

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 619**

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**619. Mrs D van der Walt (DA) to ask the Minister of Basic Education: to ask the Minister of Basic Education:**

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- (1) Whether her department has a national network of centres for children aged zero to four years; if not,
- (2) whether she intends to establish a national network of centres for children aged zero to four years; if not, why not; if so, by what date;
- (3) whether every primary school in each province has a formal Grade R class; if not, will she furnish Mrs D van der Walt with a list of schools where there is none in each province; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (4) what formal qualification is currently required for (a) Grade R and (b) Grade RR teachers?

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##### Response

1. We are not sure what the MP means by a national network of ECD centres. However, in South Africa early learning programmes are delivered through a wide array of largely non-State providers, including sole-proprietors, micro-enterprises and non-profit organisations (NPOs). During the 2021 ECD Census, the Department mapped out 42,420 early learning programmes across the country.

2. The Department is proposing an integrated Service Delivery Model, which seeks to increase access to quality ECD services, while bearing in mind the need to streamline services to ensure that the government can feasibly support all ECD programmes. This will entail seeking opportunities to provide services to ECD programmes in a way to enable programmes to benefit from economies of scale. However, it is also recognised that such a model needs to respond to the different needs of both caregivers and children. Some caregivers require full day-care for their children, whilst others do not. Children aged birth to 5 years require different support and interventions for their healthy growth, development and early learning. The DBE will therefore, enable the provision of multiple modalities of ECD provisioning to ensure that they are age- and developmental-stage appropriate. These modalities include independent ECD programmes, public-private provisioning ECD programmes, playgroups and home-based programmes. These modalities will be supported by toy-libraries and mobile ECD programmes.

3. Not all Primary schools have formal Grade R classes. **Please See Annexure**

4. Grade R teachers are required to have a B.Ed degree in Foundation Phase (R-3). Grade RR teachers are required to have a National Diploma in Early Childhood Development.