

# PARO COLLEGE OF EDUCATION CENTRE FOR CHILDHOOD STUDIES

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A GUIDE FOR VISITORS



# JOENPALEGSO - WELCOME TO OUR CENTRE

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# THE ROLE OF THE CENTRE AT PCE

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- To serve as the centre for research in ECD studies, disseminating culturally relevant findings.
- To serve as a professional development centre for ECCD.
- To pilot alternative models of programming and practice for Bhutan.
- To establish a multi service hub for children and their families.
- To serve as a hub for linkages to similar centres in other countries and become an active participant in international discussion and innovation.

# VALUES AND PHILOSOPHY

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- The values of Gross National Happiness are at the heart of every aspect of life in Bhutan. Consistent with GNH, we value our learners' prior knowledge and skills and respect individual and cultural differences, needs, and aspirations.
- Children are encouraged to explore and ask questions, fostering dispositions like helpfulness, curiosity, creativity, generosity, responsibility, caring, and independence.
- Children learn best when they can act upon their environment and manipulate open ended materials. They become the authors of their own learning when they take part in investigations and representations of the world around them.

# OUR PRACTICE

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- Early childhood practitioners work with children, their families, and the wider community.
- This is a very different model to that of traditional schooling whose focus is on covering the subject disciplines of the curriculum.
- Early childhood practitioners work in holistic ways that recognise the child as part of a complex set of social contexts that impact upon the child to influence his or her development.
- We are proudly working in a Bhutanese context so our program and practice may look very different from your experiences of teaching and learning.
- We believe our children come to preschool with rich funds of knowledge and capabilities that are uniquely Bhutanese. We strive to honour the children's strengths and home knowledge.
- Given the right support, we believe that every child has the potential to learn.

# OUR PRACTICE

## CONTINUED

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- We prepare engaging and challenging environments to extend children's interests and to cater for children's needs..We strive to reflect the children's cultural contexts.
- We believe in using open ended play materials that are familiar to the children..
- Facilitators work beside the children offering advice and providing support. They look for opportunities to extend children's thinking rather than have them memorize facts..
- We extend and enrich children's experiences through field visits to places of interest and in depth projects to follow up the experience.
- Literacy and mathematics are addressed throughout the program in meaningful ways.
- This way of teaching acknowledges and builds on the strengths and capabilities of the children so that they are able to become responsible, caring and self motivated members of society.

# THE THEORIES BEHIND OUR PRACTICE

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Key contemporary theories that underpin good early childhood practice include – at the forefront - sociocultural theories, then ecological theories, post-structural and critical theories, a few revised developmental theories, as well as recent brain research.

- We choose an eclectic range of contemporary theoretical frameworks as no single theory can meet all needs.
- We consider multiple perspectives and multiple ways of explaining how children learn, develop and play
- We recognise that the usefulness of theories is directly related to the contexts in which they are applied
- We acknowledge that children exist in social contexts and that understanding children involves understanding their contexts
- We realise that theories change, and so do their implications for practice
- We challenge, question and reflect on assumptions underpinning theories

(Arthur, Beecher, Death, Dockett, Farmer, 2012, p 73)

# PLANNING YOUR VISIT

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## **Approval of the Program Leader must be obtained**

- **Step 1:** Long before you visit you must make an appointment with the Program Leader, Karma Chimmi Wangchuck., to discuss your intentions [karmacwangchuk.pce@rub.edu.bt]
- **Step 2:** Discuss with the Program Leader and staff to your purpose for visiting. You will be advised if your plan fits with the centre's philosophy, program, schedule and protocols.
- **Step 3:** We take learning seriously and expect you to respect the children's and staff working space. You must become familiar with our requirements for being in our working spaces.



# RESPECT OUR CHILDREN'S LEARNING SPACE

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- Take off your shoes and enter the room quietly without interrupting the teacher and children.
- Observe from a distance. Find a place to sit that is well out of the way of the children working. Be unobtrusive – like a fly on the wall.
- Do NOT use your mobile phone in the classrooms.
- Do NOT talk to the children or engage in their play.
- Do NOT take photographs unless you have permission.
- DO take notes, DO observe reflectively.
- DO observe the code of confidentiality about your observations.
- DO meet with staff after your visit to debrief.

# THANK YOU FOR VISITING

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## Feedback

- We like to hold a debrief session with visitors so that any questions may be answered..
- In our debrief session we will focus on one or two areas you might want to know more about.
- We like to know what you thought about our centre and we hope you will leave comments in our visitors book.