



Learning Through PLAY

**PRESCHOOL
TEACHER
TRAINING
PARTICIPANT
HANDBOOK**

Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE)



**GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP
for EDUCATION**

unicef 
for every child

Table of Contents

Preliminary Pages

Introduction.....	i
Message to ECD Facilitators and Advocates	iii
Circle Time Guide.....	iv

Understanding Early Childhood Development.....1

Early Childhood Brain Development Key Messages	1
Domains of Child Development	1
Supporting Play Using the ECD Kit.....	2
Teacher Planning.....	2

School Based ECD Interventions.....4

Supportive Policy Framework for ECD in Sierra Leone.....	4
Setting up Quality Preschool Environments	4
Learning Through Play	6

Supportive Foundations for Quality ECD Practice

Family and Community Partnership	9
Health and Safety of Young Children	10
Using Picture Books	10

Appendix

Many Ways to Connect – Brain Cell Connection Activity Sheet.....	12
--	----

Planning Package

Skills by Domains	14
Learning Through Play 3-5 - Activity Planning Form	15
Preschool Learning Centre Modification Form	19
My Story Cards Sheet	20
Health and Safety Package.....	20
Indoor Safety Checklist.....	21
Outdoor Safety Checklist.....	22
A Healthy Eating Plan for Sierra Leoneans	23
Recommendation for Healthy Eating Patterns for Sierra Leoneans.....	24
Sierra Leone Food Based Dietary Guideline for Healthy Eating	25

Introduction

Neuroscience has yielded compelling evidence showing that the early childhood period is the most critical for human brain development, as the quality of connections formed at this time provide the foundation for all future connections. This means that the years 0-5 offer significant opportunity to solidify the groundwork needed to enable children gain the future capacities and skills needed to access their full potential.

Experience and environment play major roles in shaping the developing brain. Stimulating experiences and positive relationships with responsive adults have been proven to strengthen brain connections, while exposure to negative experiences and relationships contribute to weakening them.

Quality preschool education has been proven to support brain development, reduce deficits gained from negative experiences, equip children with stronger school readiness skills, enhance academic achievement, increase school retention and graduation rates, as well as increase access to post-secondary education. Children learn best through play. It is therefore imperative that preschool environments and experiences be strengthened to support positive outcomes for children.

As part of the government's effort to promote free and compulsory quality basic education for all Sierra Leonean children with Early Childhood Development (ECD) as the foundation, we are committed to providing preschool teachers in Sierra Leone the training and support they need to implement quality play based early learning in all schools. This will ensure that our children attain their full potential for success in primary school, future educational attainment and life outcomes.

I wish to extend my sincere thanks to UNICEF for providing technical support in the development of this training guide, and the overall implementation of the ECD programme of the MBSSE. Special thanks to the National ECD Facilitators and Advocates and the National ECD Consultants that reviewed and made input to this training guide. In addition, I wish to thank the ECD International Consultant that led in the development of these documents.

Finally, without funding from the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) these very hands-on, relevant and culturally appropriate Learning Through Play Guide would not be possible. The Government of Sierra Leone through its Free Quality School Education Programme and with funding from GPE is committed to expanding access to quality play based early childhood learning opportunities for all Sierra Leonean children under the age 6.

This Learning Through Play training guide is dedicated to the young children-our Future- in Mama Salone.

Hon. Dr. David Moinina Sengeh
Minister of Basic and Senior Secondary Education.



Message to ECD Facilitators and Advocates

The success of Early Childhood Development (ECD) in preschools begins with the teacher. Your knowledge of how children develop, planning of materials and play based activities to support domain skills and the supportive relationships you build with children and their families, contribute towards helping each child gain the skills they need to reach their best potential.

The following are important elements for you to remember and practice:

Learning Centres: Remember children learn through play. Organize your classroom using learning centres that contain age appropriate, safe and interesting materials from the ECD kit and local environment. This will support children's practice of the domain skills necessary to enhance their development.

Language: If possible, use the local language of the children. Regardless of your ability to use the local language, encourage and support children's use of their home language. Involving families and the community in the classroom is a meaningful way to support home language use.

Positive, Happy and Friendly Atmosphere: Remember to focus on building positive, nurturing and friendly relationships with children. This helps them gain the security and confidence they need to learn in your classroom.

Consistent Routines: Maintain a consistent daily routine.

Reflective Practice: Reflect on your daily practice and take the time to learn from your own experiences. Observe children to understand how they are learning, their interests and know what you need to do differently to further support each child's development.

Thank you for partnering with the Government of Sierra Leone to support societal development through increasing the quality of preschool programming.

MBSSE ECD Team

Circle Time Guide

Circle time is meant to be a fun group gathering and learning experience. Think of it as family bonding time i.e. that special time daily when the family gathers to talk, play games and relax, thereby strengthening communication and bonding.

The trainer's role is to model gentleness, fun and supportive relationship building during circle time. The teachers you train will emulate you in their work with the children.

Each circle time should include bullets 1 – 4 and at least one item from bullets 5 – 7 on the list below:

1. Welcome, greetings and calendar
2. Songs and rhymes
3. Introduction of the learning concepts for the day
4. Reminder of the group agreements and expectations for behaviour
5. Story or Book time
6. Children's contributions e.g. thoughts on the day, interesting things observed on the way to school etc.
7. Games and physical movement e.g. who is in the garden, matching game etc.

Some content of the circle must be linked to the learning for the day or week e.g. if part of the weekly goal is counting 1 – 10:

- At least one story/book should be centred around numbers
- Songs/rhymes should include counting e.g. 10 monkeys swinging on the tree etc.
- Games should also be related to numbers/counting e.g. number matching (e.g. children pick numbers in a bowl and run to find their matching partners while the teacher counts down 1 – 10. At the end of the count, children with partners say and show their number and return to the circle. Children without partners freeze in the middle of the circle)

Remember, children learn best through hands-on play. All activities should be organized to promote hands-on engagement, fun and laughter, with teachers available to support learning, provide gentle guidance and positive interactions.

Understanding Early Childhood Development

Early Childhood Brain Development Key Messages

Brain development in preschool aged children is supported by play based learning experiences in stimulating classrooms with friendly and knowledgeable teachers who understand how children develop.

Remember the following key messages:

- The human brain is made up of billions of connections, the quality of which largely determine human life outcomes
- Connections that form in early childhood provide the foundation for all future connections
- Since experiences and environment play a major role in building brain connections, the preschool classroom must provide a stimulating environment that offers hands-on play experiences in order to support brain development
- Schools and teachers have a responsibility to carefully plan and organize the preschool environment to help children reach their best potential

Domains of Child Development

The National Curriculum for Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) is organized around supporting skills development in four domains listed below.

- **Physical Development:** growing taller, stronger, being healthy, gaining balance, sitting, crawling, walking, holding things well, gaining muscle strength and control
- **Social – Emotional Development:** playing with others, making friends, learning how to be with other people, understanding culture and expectations for behaviour and interaction, learning to observe and obey social cues, understanding self, learning the importance and value of own self, trust, feelings, pride of achievement, perseverance
- **Cognitive Development:** learning to think, exploring how and why things work, paying attention, remembering people/faces
- **Language Development:** learning and using words, putting words together to make sense, listening, understanding and communicating

Remember the following key messages

- Child development is interconnected, which means that skills gained in one domain support development in others. It is also incremental which means skills grow over time and through practice
- Each skill a child gains supports the next set of skills e.g. sitting supports crawling, crawling supports walking
- Since children learn through hands-on play, the best way for the preschool classroom to help them learn is to provide opportunity for children to practice skills needed in each domain over the period of one full year
- It is important for teachers to know the domains of child development and how to support children's practice of needed skills

Supporting Play Using the ECD Kit

Questions to consider when organizing age appropriate play for preschool children:

ECD Kit Consideration Criteria

- What age is this material appropriate for?
- What domain of development does this material support?
- What skills will children practice while using this material?
- Are there any safety concerns with this material?
- How can I ensure safety?
- What learning centre would this material best fit?

Teacher Planning

Teacher planning is an essential requirement to support play based learning experiences for children. The questions to consider when planning activities are:

Planning for Quality Guide

- 1) Are the materials open-ended and interesting?
- 2) Does the activity support the practice of at least one required skills in 2 domains?
- 3) Are there enough materials for 6-10 children to be fully engaged and busy at the activity?
- 4) Will the activity hold children's attention for at least 20 minutes?
- 5) Can children do this activity without my control or direction?
- 6) Can all children in the group freely participate? If not, what do I need to modify so that all interested children can participate?
- 7) In what meaningful ways can families/community be involved?

Remember the following key messages

- Children learn best through hands-on experiences
- Activities provided for children must frequently provide opportunity for children to think critically, take initiative and leadership in their own learning, make decisions and learn through trial and error
- Teacher directed activities with specific outcomes often deny children the critical thinking, decision making, explorative, trial and error components of learning which are very critical for positive brain connections
- Remember teachers do not do the learning for children. Children must have opportunity to problem solve and learn for themselves
- Teachers have to carefully identify and add materials into the environment and routines to enable children engage in the expected learning
- Every week, the teacher should change a few things in the environment to include materials for a new concept, add a few new materials and/or rotate materials that have been out for too long and children are no longer actively using them
- This practice of planning by looking at the domain skills and using the quality guiding questions must be continued in order to strengthen the preschool environment and support children's development
- Learning through play does not mean simply making toys available. It takes careful organization of the toys and materials based on domain skills and supportive teacher relationships to enhance learning
- Teacher planning is key to supporting play based learning for children. Regular time should be set aside for ongoing teacher planning
- Remember that involving families in planning sessions is an important strategy that enhances the implementation of culturally appropriate experiences for all children

School Based ECD Interventions

Supportive Policy Framework for ECD in Sierra Leone

Remember the following key Messages

- The Government of Sierra Leone has developed several policy documents to support ECCE implementation in Sierra Leone
- There are two methods of support services being implemented i.e. community based and school based. The community based service is offered through centres in the community and home visits to support health, nutrition, WASH and stimulation for children 0-5 years. The school based services are provided through enriching the preschool learning environment and promoting stimulation, communication and hands-on learning through play experiences for children 3-5 years
- Teachers and ECD workers have a very important role to play as partners with the government to support child development and promote societal development in Sierra Leone

Setting up Quality Preschool Environments

The physical environment, consistent daily routines and positive teacher-child relationships are three critical components that significantly impact the quality of the preschool program.

• **Physical Environment:**

- Environment means safe, secure spaces, with stimulating open ended materials. The preschool classroom should support children's exploration and learning through play. It must be set up to meet the needs of children rather than adults
- Seating arrangements must provide opportunities for children to sit and work together in small groups. Children gain important language, social and cognitive development skills when they work with others
- Child friendly environments must promote children's exploration using their 5 senses - sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell
 - Sight: calm lighting, interesting posters and charts on the walls that support children's knowledge (placed at children's eye level)
 - Hearing: Children and teachers having conversations, appropriate music, rhymes, singing, storytelling, proverbs, outdoor sounds, sound making materials etc.
 - Touch: Sensory materials providing various textures around the room – hard, smooth, soft, rough, mushy, crunchy etc. for children to explore
 - Taste: Safe materials from the local environment for exploration and development of diversity of taste

- **Established routines:**

- Children need to be able to predict what will happen in order to have a sense of order and control in their lives, thus, the preschool setting must maintain a consistent routine
- Being able to predict helps children gain a sense of control which results in feelings of safety and security. These feelings are critical to support the development of self-regulation and resilience
- Expectations that children should sit still shows poor knowledge of child development, denying their physical development needs. Routines must include well balanced opportunities for high energy gross motor movement as well as quiet concentrated activities

- **Relationships**

- Relationships matter greatly in early childhood development. It is critical that the preschool teacher maintain a happy, friendly and supportive relationship with children to enable them gain a sense of safety and confidence to learn
- Preschool teachers can build positive relationships with children by keeping their focus on child development domain skills. This helps teachers learn to meet the needs of children rather than expecting children to meet the level of the adult
- Behaviour guidance means providing opportunities for children to practice and gain the skills to regulate their own behaviours This ability develops over time through adolescence and adulthood. Children with experience and skills obtained during early childhood are better self-regulated adults
- Teacher should observe and identify the skills they see lacking through a child's behaviour and then create opportunities for the child to practice the needed skills over time
- Punishment does not create opportunities for children to practice the needed skills but rather teaches them to hide the unacceptable behaviour. Teachers who punish miss the opportunity to guide skills development
- Establishing group agreements with children helps gain their partnership and gives children a good sense of acceptable behavioral expectations with daily opportunity to practice



Learning Through Play

Suggested Preschool Daily Routine Activities

- 8:00 a.m - 8:30 a.m Circle time: Bonding time, Fun Learning Related Activities and Planning for Learning.

Circle time should include fun singing, rhyming, story time or picture book reading, games related to the learning goal. The teacher should introduce the overall expected learning for the day e.g. “today we are going to be learning about respect (or whatever the learning goal is) for ourselves and others. Our picture book will help start our adventure to explore what respect means”. At least one song or game should help children explore the idea of respect. The teacher may give specific guidance at the end of circle time by saying something like “remember being kind shows respect. I want you to practice asking yourself ‘how would I feel if someone did, said or touched me in this way’ before you do, say or touch someone else. This will help you practice respect”. If the class consists of more than 50 children, 2 smaller circles should be held. If there is no assistant teacher to conduct the second circle, let one group of children be engaged in choice play with quiet activities during the first circle session and then switch the groups.

- 8:30 a.m – 8:45 a.m Planning: During planning, children are guided to think and determine what they wish to accomplish in their play. Pictograms, learning centre cards or another preferred strategy may be used to help children make decisions or children may be invited to go around, take peeks at each centre and return to the planning table. The teacher guides their thinking and discussion along the lines of planned learning goals e.g. “we are learning about respect today. I want you to think about and tell us what you can do to show respect for yourself, others and the materials as you play today” or “we are exploring numbers 1-10 today. Go and take a quick look at the materials, think about and come back to say what you can do with numbers in your play”. Children leave the planning table with a developing idea of what they would like to undertake, explore and practice in their play.
- 8:45 a.m - 10:00 a.m Small Group/Choice Play: Allow children to choose what learning centres they would like to play in, not exceeding 6-10 children per area. The higher the number of children in the classroom, the more learning centres are required. Indoor and outdoor spaces can be set up with centres promoting the learning goal and one teacher supports learning indoors while a second teacher does the same outdoors e.g. one sensory area indoors, another outdoors; one construction area indoors, another outdoors etc. The teacher’s role is to participate, guide, encourage and ask relevant open-ended questions that help each small group of children think further about what they are doing, analyze, revise or continue with their plans.

Small group activity (or teacher guided) activity: The teacher sets up a planned activity on 1 – 2 tables and invites children to engage in small groups. Teacher guided activities are specifically designed to further exploration of the learning goal e.g. If the goal is respect, a home centre pretend play activity with the teacher guiding children to choose roles and make up scenarios about respect or disrespect could be the planned activity. If the goal is counting 1-10, the teacher may provide specific table or floor activities for each small group of children to engage with. For example, 1-10 coloured counting cans with a big bucket of coloured stones for sorting or homemade number puzzles may be the guide activity. The teacher must provide enough materials so that all children at the table can engage.

WASH: Tippy tap and soap provided at the entrance of class. Children should be reminded to freely wash and air dry their hands every time they are returning to class. The class may have a hand wash song that every child uses when lathering with soap

- 10:00 a.m – 10:30 a.m Break Time

- 10:30 am – 11:15 am Outdoor Play: All children must have physical gross motor play daily. Children who have been engaged in outdoor activities should switch with children engaged in indoor activities. If no children have been outdoors, all children should do so at this time (except for children with special needs and parent/medical requests e.g. sickle cell anemia, and children who need a few more minutes to finish what they are working on). As much as possible, outdoor play should NOT be made up of 1 large group. There should be various choices of physical activities to promote children’s freedom of exploration and large muscle movement. Children must be given opportunities to organize themselves without undue adult directions/control, unless the outdoor activity is the teacher guided plan

- 11:15 a.m – 12:00 p.m Circle Time: Song, story or picture book. Tell a story or read to the children and ask them literal (where did the cow go?), inferential (no direct answer in the story but clues to tell the answer e.g. the cow is hungry and looking for money. What is the cow planning to do with the money?) and value judgment questions (e.g. what do you think of the cow taking the chicken’s money?). Always end the circle by guiding children to look for interesting items that will help extend their learning beyond the classroom. For example, you can say “remember our numbers 1-10. I want you to look for 10 very interesting things around your home that you can bring to class tomorrow. Ask someone in your family to explore with you as you hunt for things”

Note: closing circle is an opportunity for children to review and analyze their play accomplishments related to their plans. A few children may be given opportunities daily so that over time, every child gets their own turn to talk.

Key Messages to remember

- Although the times may vary, the preschool routines must be consistent. Consistent routines promote positive behaviour
- It is helpful for teachers to remember that the skills children are practicing will develop over a period of 1 year. Teacher's must set realistic expectations based on the domain skills, providing daily opportunity for children to practice the required skills
- Punishment is not positive behaviour guidance as it primarily teaches children to hide the negative behaviours in the presence of the teacher. Teachers should focus on creating opportunities for children to practice the skills they need to develop the positive traits. This is positive behaviour guidance
- The teacher has a responsibility to maintain a friendly and relaxed learning environment



Supportive Foundations for Quality ECD

Family and Community Partnerships

- Teachers make learning culturally relevant when they partner with families to support and guide their children's learning and achieve culturally relevant child development goals
- Families should be involved in decision making that affects their children. Involvement ideas include:
 - Parent Teacher Association meetings
 - School Management Committees
 - Invitation to teacher planning and cluster meetings as well as professional development activities
 - Informal, daily drop-in-and-play opportunities for family and community members
 - Special invitations for community leaders and elders to visit classrooms
 - Family and community supply of play materials, resources and skills e.g. a carpenter could come and lead in a small group woodworking activity or a cook could come and lead in a recipe creation or cooking activity
- Involving families also expands awareness of child development in the community and supports responsive caregiving

Key messages to remember

- Families have valuable knowledge that the teacher does not have. This includes knowledge of the child, goals and dreams for the child and the values which determine how they choose to raise their child
- The easiest and most effective method for setting up and maintaining culturally appropriate child learning opportunities is through teacher-family partnership
- Quality in education is greatly enhanced when the teacher and families are partners in supporting the growth, development and wellbeing of the child
- During parent teacher association and SMBC meetings, awareness on play based early learning should be raised. Pre-school teachers can be given a slot to explain this

Health and Safety of Young Children

Key Messages to remember

- The teacher has responsibility to ensure the health and safety of children while at school
- Ensuring health and safety means daily monitoring the indoor and outdoor environment and involving children in daily routines that help them learn skills to take ownership in safeguarding their own health and safety
- Children should be supported to practice health and safety skills by including them in conduct daily safety checks (with an adult), establishing WASH practices as a routine and involving them in the weekly toy wash. This can be a once-per-week small group play session

Using Picture Books

Key Messages to remember

- Research shows that book handling, i.e. the simple knowledge of how to hold a book, turn the pages, recognize the cover, the back, a page, words etc. plays a very critical role in helping children learn how to read successfully
- This important skill is very easy to support. Teachers simply need to provide interesting books in the environment and encourage children to freely explore
- Books should be made readily available for children in the classrooms. Teachers should not worry unduly about ripped pages but use every opportunity to help children learn how to respectfully enjoy them by treating them with care. Children should also be a part of repairing broken books with clear tape



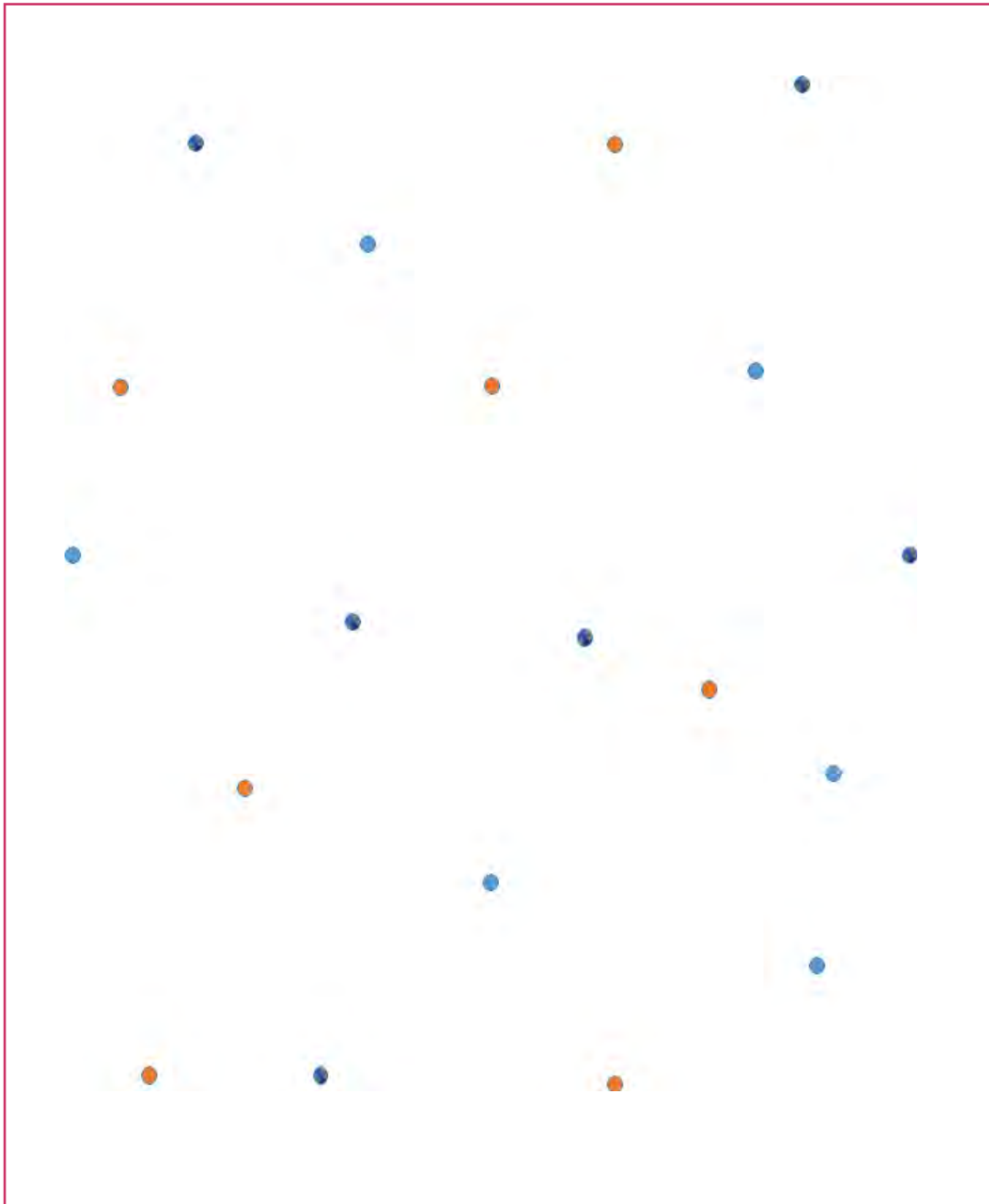
Appendix



Many Ways to Connect

Instructions:

- Each single dot can make several connections with all other dots
- Work together to find all the many ways to connect every dot to each other



Planning Package



Skills by Domains

Social Emotional	Physical Motor	Cognitive	Language
<p>Sense of Self</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjusts well to new situations • Demonstrates appropriate trust in adults • Recognizes own feelings and manages them appropriately • Confidence to express needs <p>Caring for Self and Others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates self-control and independence • Takes responsibility for own well being • Respects and cares for classroom environment & materials • Follows classroom routines • Follows classroom rules <p>Respects Others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plays well with other children • Recognizes the feelings of others and responds appropriately • Respects the rights of others • Uses respectful words to resolve conflicts 	<p>Large Motor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates basic motor skills such as running, jumping, hopping, skipping • Shows balance while moving • Uses body movements to express feelings • Shows coordination with swings, ropes, climbing with moving toys • Demonstrates throwing, kicking and catching <p>Fine Motor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controls small muscles in hands: pours, cuts, traces, twists, inserts, ties, and pounds objects • Coordinates eye-hand movement • Uses tools for writing and drawing <p>Healthy Body</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Washes hands with water and soap after toilet and before eating • Eats nutritious foods • Drinks clean water • Fully immunized 	<p>Observation & Problem Solving</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observes things with curiosity • Asks questions – What? Why? How? • Shows persistence in solving a problem • Explores cause and effect • Applies experience to a new context <p>Mathematical Thinking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matches, compares and sorts objects by size, shape, color, number and amount. • Organizes things by category • Arranges objects in series (ex. big to small) • Recognizes patterns and can repeat them • Shows awareness of time and sequence • Understands location and position words (ex. above) • Attempts to count objects <p>Represents with symbols</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes on pretend roles • Makes believe with objects • Uses a symbol to represent 	<p>Listening and Talking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talks with others about personal experiences and views • Describes objects, events and relations • Expresses feelings in words • Actively listens to others (can recall and ask questions for better understanding) • Notices differences in sounds • Learns new vocabulary • Understands and follows oral directions • Asks and answers questions • Actively participates in conversations <p>Pre-reading and Pre-writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draws to represent ideas • Holds instrument to write • Enjoys and values storybooks • Comprehends what is read • Knows that print carries a message • Knows that spoken words can be written down • Knows letters & sounds • Scribbles • Traces lines and shapes

Taken from A Guide for Preschool Educators on how to Use the National ECCE Curriculum

Learning Through Play 3-5 - Activity Planning Form

Sample

Date: 16 -20 December 2019

Theme: Nature

Routine/ Learning Centre	Domain	Domain Skill (copy from Skills by Domains)	Activity (fun name of activity)	List of materials (MUST clearly support practice of the domain skill)	Modifications (Ensure ALL interested children can participate)	Family and Community involvement
Morning Circle Monday	Social Emotional	Adjusts well to new situations	Insect exploration	Clear containers with 1 cockroach, 1 black ant, 1 beetle, 1 grasshopper, 1 firefly (dark box), 1 housefly, 1 mantis, 1 butterfly	-Homemade magnifying glass -Thick gloves to reduce fear of handling	Have 2 primary 4/5 pupils (boy and girl) join to model confidence handling insects
Planning (idea teacher plants in children's minds to help them think about what/how they want to play)	Teacher: Invite children to explore something new today and think about how it makes them feel	Not applicable	Teacher: Mention new interests in centres/invite children to briefly see each to get ideas of what to do	Not applicable	Not applicable	Conduct planning in 4 small groups with 1 secondary school leaver in each
Cognitive Area	Cognitive	Asks questions What, why and how	All about insects	Cut out/printed large pictures and mini facts of insects from magazines – wasps, stick insects, butterflies and beetles	- Large pictures covered with clear tape - Minimum 40 pictures for easy access	- Parent to assist with printing pictures - local expert/ parent to play and read insect facts to children
House Pretend	Physical (healthy body)	Eats nutritious food	Healthy Cooking	- 1 colour poster Sierra Leone food guide, 1 cassava stew picture recipe card, 1 rice picture recipe card, chopping block, plastic knives, green leaves, sand (in rice package), salt, oil, empty condiment containers - pots, pans, cutlery - plastic fruits, cut out photos of fish and meat portions	- Different sized knives - chopping board on the table - outdoor cooking for space	Community health care worker to participate in reading the food guide and play planning portions and cooking with preschoolers

Discovery Area	Cognitive	Observes things with curiosity	Insect observation	Insects from circle, 1 shallow net covered box with mixed insects, 6 magnifying glasses (homemade), 2 thick gloves, 2 thin gloves, 6 flashlights	Gloves provided to support child confidence in exploration	Primary 4 and 5 to catch insects and drop-in to play with insects alongside preschoolers
Block Area	Physical (Fine motor)	Controls small muscles in hands: pours, cuts, traces, twists, inserts, ties and pounds objects	Insect sanctuary construction	Pieces of plywood, odd wood pieces, 1 pack small nails, 6 mini hammers, 6 thick gloves, 6 safety goggles (from plastic bottles and rubber band), old netting, tape	* stick nails halfway through Styrofoam for easy pick up	Local carpenter to lead activity and provide safety guidance - community to collect materials 1 week in advance
Art Area	Social Emotional	Confidence to express needs	Painting	Tray of mud paint, tray of charcoal/ water paint, tray of clay 5 medium and 5 fine paint brushes, large slightly heavy pieces of fabric (to ensure children ask for help/ express needs), 2 safety scissors	- 1 left handed scissors - plastic gloves (for children who prefer not to touch mud)	- Parents provide old adult tops/ shirts for children's painting smocks
Literacy Area	Language	Comprehends what is read	Picture book reading and retell	- 1 set UNICEF picture book series - 1 set UNICEF picture book series, cut out, laminated pages of each picture book (organize one story in sequence on the literacy table)	- Include wordless picture books	UNICEF provision of extra copies of book for creating story retell cut out pages
Outdoor	Physical	Shows balance while moving	Insect hunt and find	-10 Plastic containers with holes in the lids - 10 plastic spoons and forks	Tape 2 plastic spoons and 1 fork to 1 foot length sticks for children who may not be able to squat	Invite the participation of older children during their break
Morning Circle Tuesday	Repeat Monday (sit close to more reluctant children and have the insects close)					Have 2 school leavers for the week
Morning Circle Wednesday	Cognitive	Takes on pretend roles	Guessing game -What insect am I	None	None	"

Morning Circle Thursday	Language	Expresses feelings in words	How do I feel about insects	3 sets of sight words with pictures showing feelings – scared, happy, excited, angry, confused etc.	Do circle in 3 groups to reduce wait time as children take turns choosing cards and talking	“
Morning Circle Friday	Social emotional	Respects the rights of others	Insect matching game	Home made insect matching cards (face down in the middle of circle area). Children take turns flipping to find matching pairs	Paste the insect pictures on thick cardboard cartons for easier pickup	“
Circle Monday						
Planning (focus idea teacher plants in children's minds to help them think about what and how they want to play)						
Cognitive Area						
House Pretend						
Discovery Area						

Block Area						
Art Area						
Literacy Area						
Outdoor						
Circle Tuesday						
Circle Wednesday						
Circle Thursday						
Circle Friday						

Preschool Learning Centre Modification Form

Theme: _____ Week of: _____

Blocks	Pretend	Literacy
Cognitive	Discovery	Art

My Story Cards

My name: _____

Story title: _____

Indoor Safety Checklist

Instructions: Conduct a daily inspection of your preschool classroom. Place a ✓ for Yes and X for no. Attend to all “no” answers immediately.

Name of teacher/inspector: _____ Date: _____

Toys are:

- Non toxic
- Washable
- In good repair, without sharp edges or pieces that could break and hurt a child
- No smaller than the barrel of a toilet roll
- Hygienic. Washed/sanitized within the last 5 days
- Learning centre toy bins have been washed within the last 5 days
- The sand box is covered daily (if applicable)
- The water table is washed out daily (if applicable)
- Heavy toys are safely stored so that children cannot pull them down on themselves

Environment

- There are no broken electrical cords or outlets
- Fabric/clothing used in the classroom are non-flammable
- There are no broken cement holes or slippery floors in the classroom
- There are windows and doors to let in fresh air and light
- The indoor space is clean
- There are no chemicals/unsafe cleaning materials within children’s reach
- All areas of the room are visible
- All pathways are unobstructed
- All mirrors are shatter proof
- Shelving and locker units are wide-based to prevent tipping.
- There are no toy chests with heavy lids to fall on children.
- The rugs or mats are low-pile and free from curled-up edges or corners

Hygiene

- There is access to non-stagnant/running water and soap for regular hand washing
- The classroom has a hand wash song that children use automatically when washing
- The hand washing lasts for at least 20 seconds
- Children wash their hands frequently
- There is access to clean drinking water
- Meal areas are cleaned before and after meals
- There is a clearly identified container for garbage

Protection

- Inspection is carried out every morning
- Teacher has a valid basic first aid training
- A first aid kit is available on the school premises
- Medicines are kept in original labelled packaging and locked away

Outdoor Safety Checklist

Instructions: Conduct a daily inspection of the grounds of your preschool classroom. Place a ✓ for Yes and X for no. Attend to all “no” answers immediately.

Name of teacher/inspector: _____ Date: _____

Playgrounds are:

- Free of broken glass
- Free of animal excrement

Playground equipment

- Are sturdy
- Do not have broken or rusted edges/parts
- Are not inappropriately high
- Do not have metal slides that present a burn hazard when hot
- Are not mounted on cement floors

Outdoor spaces

- Have no debris or cracks near the building for snakes/wild animals to hide in
- Are free of broken glass
- Are free of broken furniture
- Have no poisonous or dangerous plants
- Have access to non-stagnant/running water and soap for hand washing
- Are fenced or far from a road
- Latrines are kept cleaned daily

Supervision

- Inspection is carried out every morning



Ensuring Health and Nutrition

A HEALTHY EATING PLAN FOR SIERRA LEONEANS

Adopt a healthy eating plan throughout life to support;

- A healthy body
- Minimise incidence of chronic disease
- Maintain a healthy body weight

A healthy eating plan includes adequate intake of :



Fruits



Dark green, orange, yellow, purple vegetables



Animal proteins e.g. fish, poultry, meat, milk or eggs:



Grains e.g. rice, cassava or other whole grains such as roots or tubers



Pulses e.g. beans, peas and lentils



Oil, nuts and seeds



Take 8-10 glasses of safe water daily



Physical activity:
At least 30 minutes of a physical activity (moderate)



Limit salt intake



Limit sugar intake



Ensuring Health and Nutrition

RECOMENDATIONS FOR HEALTHY EATING PATTERNS FOR SIERRA LEONEANS:

The food based dietary guidelines for Sierra Leone offers 10 key messages for healthy eating patterns.

These are outlined as follows:

10

key messages

1. Eat variety of foods
2. Eat either fish, poultry, meat , milk or eggs everyday
3. Eat plenty of fruits, vegetables especially green leaves at every meal
4. Eat rice, cassava or other whole grains such as roots or tubers as part of meals
5. Eat beans, peas and lentils everyday
6. Use oil in moderation and eat nuts and seeds
7. Use iodised salt but use it in moderation
8. Use sugars, foods and drinks made with sugar in moderation (added sugars)
9. Take 8-10 glasses of water daily
10. Be physically active



Ensuring Health and Nutrition

| SIERRA LEONE FOOD BASED DIETARY GUIDELINE FOR HEALTHY EATING (2016)

Below is an example of food guide servings by food type

BOX 1: EXAMPLE OF FOOD GUIDE SERVINGS BY FOOD TYPE	
Food Type	What counts as a serving?
Vegetables	1 cup of cooked leafy vegetables 1 cup raw vegetables (size of a fist) 1 cup of raw vegetable salads
Fruits	One medium-sized fruit (size of a baseball) One cup of fruit juice
Grains	1 slice of bread Half a cup of cooked rice
Meats, fish poultry, eggs	Cooked meat (size of a palm) Cooked fish (size of a palm) Piece of liver (size of a matchbox) 1 chicken wing 1 egg
Nuts, seeds	2 tablespoons peanut butter 2 tablespoons seeds Half a cup of shelled groundnuts
Beans and lentils	Half a cup cooked beans/lentils
Fats and oils	1 tablespoon vegetable oil 1 tablespoon regular oil e.g. palm oil



