

# The History of Kindergarten about The Challenges of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Teacher Education

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**Abstract: Kindergarten**, literally meaning 'garden for the children' is a preschool educational approach traditionally based on playing, singing, practical activities such as drawing, and social interaction as part of the transition from home to school. At first such institutions were created in the late 18th century in Bavaria and Strasbourg to serve children whose parents both worked out of the home. The term was coined by the German Friedrich Fröbel, whose approach globally influenced early-years education. Today, the term is used in many countries to describe a variety of educational institutions and learning spaces for children ranging from two to seven years of age, based on a variety of teaching methods.

## I. THE HISTORY OF KINDERGARTEN

In 1779, Johann Friedrich Oberlin and Louise Scheppler founded in Strasbourg an early establishment for caring for and educating pre-school children whose parents were absent during the day. At about the same time, in 1780, similar infant establishments were established in Bavaria. In 1802, Princess Pauline zur Lippe established a preschool center in Detmold, the capital of the then principality of Lippe, Germany (now in the State of North Rhine-Westphalia).

In 1816, Robert Owen, a philosopher and pedagogue, opened the first British and probably globally the first infants school in New Lanark, Scotland In conjunction with his venture for cooperative mills Owen wanted the children to be given a good moral education so that they would be fit for work. His system was successful in producing obedient children with basic literacy and numeracy.

Samuel Wilderspin opened his first infant school in London in 1819, and went on to establish hundreds more. He published many works on the subject, and his work became the model for infant schools throughout England and further afield. Play was an important part of Wilderspin's system of education. He is credited with inventing the playground. In 1823, Wilderspin published *On the Importance of Educating the Infant Poor*, based on the school. He began working for the Infant School Society the next year, informing others about his views. He also wrote *The Infant System, for developing the physical, intellectual, and moral powers of all children from 1 to seven years of age*.

## II. INDIA

In India, there are only informal directives pertaining to pre-primary education, for which pre-primary schools and sections need no affiliation. Directives state that children who are three years old on 30 May in the given academic year are eligible to attend Nursery and Kindergarten classes. Typically, children spend 3 to 4 years of their time in pre-primary school

after which they are eligible to attend 1st Standard in Primary School which falls under HRD ministry norms. Primary education is now compulsory in India, and accompanied with mid-day meals, in most parts of the country run by the government. Pre-primary is not mandatory, however preferred. All government schools and affiliated private schools allow children who are 5 years of age as of 30 May to enroll to standard 1 of a primary school.

## III. THE KINDERGARTEN IN TAMILNADU

MADURAI: Senior field-level officials of the Department of Elementary Education have suggested to the State government the introduction of LKG and UKG in government schools.

Officials from various districts made this request to School Education Minister Thangam Thennarasu, who convened a review meeting of elementary education officials recently. Sources told The Hindu on Saturday that Assistant Elementary Education Officers in districts had conveyed to the Minister that government primary schools would be able to attract more students/admissions if LKG and UKG classes were made available.

Now, admissions are made from Class I and prior to that the children go to 'balwadis' and noon-meal centres.

"Parents are admitting their children to private nursery schools and are reluctant to bring them back to government schools for Class I. So, the field-level officials were of the view that if kindergarten sections are available, parents will prefer only government schools. This was the suggestion made by the AEOs at the meeting," a senior official from Madurai who attended the meeting said.

The Minister was told that parents in rural areas were also inclined to admit their children to private nursery sections to enable them to acquire English-speaking ability "and hence the best way to challenge the private nursery schools is to have LKG and UKG classes in government elementary schools."

Officials said the review meeting, held in Tiruchi last week, was attended by senior officials from the Directorate of Elementary Education. "Mr. Thennarasu assured us that the government will consider the request," Our feeling is that if we have nursery sections and adequate teachers for kindergarten, government schools will be able to have more admissions," a senior official said.

### MLA statement

Elementary education officials cited the statement made by Madurai East MLA N. Nanmaran in the Assembly pointing to the hardships faced by schools under the Madurai Corporation

because parents prefer admitting their children to private nursery schools.

### CONCLUSION

Kindergarten , literally meaning 'garden for the children') is a preschool educational approach traditionally based on playing, singing, practical activities such as drawing, and social interaction as part of the transition from home to school. At first

such institutions were created in the late 18th century in Bavaria and Strasbourg to serve children whose parents both worked out of the home. The term was coined by the German Friedrich Fröbel, whose approach globally influenced early-years education. Today, the term is used in many countries to describe a variety of educational institutions and learning spaces for children ranging from two to seven years of age, based on a variety of teaching methods.