especially those in own name
- b) Know that letters also have a particular sound/sounds
- c) Differentiate letters from numbers

Print concepts.

- a) Follow words from left to right, top to bottom, page by page
- b) Recognise spoken words are represented in written language by specific sequences of letters
- c) Understand that words are separated by spaces in print
- d) Recognise letters are grouped to form words

Phonological Awareness

- a) Engage in language play (rhymes, sound patterns alliterative language)
- b) Clap syllables in words/names
- c) Recognise and match words that rhyme
- d) Be able to differentiate between sounds
- e) With support be able to isolate, pronounce and identify the initial sounds in words

Phonics and word recognition

- a) Recognise own name and common signs and labels in the environment
- b) Able to write own name
- c) Begin to recognise others names and some high frequency words

Fluency

- a) Displays emergent reading behaviours with purpose and understanding (eg. Pretend reading).

- **Numeracy**

Number words and symbols, Counting, One-to-one correspondence

Colour

Part / whole relationships

Shapes

Spatial awareness (position)

Measuring

Patterning (sequencing)

Classifying and data analysis (grouping)

- **Social and emotional development**

Confidence and self worth: Children develop a positive sense of who they are, their strengths and weaknesses

Competence: Children learn that they are competent.

Emotions: children recognise, label and regulate their feelings

Community: children participate in the community of the classroom with both children and adults

Resilience: children develop the ability to deal with difficulties and to persist when things get tough

Cooperative play: children engage in cooperative play

Respect: children show respect for other people and for the environment

Conflict resolution: children resolve social conflicts

- **Physical development and Health**

Gross-motor skills: children demonstrate strength, flexibility, balance & timing in using their muscles

Fine-motor skills: children demonstrate dexterity & hand-eye coordination in using their small muscles.

Personal care: children know and carry out personal care routines on their own

Healthy behaviour: children engage in healthy practices

Regular health checks: children have regular health checks, immunisations etc

- **Creative Arts**

Visual arts: children express and represent what they observe, think, imagine, and feel through the visual arts

Music: children express what they observe, think, imagine and feel through the enjoyment of, moving to, and participating in listening to and the making of music.

Imaginative (pretend) Play: Children express and represent what they observe, think, imagine and feel through pretend play

- **Science and technology**

Observing: Children observe the materials and processes in their environment

Classifying: children classify materials, actions, people and events

Experimenting: children experiment to test their ideas

Predicting: children make predictions of what they think will happen

Drawing conclusions: children draw conclusions based on their experiences and observations

Communicating ideas: children communicate their ideas about the characteristics of things and how they work.

Natural and physical world: children gather knowledge about the natural and physical world

Tools and technology: children explore and become capable of using tools and technology

- **Social Studies**

Diversity: children understand that people have diverse characteristics, interests and abilities.

Community roles: children recognise that people have different roles and functions in the community.

Geography: children recognise and interpret features and locations in their environment

History: children have an understanding of past, present and future and how this relates to their community.

Ecology: children develop and understanding of the importance of taking care of their environment.

Processes (through which the children achieve identified curricular goals)

- Teaching Strategies (What kind of teachers do we need and what do they do to help children achieve the goals.
- A teacher and an assistant for each ECD of less than 35 students

Teachers: as highly qualified as possible. Matric minimum but also Level 4 or 5 ECD trained. The teacher should have a higher requirement ie. Level 4 or 5 ECD. We want the best teachers possible working on the principle that it is impossible to teach what you don't understand yourself. We need to value our teachers as our most valuable asset, invest in them, give them opportunities for growth and promotion.

- Love for children, gentle manner
- Christian – Christian values and principles are apart of the school as a whole
- Bilingual
- Teachable
- Willing to work as part of a team
- From the community

- No criminal record
- Xhosa
- Training

Need a training period of at least 2 weeks to familiarise teachers and assistants with the curriculum and core values of our ECDs. This is after their formal education is complete. There will also be on going training. Every month at least one morning needs to be set aside for training with a follow-up visit to see how things are going in the ECD. There is also the possibility of a brief meeting before the start of each unit to help plan and prepare.

Classroom Organisation

Block and construction corner

Library and literacy corner

Imagination corner

Educational corner/Numeracy

Art and craft table in the centre. Baking table.

Dough station.

Science/nature exploration

Daily Timetable

Children arrive. Play

8.00am Mat time. Introduction to day. Days. Weather. Theme based story. Explanation of any activities

8.30- 10.00am First round of activities about 15 minutes per activity with some time allowed for change overs. Time to be flexible depending on the engagement of children in the activities. System which allows only 5-6 children per area. Start by making the children move from activity to activity and then when they are used to the system allow children to stay at an activity for up to two 15 minute periods as long as there is room. (negotiation).

10.00-1030am Toilet and snack time

10.20-11.00am Outside play

11.00-12.00pm Second round of activities. Language, numeracy, science.

12.00pm Toilet. Handwashing. Lunch

12.30-2.00pm Quiet time. Sleep

2.00pm Mat time, songs, rhymes, poems, stories

2.30-3.30pm Outdoor activities

3.30pm Afternoon snack time. Play. Clean up.

Mealtimes

Breakfast – Pap

Mid morning – fruit and biscuit

Lunch – sandwiches / soup, stew

Mid-afternoon – fruit and snack

Person responsible for preparation is Assistant teacher. What we serve should be nutritious and simple to prepare. Everyone helps cleanup

Curriculum Organisation

Term One	Term Two	Term Three	Term Four
Me	Fire	Doctor and Hospital	Under the Ground
My Body	My Family	Teeth and the Dentist	Farm Animals
Clothes		Shopping and Money	
My Five Senses	My Home	Sea and Beach	Wild Animals
	Shapes	Water Animals	
Colours			Water
	Safety	Spring (1 September)	Birds
Autumn	Winter	Land Transport	Dinosaurs
Fruit	Vegetables		Summer
Easter	Garden Visitors	South Africa (Heritage Day 24 September)	Christmas
Sport and Balls	Day and Night	Caring for our World	Christmas

Programme Focus

Holistic
 Christian
 Sustainable
 Learning is exciting and fun
 Inclusive and supportive
 Excellent & quality controlled

Training

Why are we doing this?
 HAC Vision
 HAC Ethos
 The things that HAC values
 Some statistics about ZA and its children
 Teacher expectations and how they affect learning (the power of positive speech)