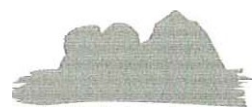




**education**

DEPARTMENT: EDUCATION  
MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

## GRADE R EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT POLICY



MPUMALANGA  
A Pioneering Spirit

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The pin-point focus of the Grade R ECO Policy is to qualitatively expand access to Grade R within the ambit and parameters of White Paper Number 5, South African Schools Act and the approved Provincial Integrated ECO Strategy that had been ratified by the Executive Council in 2008. The core pillars/ thrusts that scaffold and mediate ECO provisioning in terms of registration of centres, issuance of subsidies, learner-practitioner ratios and roles of the different tiers of departmental strategic and operational functioning are outlined briefly.

## 2. OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

This Regulatory Framework intends to explicitly indicate the registration requirements for ECO a centre, the Practitioner -Learner Ratio, the Department of Education's mandated responsibilities towards Grade R and how Grade R is managed and supervised inschools.

In summary, the ECO Regulatory Framework closes the gaps, silences and contradictions in ECO provisioning that was evident since the advent of democracy in 1994 by outlining procedures of registering and funding ECO centres, support offered to ECO centres in terms of curriculum visits, the minimum qualifications of practitioners and provision of LTSM to ECO centres

## 3. MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

This Regulatory Framework is underpinned and reinforced by the tenets/mandates embedded within:

- White Paper Number 5,
- Early ECO Service Guidelines of 2006
- National Norms and Standards For Grade R Funding.
- Provincial Integrated ECO Strategy

## 4. PRINCIPLES

The ECO Regulatory Framework is premised on the following principles:

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- Access
- Quality
- Information
- Openness and Transparency
- Redress

## 5. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

All ECO funded institutions that are monitored and supported by the Department of Education

Previously in terms of White Paper Number 5, there were 3 models of ECO provisioning viz:

- Public Schools,
- Community Based Centres
- Independent Schools.

The National Norms and Standards for Grade R funding departs from the previous 3 ECO provisioning models and now prescribes that there can only be two models of ECO provisioning in South Africa viz:

- Public Schools
- Independent ECO centres (paragraph 218 (f)).

Not that Community Based Centres will be systematically phased out, with Site Management Committees being provided with application forms to apply for registration.

### 6.1 PUBLIC ORDINARY SCHOOLS

In terms of the tenets of White Paper Number 5 (Section 4: 1) all Primary Schools will be encouraged to admit Grade R learners. There is no need for schools to complete registration forms to admit Grade R learners but they should inform the Regional Office via the Circuit Manager of their intention to admit Grade R learners before the 30

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September of the school year. As per SASA regulations "No fee schools" are not allowed to charge parents Grade R school fees. According to the Education Amendment Act of 2006, The No-fee Schools policy abolishes school fees in the poorest 40% of schools nationally for learners from Grade R to Grade 9. Schools, that are not classified as "No Fee Schools" may charge school fees but no child should be disadvantaged if a parent does not pay the Grade R fees as part of SASA regulations (paragraph 39).

## 6.2 INDEPENDENT ECD CENTRES

According to the Guidelines enshrined within the National Norms and Standards for Grade R funding (2008) there are only 2 types of Grade R centres viz:

- Public Primary Schools
- Independent Schools.

As per National Norms and Standards of Grade R funding, all community based centres must register as independent schools if they wish to become eligible for funding. Independent Centres will qualify for funding provided that they:

- are not in direct competition with a nearby Public School to enroll Grade R learners
- have an exceptional Grade R programme that is not offered at any Public School nearby.
- The Department will provide LTSM and pay stipends to practitioners based on Grade R enrolment to the independent centre provided that they comply strictly with the above-mentioned conditions.

As per prescripts enshrined in Circular 62 of 2006, Community Based Sites were phased into Public Ordinary Schools contingent on them being in radius of five kilometers from the school. Those remaining Community Based Centres that refused to phase into Public Ordinary Schools and wish to be stand-alones must apply for registration as independent schools if they wish to become eligible for state funding. The maximum time allocated to fund the above-mentioned stand-alone Community Based Centres will be 6 months from the date of application pending the approval of

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the Head of Department in registering the site as an independent school. The Head of Department reserves the right to reduce the funding period accorded to Community Based Centres pending approval based on financial considerations.

If a site also offers services to learners who fall into the birth to 4 year old category, it must first comply with the registration requirements of the Department of Social Development in order for it to be registered as an independent school offering Grade R. Currently these requirements are to be found in the guidelines for Early Childhood Development Services (2006) developed by the Department of Social Development, and in particular Chapter 5 of the guidelines.

## 7. REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS OF ECO CENTRES

In order to register as an independent school only offering Grade R the site:

- Must apply for registration to the Department of Education
- Have a qualified teachers/practitioners- the principal is a professional qualified educator and the Grade R practitioners should be at least have an ECO NQF Level 4 Core Unit Standard
- Follow the NCS Curriculum in the interim and CAPS fully in 2012
- Have appropriate administrative systems and procedures
- Have a constitution ratified by parents
- Have a functioning bank account
- Have assessment and evaluation systems
- Have learner support systems
- If the site offers services from birth to 4 years old it must be registered with the Department of Social Development in terms of their requirements
- The premises for Grade R must satisfy the following requirements:

Exterior playground: At least 5 square metres per child is required. Such an exterior area should be fenced and provided with lockable gates.

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Interior play area: A minimum of 2 square metres per child is required, of which at least 1,5 square metres must be playroom space, while the remaining required 0,5 square metres should preferably be on an open stoep (under roof), protected against wind, rain and other inclement weather conditions.

Toilet facilities: One toilet for 12 children. Not more than 25% of the toilet provision may consist of urinals. One urinals replaces two toilets.

Washbasins: One washbasin must be provided for every fifteen (12) children, or portion thereof. One communal washbasin of 1 m with two taps is equivalent to two washbasins. All ablution areas must be cleared at least twice daily with a suitable disinfectant.

## 7.1 PROCEDURE FOR REGISTRATION

### REGIONAL OFFICE

- A completed application form is submitted to the District ECO Curriculum Implementer to check on the authenticity of information and attachments submitted. The application form is attached for perusal. The application form must include a health certificate issued by the Department of Health.
- On site verification must be conducted by the Curriculum Implementer.
- The ECO centre must follow the NCS curriculum and practitioners are required to submit evidence that they attended departmental workshops.
- The application form is submitted to the Circuit Manager for his/her perusal.
- The circuit manager recommends and appends his/her signature.
- The circuit manager also conducts in loco inspection of the ECO site.
- The application form is then submitted to the Regional Director for further recommendation and for onward submission to Head Office for approval

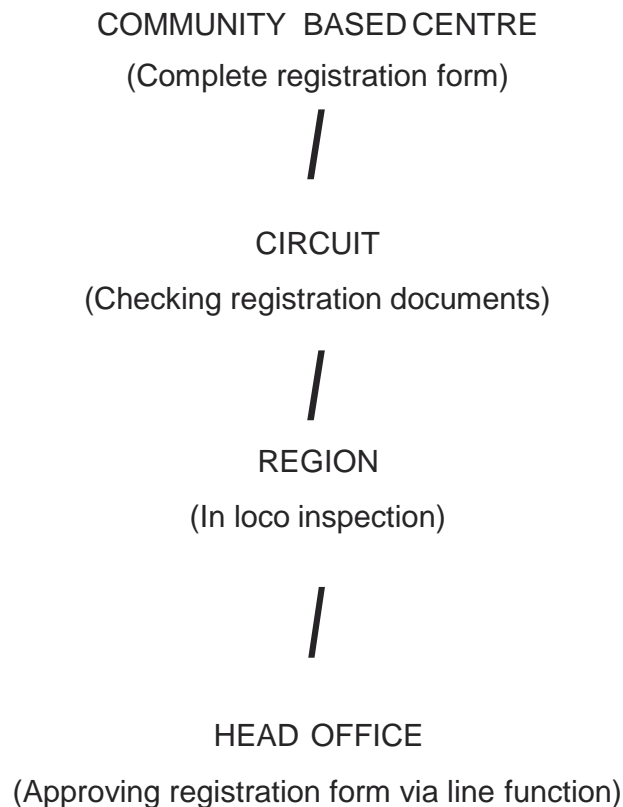
### HEAD OFFICE

- Upon receipt of the application form, the ECO unit verifies procedures, signatures and other attachments and make recommendations to the HOD

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- The CFO comments on the availability of funds
- The HOD approves or disapproves the application for registration of the ECO centre
- Upon approval by the HOD, the EMIS number is issued to the ECO Centre by the EMIS Directorate.

*FLOW DIAGRAM ILLUSTRATING REGISTRATION PROCESSES AT DIFFERENT TIERS OF DEPARTMENT'S FUNCTIONING*



## 7. LEARNER-TEACHER RATIO

According to ECO Service Guidelines of 2006 under the heading Staff Ratios, the maximum number of learners that be accommodated in a Grade R class is 30. It should be noted that infrastructural and financial challenges may impede the Department in some cases not to achieve the ratio of 1 Practitioner to 30 learners. The minimum number of learners that can constitute a Grade r class is 15.

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## 8. PRACTITIONER'S QUALIFICATIONS

- Preference will be accorded in appointing practitioners with Grade 12 certificate plus NQF Level 4 qualification. However a Grade 12 certificate is a prerequisite for appointment.
- The Department will upgrade all ECO who do not have the required qualifications by registering them with accredited service providers.
- The overall goal to ensure quality ECO services is to staff ECO centres with fully qualified educators appointed in terms of the Employment of Educators' Act of 1998 subject to national prescripts.

## 9. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL TOWARDS GRADE R

- The Head of Department (HOD) in a school is required to supervise the practitioner in terms of facilitation, classroom organization, discipline, assessment, recording and reporting of learner's progress.
- The HOD in the school must ensure that the informal play based curriculum is implemented by following the approved curriculum for Grade R-3.
- Grade R learners should as far as possible not interact with learners from other grades and the school times of Grade R should be different from the other grades.
- The School Governing Body (SGB) should support the advocacy of Grade R enrolment by addressing parents on their roles and responsibilities towards assisting their children in acquiring the necessary Emergent Literacy, Numeracy and Life Skills at home.
- Parental consent is needed when learners go on excursions and any outings deemed to be educationally stimulating.
- Schools need to keep an inventory of LTSM received from the Department of Education
- Every class must have a first aid kit readily available and a fire extinguisher installed that is within reach of the practitioner
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## 10. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S ROLES TOWARDS REGISTERED ECD CENTRES

- The Department will pay stipends to Practitioners based on learner numbers
- provide LTSM,
- Training practitioners in ECO NQF Level 4/Level 5
- Conduct curriculum based workshops with practitioners to improve their knowledge and competencies
- Circuit offices will establish close liaison with the local Health and Social Development Offices in order for Grade R

## 11. ROLES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

- the Department of Health will immunize children against measles and other diseases

## 12. ROLES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

- The Department of Social Development will assist orphans with child subsidy grants.

## DEFINITIONS

Grade R: is a year long programme where children aged 4Y:i turning 5 by the 30 June in the year of admission are provided with skills, competencies and knowledge for preparation to formal schooling as per SASA regulations 5(4)(1) of 2002.

### INDEPENDENT ECD CENTRE

An independent centre is owned by a private individual that has to submit a registration form to the Department, provided that school policies are not in conflict with SASA (Section 5) and the constitution.

### SCHOOL-BASED ECD CENTRE

This refers to the centre in the Public Primary School that registers Grade R learners.

**ECDPRACTITIONER**

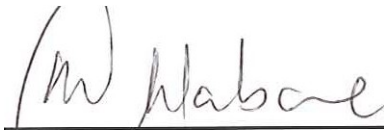
"ECO practitioner "will be used for persons employed to teach Grade R classes and who are in the process of obtaining or have obtained a minimum National Qualifications Framework (NQF) level 4 (ECO) qualification from a recognized training organization or tertiary institution or for persons employed in Grade R classes and who have not yet received registration from the South African Council of Educators. (SACE).

**13. REVIEWAL OF POLICY**

The policy will be reviewed when deemed necessary according to the changing needs and priorities of the Mpumalanga Department of Education.

**14. APPROVAL OF POLICY**


This Policy was approved by the Head of Department of Mpumalanga Department of Education on \\_ (day) of Oct (month) 2011 (year), at Nelspruit (place), and comes into operation on 01 (day) 01 (month) 2011 (year).



**MRS MOC MHLABANE**  
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

DATE:--11 / 10 / 2011

## Addendum: Registration of Community Based Sites as Independent Sites


		MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST  REGISTRATION OF A COMMUNITY BASED-SITE AS AN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL	
Name of community based-site:		Physical Address:	
EMIS Number:		Postal Address:	
Tel:		Fax:	

(Tick "yes" if the following has been submitted with the application form)

Documents submitted	Yes	No
1. Constitution		
2. Admission policy		
3. Curriculum		
4. Lease contract / proof of ownership of buildings		
5. Educators' qualifications		
6. Health certificate		
7. Proof of registration with Department of Social Development		
8. Proof of registration with Department of Health		
9. Language of teaching or 1st language		
10. Examined Financial Statements		
11. Governance Structure		

SECTION A

GENERAL PARTICULARS OF COMMUNITY BASED-SITES

 <p>MPUMALANGA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION</p>		<p>MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST</p> <p>REGISTRATION OF A COMMUNITY BASED-SITE AS AN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL</p>	
<p>Name of community based-site:</p> <p>EMIS Number:</p> <p>Principal Name:</p> <p>Circuit:</p> <p>Region:</p> <p>Municipality:</p>		<p>Physical Address:</p> <p>Postal Address:</p> <p>Tel:</p> <p>Fax:</p> <p>Cell:</p> <p>Name of nearest Public Ordinary School</p>	
<p>Form of Ownership</p>		<p>Distance to Nearest</p>	

of Land:		Public Ordinary School offering Grade R (km)
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SECTION B

SCHOOL YEAR: \_\_\_\_\_

LEARNER ENROLMENT AND CURRICULUM

CURRENT ENROLMENT						
AGE GROUPS:	0 - 1 yr	1- 2yrs	2 - 3 yrs	3 - 4 yrs	4 - 5 yrs	5 - 6yrs (Grade R)
NUMBER OF LEARNERS						
LEARNING AREAS:						
1. LITERACY						
2. NUMERACY						
3. LIFE SKILLS						

ESTIMATED ENROLMENT (for the following year)						
AGE GROUPS:	0 yr	1-2 yrs	2- 3 yrs	3-4 yrs	4-5yrs	5 - 6yrs (Grade R)

NUMBER OF LEARNERS	
LEARNING AREAS:	
1. LITERACY	
2. NUMERACY	
3. LIFE SKILLS	

SECTION C  
EDUCATORS' INFORMATION

Qualification of Principal:	
Number of qualified Practitioners:	
Number of Practitioners with ECO NQF Level 4:	
Number of Practitioners with NQF Level 3:	
Number of Grade R Practitioners:	
Qualification(s) for Grade R Practitioners:	
Number of Non-Qualified Practitioners:	
Number of Practitioners that attended training in the current/previous year:	
Form of training attended:	

SECTION D  
LANGUAGE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

Indicate the languages used for teaching

<u>Language</u>	<u>%</u>

Other Languages offered as 1st or 2nd Language

<u>Language</u>	<u>%</u>



SECTION E  
PREMISES AND EQUIPMENT

PREMISES		
Type of building (House, school, etc.)		
Size of the centre's premises		
Learning Space:		
Number of classrooms for centre		
Number of Grade R classrooms		
Indicate the classroom size (m <sup>2</sup> )		
Indicate the inside play space per child (m <sup>2</sup> )		
Indicate the outside play space per child (m <sup>2</sup> )		
Does the centre have an outside play station (i.e. 2m <sup>2</sup> per child)?	YES	NO
EQUIPMENT		
Is there enough learning equipment for each child?	YES	NO

(Attach a list of Grade R learning equipment)

SECTION F

HEALTH AND SAFETY

	YES	NO
Does the centre have a security fence?		
Is the property clean (inside & outside)		
Are the buildings safe for children?		
Is the premises disability friendly?		
Is the play space enough?		
Is the learning equipment safe for children to use?		
Is the learning equipment clean?		

SECTION G

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

1. Feeder schools

Indicate all existing GET Band feeder schools that have Grade R in the concerned location and in the surrounding area.

Name of School	Category (e.g. Primary School)	EMIS Number	Location	Distance from your centre (km)

## SECTION H

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

A community based-site may be registered provincially pending an assessment of premises, curriculum and learning equipments on the following aspects and if these aspects are not positively met, registration would be withdrawn.

## Provincial Monitoring

	YES	NO
Does the community based-site agree to unexpected visits from the provincial education department?		
Is the curriculum for Grade R in line with curriculum prescribed by the DoE?		
Are premises in good condition?		
Are learning equipments in good condition?		

SECTION I

APPROVAL OF APPLICATION

RECOMMENDATION BY CIRCUIT MANAGER

This is to certify that I ....., the circuit manager of ....., have checked on the correctness of the application and verified the need applied for. I therefore recommend/ do not recommend this application based on the following reasons.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

CIRCUIT MANAGER  
(Initials and Surname)

SIGNATURE

DATE STAMP

RECOMMENDATION BY THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR

This is to certify that I ....., the Regional Director of ....., support / do not support this application.

If supported please complete how provision in the estimate budget is made

Remarks:.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Items:	Financial year	Amount
LSM		

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Furniture \_\_\_\_\_  
Educator post(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Support Staff \_\_\_\_\_

REGIONAL DIRECTOR  
(Initials and Surname)

SIGNATURE

DATE STAMP

SUPPORTED/NOT SUPPORTED  
COMMENTS:

DIRECTOR (ECO)  
(Initials and Surname)

SIGNATURE

DATE STAMP

COMMENTS:

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER  
(Initials and Surname)

SIGNATURE

DATE STAMP

Supported/ not supported  
Comments:

.....

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HEAD OF DEPARTMENT  
(Initials and Surname)

SIGNATURE

DATE STAMP