



## QUALITIES AND ROLES OF AN ECCE TEACHER

We all know that early childhood is the most important period in children's lives. The influence of this period lasts and affects the whole life of a human being. If children receive utmost care with ample learning opportunities during this phase, they may later develop into healthy and happy human beings. After the home, an ECCE centre is a place where children are nurtured to attain abilities in different domains like physical-motor, socio-emotional, cognitive and language competencies. ECCE teachers at the centre own the responsibility of providing positive inputs to children for their holistic development. Thus, in the process of early childhood development and learning, good quality teachers are indispensable.



### LEARNING OUTCOMES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- explain the qualities of an effective ECCE teacher;
- discuss the roles and responsibilities of an ECCE teacher;
- describe the skills required for enriching children's learning environment; and

### 17.1 QUALITIES OF AN ECCE TEACHER

To ensure quality ECCE, the quality of teachers involved in providing early care and education becomes essential. Teachers need to possess certain qualities to create a conducive and child friendly environment for young children.

Teachers play a significant role in realizing the objectives of the ECCE programme.

Let us study the key qualities of ECCE teachers. These are not only desirable but indispensable.

**Froebel**, the Father of Kindergarten, said:

I understand it thus. She (the mother) says, “I bring my child—take care of it, as I would do”; or do with my child what is right to do, or “do it better than I am able to do it”. A silent agreement is made between the parents and you, the teacher; the child is passed from hand to hand, from heart to heart. What else can you do but be a mother to the little one, for the hour, morning or day when you have the sacred charge of a young soul? In hope and trust the child is brought to you, and you have to show yourself worthy of the confidence which is placed in your skill, your experience and your knowledge.

**Source: Early Childhood Education Today, -George.S.Morrison-p-619**

An ECCE teacher is:

### **Loving and Caring**

Children need love, care and affection to open up and get along with others. As children enter a new space of ECCE centre, they need an affectionate teacher on whom they can rely for their needs. Unconditional love and care helps in developing a sense of trust between children and the teachers. This also helps in children’s sound social and emotional development. Teacher’s concern and care for different needs of the children pave the way for forming an everlasting bond with them. This further helps in solving classroom problems with mutual understanding and belief. A sense of belongingness is developed in children enabling them to build more trustworthy relationships with others in future. Thus, being caring and loving are one of the most important qualities ECCE teachers are expected to possess.

### **Energetic, Enthusiastic and Motivated**

Teachers full of positive energy energise the classroom and children. Joyful teachers have the potential to create an atmosphere which is enjoyed by all children. Play leads to healthy development of children and enables them to learn and explore a variety of things around them. Motivated teachers mingle well with children in various activities which leads to children and teachers constructing ideas together and learning together. Such teachers experience inner satisfaction and happiness while working with children.



Notes



## Notes

### **An Active and Empathetic Listener**

It is a known fact that to understand and feel the problems or situation of another person, one has to put oneself in that person's shoes. This is called 'empathy'. This fact is equally true in children-teacher relationships. To understand and feel children's pleasure and pain, teachers have to be active and empathetic listeners. Children have different ways of expressing their emotions and responding to situations. Empathetic teachers have the ability feel to recognize children's thoughts and emotions. This helps in making children understand their place in the teacher's life. This quality also helps teachers in solving many classroom and behavioural problems.

### **Cheerful and Committed**

Did you ever encounter a teacher in your school who used to be annoyed, angry and always displeased with the children? Did you like that teacher? You probably did not. The personality of teachers directly influences children. Teachers with positive personality create a positive emotional environment. Such teachers receive cooperation and positive responses from children. These teachers respect their profession and are happy working with children.

### **Patient and Persistent**

Teachers must have patience and persistence to address the needs of children. Teachers may find that during play and other activities, children might misplace toys or play material, mess up the classroom and dirty themselves. They may not respond and learn things in the manner in which teachers have anticipated. In these circumstances, teachers need not get upset or angry at children. Rather providing freedom to the children to play and explore the way they like, keeping in mind their safety concerns, encourage children to learn better. Similarly, one child might require the same thing to be repeated several times while the other may require very special attention in some other way. To address different needs, ECCE teachers have to be patient and persistently strive for positive outcomes.

### **Flexible and Adjusting**

Teachers have to manage a classroom full of children with diverse needs and potentials. Planning to cater to these needs is a vital component of an ECCE programme. Teachers may not necessarily have all the resources and conditions adequate for effectively planning and implementing the activities. Teachers who are flexible and adjusting may help in bringing out positive outcomes from adverse circumstances. This also aids in smooth functioning of the centre as it is not bound to rigid rules. Thus, teachers must keep a flexible and adjusting approach while planning and designing learning experiences for young children.



### **Creative and Innovative**

Children are curious. They want to explore the environment around them and find reasons for various phenomena. They imagine things in their own ways. They can find novel answers to possible questions and can construct things which are new in their own innovative ways. There is a need to nurture these unique ways of thinking and learning in children from the very beginning to help them bloom to the fullest. Children need to be provided with opportunities to experiment and innovate.

Hence, creative and innovative teachers are a must if the objectives of ECCE are to be attained.

### **Organized**

ECCE teachers have to accomplish many things such as organizing the classroom, creating teaching learning materials, designing bulletin boards, conducting parent teacher meetings etc. So, being organized is another quality which they should possess in order to conduct activities smoothly.

### **Effective Communicator**

Communication skills of teachers are significant as they need to communicate effectively with children, parents, the principal and the community. These skills are important for teachers as they are required to engage children in various activities and sustain their interest. Teachers have to express their ideas in a very clear and simple manner so as to connect with young children. They are also required to use appropriate gestures, postures, voice modulation, etc. while conducting activities for children such as storytelling, rhyming and role playing.

Good communication skills help them to build a rapport with parents and other stakeholders to support children's holistic development.

### **Effective in Building Rapport with Parents and Community**

Home and ECCE centres are two important places where young children grow, develop and learn. Positive attitude of teachers towards the role of parents in their children's care and education is essential. Regular communication between parents and teachers help in understanding children's needs and their developmental stages. Also, active participation of parents and community members in the functioning of the centre reduces the gap between the two environments. Thus, building rapport with parents and community members is essential for optimum development of children.



## Notes

### Self-Confidence and High Self-Esteem

Self-confidence and high self-esteem are significant qualities of ECCE teachers. They must display these qualities in order to create a healthy and positive environment in the classroom.

### Well Trained

ECCE teachers are required to possess essential knowledge and skills to effectively deal with young children. In order to make learning experiences meaningful for children, teachers must understand the significance of the early years of life and quality ECCE. To cater to the physical-motor, socio-emotional, cognitive and language needs of children, teachers must have a thorough understanding of the fundamentals of growth and development. Understanding diversity and practising inclusion is essential for ECCE teachers to provide children with equal learning opportunities, experiences and exposure irrespective of their varied differences. ECCE teachers are required to support children with disabilities, socio-economic disadvantaged children or children who become victims of natural calamity, violence or war by understanding their developmental characteristics and learning needs.

They must be well trained in teaching skills and in teaching. This requires them to understand how young children learn, and the teaching methodologies. Thus, knowledge of a variety of teaching learning approaches like learning through play, activity-based learning, learning by doing/hands-on learning, discovery learning, cooperative learning, discussions, field visits are highly essential and add to the quality of ECCE teachers.

### Research Skills and Lifelong Learner

To make the ECCE programme effective, teachers also need to engage in research. This enables them to solve immediate problems faced in the classrooms, revisit their teaching methodology and improve upon the teaching learning process.

Striving for continuous improvement in knowledge and skills to meet the needs and demands of the early childhood profession is another key quality of ECCE teachers. Teachers are required to keep themselves abreast of new knowledge and developments in the field of education and ECCE in particular.



Notes



**INTEXT QUESTIONS 17.1**

1. Identify the qualities of ECCE teachers in the given grid.

c	c	t	p	q	s	m	b	b	l	y
o	r	g	a	n	i	s	e	d	o	o
n	i	n	n	o	v	a	t	i	v	e
f	e	m	p	a	t	h	e	t	i	c
i	m	s	a	c	x	z	i	l	n	a
d	p	s	t	r	b	c	i	l	g	r
e	t	t	i	e	d	k	n	p	c	i
n	l	q	e	a	c	t	i	v	e	n
t	c	p	n	t	h	f	d	c	j	g
f	c	l	t	i	n	m	c	x	k	f
n	k	m		v	o	n	z	z	z	m
o	j	f	l	e	x	i	b	l	e	b

2. Fill in the blanks.

1. Teachers have to manage a classroom full of children with diverse .....and.....
2. Teachers are required to keep themselves abreast of new .....and.....in the field of education.
3. Regular communication between parents and teachers help in understanding children’s .....and their .....stages.
4. Teachers must be ..... while planning and designing learning experiences for young children.
5. Children have different ways of expressing their .....and responding to situations.
6. An unconditional..... and care helps in developing a sense of .....between children and the teachers.

**17.2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ECCE TEACHERS**

ECCE teachers play a major role in supporting the overall development of children. They have multiple and dynamic roles as they own the responsibility of taking care of various aspects of young children’s lives such as their health, nutrition, safety, protection and education.



## Notes

Let us study some of the roles and responsibilities of ECCE teachers.

### Ensuring Safety and Security of Children

Children need to be physically and emotionally safe. An ECCE teacher must ensure that the ECCE centre is a safe place for them to move freely. They need to be continuously observed and supervised.

It is also required to create an emotionally safe and positive environment full of praise, encouragement and support in the classroom so that children feel comfortable and happy within their surroundings.

### Planning Activities

Planning is one of the most important roles of ECCE teachers. It is required at every phase of delivering a quality ECCE programme. They are required to plan a number of activities including curriculum, time table, age appropriate indoor and outdoor learning activities, assessment procedures, parent teachers meeting, workshops etc. Teachers have to plan keeping in mind children and their requirements; societal needs and expectations; availability of resources and feasibility. Thus, thoughtful and systematic planning is essential and helps in attaining the desired outcomes.

### Designing and implementing ECCE Curriculum

This is one of the most important roles of ECCE teachers. Teachers understand the needs and developmental levels of children. Hence, they should actively contribute in designing the curriculum which encompasses all the experiences provided to children.

A well designed curriculum can only be successful if teachers are trained in delivering and implementing it in the right manner.

### Creating an Enriching Teaching Learning Environment

Each child has an individual learning style and pace of learning. One teaching approach might not be effective for all children. ECCE teachers own the responsibility of creating a supportive and nurturing environment for young children. There are various aspects which together contribute to conducive learning environment at the ECCE centre. Let us study the role of teachers with respect to these aspects.

- ECCE teachers need to organize and manage classrooms. This requires them to allocate the space for different activities, select age appropriate equipment and learning material and organise classroom space to cater to the requirements of children with disabilities. Safety and security of children are also to be ensured by the teacher.
- ECCE teachers have to use a variety of teaching learning material to make learning interesting and meaningful. It is the teachers' responsibility to procure appropriate teaching learning material. They may also create the learning material using locally available low-cost and no-cost materials as per the need. They are required to innovatively use and recycle material.



For example, they may use empty cartons for making pencil/pen stand, bird feeder, toy bus, house etc. Similarly, waste plastic bottles may be used for making rockets, pen stand, etc. Teachers should also provide waste materials to children to manipulate and create something. This helps development of creativity and imagination in children. In addition, the material found in the natural environment like pebbles, dry leaves and twigs also attract children and they prefer to play with them.

Teachers have to be innovative in using teaching learning material in multiple ways, for example they may use pebbles for teaching the concept of rough and smooth surface, counting, addition, subtraction, playing etc.

- Organise age-and developmentally appropriate, engaging and interesting learning experiences. All children should be provided with ample opportunities to play, observe, manipulate, interact, explore and experiment. Activities to cater to different development domains must be organised by the teachers. For example, they may organise role play for socio-emotional and language development, visit to a nearby park for physical-motor development etc.
- Teachers have the responsibility to ensure that every child in the classroom feels respected, accepted and welcomed. To address the existing diversity in the classroom, teachers are required to organise the learning process in such a manner that all children get an opportunity to participate and express themselves. Children with disabilities must be provided the required support in their development and learning.
- Teachers are responsible for conducting regular assessment to identify patterns of growth and development in children, monitor their progress, provide them support and create an enabling environment. This may be done through observation, making anecdotal records and portfolios.

### Organising Programmes and Events

- Scheduling and organising Parent Teacher Meetings (PTM) is another important responsibility of ECCE teachers. Both parents and teachers should aim for overall development of children. Thus, through these meetings they can work collaboratively to promote children's learning and development.
- Children need to be given varied exposure for their sound development. ECCE teachers are required to organise special talks/interaction for children on topics significant and related to their day to day life, for example the importance of safe drinking water, saving water and electricity, planting trees, healthy food and body, protecting animals etc. They also expected to celebrate special days and ensure active participation of children in these events.
- ECCE teachers are required to conduct orientation programmes and workshops for parents and community members as well.



Notes

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 17.2**

Fill in the blanks.

1. ECCE teachers should use .....low-cost and no-cost material.
2. Ample opportunities should be provided to children for their .....  
.....development.
3. Teachers may creatively ..... and .....material in an innovative manner.
4. ....and .....planning is essential and helps in attaining the desired outcomes.
5. Teachers should actively contribute in designing the.....
6. Children with disabilities must be provided the required support in their .....and.....

**ACTIVITY 17.1**

Talk to an ECCE teacher and list out the role she/he performs.

**WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT**

- Scheduling and organising parent-teacher meetings
- Organising special talks/interaction for children on topics significant and related to their day-to-day life, conducting orientation programmes and workshops for parents and community members.
- Ensuring that every child in the classroom feels respected, accepted and welcomed; address the existing diversity in the classroom. Children with disabilities must be provided the required support in their development and learning.
- Organising age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate, engaging and interesting learning experiences. All children should be provided with ample opportunities to play, observe, manipulate, interact, explore and experiment.
- Using a variety of teaching learning material to make learning interesting and meaningful. Create the learning material using locally available low-cost and no-cost materials, creatively use and recycle material in an innovative manner using teaching learning material in multiple ways.
- Organise and manage classrooms: Allocate the space for different activities, select age- appropriate equipment and learning materials and organise classroom space.

## Qualities and Roles of an ECCE Teacher

- Design and successfully implement ECCE Curriculum.
- Provide an emotionally safe and positive environment full of praise, encouragement and support for children to feel comfortable and happy.
- Planning a number of activities including curriculum, time table, age-appropriate indoor and outdoor learning activities, assessment procedures, parent teachers meeting, workshops etc.
- Conduct regular assessment.

### QUALITIES

- Loving and caring
- Creative and innovative
- Patient and persistent
- An active and empathetic listener
- Energetic, enthusiastic and motivated
- Cheerful and committed
- Flexible and adjusting
- Organised
- Self-confidence and high self-esteem
- An effective communicator
- Effective in building rapport with parents and community
- Research skills and lifelong learner



### TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. Briefly explain the roles and responsibilities of ECCE teachers.
2. Discuss the qualities of ECCE teachers.
3. How can ECCE teachers create an enriched learning environment for children?



### ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

17.1

1.

c	c	t	p	q	s	m	b	b	l	y
o	r	g	a	n	i	s	e	d	o	o
n	i	n	n	o	v	a	t	i	v	e



Notes



## Notes

f	e	m	p	a	t	h	e	t	i	c
i	m	s	a	c	x	z	i	l	n	a
d	p	s	t	r	b	c	i	l	g	r
e	t	t	i	e	d	k	n	p	c	i
n	l	q	e	a	c	t	i	v	e	n
t	c	p	n	t	h	f	d	c	j	g
f	c	l	t	i	n	m	c	x	k	f
n	k	m		v	o	n	z	z	z	m
0	j	f	l	e	x	i	b	l	e	b

## 2.

1. needs, potential 2. knowledge, developments 3. needs, developmental 4. flexible 5. emotions 6. love, trust

## 17.2

1. locally available 2. holistic 3. use, recycle 4. thoughtful, systematic 5. curriculum 6. development, learning

## REFERENCES

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