



PRESCHOOL LITERACY POLICY



GRINDAVÍKURBÆR

Emergent literacy

In the Preschool Act it is stated that: "Learning through play should be encouraged in a creative environment where children are afforded a variety of opportunities to grow" (Preschool Act no. 90/2008). In the national curriculum for preschools literacy is one of the fundamental pillars and "literacy at preschool level involves the children's knowledge, skills and ability to read in their environment and express their experiences, emotions and opinions in various ways". The best results are achieved when there is good co-operation between preschools and parents as regards the children's learning.

The preschool years are a time when important foundations are laid for the development of children to prepare them for acquiring reading skills at a later stage, and the concept emergent literacy is often used to refer to this process. Emergent literacy has been defined as consisting of certain skills, knowledge and perspective that is developed as the precursor to actual reading and writing skills. Emergent literacy involves an understanding of literacy-related concepts and includes traditional literacy elements: phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, word decoding, vocabulary, language comprehension and writing.





Many studies confirm the importance of an environment that encourages language use among children, not least in order to strengthen vocabulary and language comprehension. One example is the importance of teaching vocabulary in connection with reading comprehension. There are indications that children who are well-prepared for learning to read will use reading instruction to a greater advantage; they learn to read at an earlier stage and reach a higher level of reading skills than children who acquire less skills in the basics of emergent literacy.

- It is important to encourage a positive attitude in the minds of children.
- It is important that children have access to materials for play that encourage language and literacy acquisition, both at play and in more structured activities.
- Through their main objective, playing, preschools shall organize the learning of children in such a way that the children enjoy improving their language and literacy skills in a wide context through diverse experience and materials.
- Early intervention is important to give particular support to the children who clearly need such support.
- With targeted action whereby it is emphasized to improve the language and literacy skills of all children preschools can work towards creating equal opportunities for children to succeed in their studies and life in general.
- Studies show that the home environment has an effect on literacy, for instance it matters if children see their parents read and whether there are books or other reading materials available in the home.

In the preschool

- There is a written literacy plan.
- There is emphasis on varied work with all aspects of language (vocabulary, word comprehension, expression of language, recounting ability, listening skills, phonological awareness and written language).
- Children have good access to diverse material that encourages language skills.
- There are targeted endeavors to teach bilingual children Icelandic as a second language through play and with their active participation.
- There is monitoring of children's progress in language development and literacy skills, and attested analytical tools/screening is used to monitor progress.
- There are early interventions and consultations with experts when there is suspicion of language development problems. It is necessary to define the nature of the problem by obtaining good background information about the child and examine closely what aspects of language must be addressed, and provide advice and targeted training in order to get results.
- Parents are encouraged to co-operate actively when it comes to the language and literacy skills of their children, and are informed about their progress.



Co-operation with parents

- There is an initiative to improve literacy skills with the co-operation of parents.
- There is a dialog with parents regarding the importance of reading.
- Parents are informed about their children's learning and progress with regard to language and literacy skills.
- Guidance is provided to parents as to how they can support and encourage their children's language and literacy skills.
- Parents of children with a first language other than Icelandic are informed of the importance of first language and how the preschool and parents can together encourage active bilingualism.
- Parents can borrow and take home with them books or other materials for play that stimulate language and literacy skills.
- Parents are encouraged to set a good example by making regular visits to the preschool for reading.
- Studies show that the home environment has an effect on literacy, for instance it matters if children see their parents read and whether there are books or other reading materials available in the home.
- Particular attention is given to strengthening co-operation with parents who for some reason have fewer opportunities to improve and encourage their children's language and literacy skills.





Diverse co-operation

It is important that preschools engage in good co-operation with their local environment, including elementary schools, libraries, healthcare centers and senior citizens.

Examples of educational materials:



**Lubbi finnur málbein
(Lubbi finds a
tongue-bone)**



**Markviss málörvun
(Targeted language
stimulation)**



K-PALS



**TMT -
Tákn með tali
(Signing and talking)**

Screening

- Tras – Registration of the language development of young children
- EFI-2 – Language development screening for children in their fourth year
- HLJÓM-2 – Examination of phonemic and language awareness of preschoolers

Supplementary material

Diverse and prepared educational material such as board games, computer games and apps that stimulate language and literacy skills can be used with children of all age groups. It is important that all preschool staff have access to such material and not only those responsible for special teaching. The following list is by no means comprehensive but here are some examples of educational material and links:

Orðaspjall is a way to improve vocabulary and listening comprehension of children by reading books.

The handbook for this method and information can be found at www.tjarnarsel.is

Lærum og leikum með hljóðin www.laerumogleikum.is

Lubbi finnur málbein www.forlagid.is/?p=16717

"Markviss málörvun" is a handbook for the development of phonological awareness and the connection between phonological awareness and reading processes and development of literacy.

Various points about encouraging language skills and communication are to be found in the books Ljáðu mér eyra and Bína bálreiða by Ásthildur Bj. Snorradóttir.

Various apps for encouraging the language skills of preschoolers can be found at www.appland.is/leikskoli

Tákn með tali www.tmt.is

Paxel123, language skill stimulation and mathematics in many languages <http://paxel123.com/is>



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www.grindavik.is - www.visitgrindavik.is - grindavik@grindavik.is

