

THE IMPORTANCE OF GRADE R

Bridging the gap between pre-school and primary school

Although many parents are aware that Grade R is an important year that bridges the gap between pre-school and primary school, not many realise that this is a fundamentally important phase of a child's life. It's during this time that a child starts to develop a sense of self and acquires skills such as responsibility and independence. It's also during this phase of a child's life that they learn about consequences.

Skills for 21st-century six-year-olds

There are a few things to remember when it comes to preparing children to live in the 21st century. There should be an emphasis on the development of fundamental skills instead of just teaching children to remember content.

While there's currently an interest in technology learning tools appropriate for early childhood development, such as educational games and apps, it is essentially more important for children to have real-world interactions in order to learn core 21st-century life skills.

These are the fundamental survival skills children learn in Grade R, which will assist them in the fast-paced world we live in today:

- Critical thinking
- Problem solving
- The ability to communicate well
- Being able to collaborate with others
- Creativity

Children learn through their senses, so they need to spend time touching, seeing, hearing, tasting and smelling. They also learn through doing, so they need many opportunities to experience things for themselves.

We should rather be encouraging our children to play outside and use their imaginations to build forts and make up their own games with their friends.

Studies have shown that active play and movement are at the heart of children's learning. Again, this is where the reiteration and focus on play and activities that get children moving and engage all their senses is so much more important than purely teaching them to be quiet and sit still.

There should also be a focus on encouraging children to take responsibility for themselves and on learning to collaborate with others at this age. But this can be quite a daunting task for Grade R teachers and parents alike.

Young children are typically egocentric, and so feel like the world revolves around them. This can make group work activities challenging, as children may struggle to interact well with their peers. Teachers need to persevere with this kind of activity, and parents should encourage play dates with other children, even when it's not all fun and games. This type of interaction is important for children's social and emotional development.'

Grade R teachers have a tough job. They're essentially laying the groundwork to prepare our little ones for schooling as well as for life. Grade R is a key year in a child's educational development because it focuses on helping children take important steps towards independence while teaching them vital social skills. This can contribute towards a well-rounded child who can take on responsibility later in life. Not being ready socially and emotionally is one of the most frequent reasons children are held back from progressing to Grade 1.