

## NURSERY SCHOOLS OF SCHEDULED CASTES DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT



*Submitted to*  
**Scheduled Castes Development Department**  
**Government of Kerala**

**December 2018**



*An Autonomous Institution of Government of Kerala*  
*Thiruvananthapuram – 17*



**NURSERY SCHOOLS  
OF SCHEDULED CASTES DEVELOPMENT  
DEPARTMENT  
[*Report No: 6*]**

**MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF SCHEMES  
IMPLEMENTED BY SCHEDULED CASTES DEVELOPMENT  
DEPARTMENT DURING THE ELEVENTH AND  
TWELFTH PLAN PERIOD [2007-2017]**

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Thiruvananthapuram - 18*



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The Nursery Schools run by the Scheduled Castes Development Department (SCDD) play a significant role in providing pre-school education to children from SC communities in Kerala. These schools provide a healthy and positive environment that helps the child's personality to develop.

We would like to thank all the officials of Scheduled Castes Development Department, staff and parents of the sample nursery schools and representatives of various NGOs who wholeheartedly cooperated in this study. Thanks are also due to all the academic and non-academic staff of GIFT.

We are happy to submit this report to Scheduled Castes Development Department, Government of Kerala. The findings of the report, we hope, will be useful for further improving the functioning of nursery schools.

Thiruvananthapuram  
December 2018

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Study Team of Gulati Institute of Finance and Taxation gratefully acknowledges the help and support extended by the following officials:

- **Dr.V. Venu IAS**  
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- **Officials and Staff of all Nursery Schools under SCDD**

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## ABBREVIATIONS

CBSE	Central Board of Secondary Education
GP	Grama Panchayat
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Scheme
IT	Information Technology
LG	Local Government
NR	No Response
PTA	Parents Teachers Association
SC	Scheduled Castes
SCDD	Scheduled Castes Development Department
SSLC	Secondary School Leaving Certificate
ST	Scheduled Tribes
UNESCO	United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

Nursery programmes are uniquely placed to play a critical role in building young children's resilience and feelings of well-being from the early years of their life. They provide children with pre-school orientation, help parents in nurturing healthy habits in their wards and the communities by facilitating the learning and personality development of the new generation. Nursery School programme was launched by the SCDD with the above objectives in view. The objective of the present study was to analyse the present status of nursery schools under SCDD, understand their problems and issues and make some suggestions to improve their functioning. Given below are the major suggestions based on analysis of data and information collected through survey, and on discussions with stakeholders. The suggestions are grouped under three heads viz., Teaching, Administration and Infrastructure Facilities

### Teaching

1. **Syllabus** - It is understood that a common syllabus for nursery schools has been introduced recently. Once implemented, it may be evaluated and modified based on inputs from teachers and other stakeholders.
2. **In-service Training:** In order to keep the nursery teachers updated about pre-school learning practices and child care, they may be given an in-service training. This is especially needed for dealing with the specially challenged and differently-abled students in their schools. Apart from pedagogy and child care, the training may also

include basic administration and maintenance of accounts, registers etc. A tie-up with Education Department may be sought for providing regular annual training.

3. **Improving Family Environment:** In many cases, the students come from families facing several social and economic problems that disturb the learning environment and affects the behaviour of the children in the class. In order to address their emotional and learning problems, counseling programmes may be organized for students, teachers and parents to address those issues in a coordinated manner. The advice and help of NGOs working in this field may be sought for this.
4. **New Approach to Curriculum:** There is no curriculum for nursery schools across Kerala. Therefore a curriculum may be developed, based on **‘Teaching and Learning through Play’** perspective. Such a curriculum may take into account the social conditions of SC communities in Kerala and develop appropriate learning techniques and tools like local songs and stories that will stimulate their faculties and address their issues. Books, teaching aids and tools including learning/teaching software also need to be developed and prepared by incorporating puzzles, games, and learning activities for children.
4. **Teaching Aids:** Teaching materials are crucial to pre-school learning. They have to be identified and provided to nursery schools and constantly updated, to help in making learning and teaching more easy and playful. All nurseries may be provided with enough materials for Sketching, Drawing, Painting, Sculpting etc.



5. **Educational Toys:** During the survey, 26 nurseries reported about lack of sufficient toys. Enough educational toys may be supplied to all nursery schools. All toys supplied to the schools may be standardised as per UNESCO guidelines for toys.
6. **Medical Check-up:** Arrangements may be done to ensure mandatory medical check-ups at least once in three months.

### **Administration**

1. **Lack of Monitoring:** In order to monitor and evaluate the functioning of the nursery schools a web enabled monitoring system may be developed. There may be regular inspections by the higher authorities to understand and address the problems faced by the schools.
2. **Introduce Transfer Facility:** The transfer facilities to staff may be introduced in nursery schools.
3. **Annual Performance Report:** An Annual Performance Report may be designed for submission by all nursery schools under SCDD. The proforma may elicit basic information about the students, staff and infrastructure of the school. It may also include information about the status and functioning of the nearest nursery school in the locality which is run by other agencies.
4. **Timely fund allotment:** There is delay in disbursement of funds to nursery schools especially for the midday meal scheme, conduct of Annual day, study tour, observance of Independence and Republic day, purchase of study materials, teaching aids, computer, food

expenses, maintenance of transport facility, building/Furniture, disbursal of festival allowances etc. Necessary arrangements may be taken to release the funds for these purposes in time to ensure the smooth functioning of the school and not to overburden the staff with such expenses.

### **Infrastructure Facilities**

1. **Own building:** 14 nursery schools are working in rented buildings. Steps are needed to construct permanent buildings for the nursery schools that have sufficient number of pupils but are working at present in rented buildings.
2. **Cooking Gas facility:** A gas connection may be provided wherever there is no gas connection.
3. **Safe Drinking Water facilities:** Drinking water facilities are not up to the mark in many schools. In some schools, it is procured from nearby wells or public taps. Facilities for safe drinking water are a must and arrangements for the same should be made at the earliest.
4. **IT enabled education:** There are no computer facilities in almost all the schools. Computers and internet connection may be provided to all nursery schools.
5. **Playground:** In the case of 49 nurseries, they have no playground. As play is crucial in creating an amicable learning and growing environment, it should be given top priority. Wherever possible,

space for playgrounds may be identified and developed, or schools shifted to locations where play space is available or nearby.

6. **Maintenance of Buildings:** Action may be taken for timely maintenance of buildings at the earliest.
7. **Electricity Connection:** There are 27 nurseries that do not have electricity. Necessary steps may be taken for the immediate sanction and installation of electricity connection in these schools.
8. **Toilets:** 11 Nurseries are working without own toilet facility. Child-friendly toilets may be constructed in these schools at the earliest. All the nurseries under SCDD may ensure construction of child-friendly toilets.



## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

*Your children are not your children.  
They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself.  
They come through you but not from you.  
And though they are with you, yet they belong not to you.  
You may give them your love but not your thoughts,  
For they have their own thoughts.  
You may house their bodies but not their souls,  
For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow,  
Which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.  
You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like you.  
For life goes not backwards nor tarries with yesterday.  
You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent forth*

**Kahlil Gibran, *On Children***

Early education is an important phase in a child's life that shapes and influences the learning experiences and attitudes in children. It is an institution that plays a crucial role in the character formation and intellectual development of a child, which in turn influences their performance in school and future role in society. Unfortunately in India, about 20 million Indian children aged between three-to-six years who come from poor families and marginalized communities do not attend pre-school.<sup>1</sup> Given this national context, the nursery schools established and run by Scheduled Castes Development Department of Kerala is an important initiative at the state level to address this issue. These schools play a significant role in providing pre-school education for SC children in Kerala.

## **1.1 Importance of Pre School Education**

For a child, formal education starts at the age of 5 with primary schooling. The pre-school years are the most impressionable and crucial years in the life of any individual. These years are normally spent at homes and this is as it should be. All great educationalists have stressed the importance of home in the early education of a child. The ‘mother’s lap’ is child’s first school. But due to economic and social factors, many houses are unable to provide the right type of learning environment to the growing child. In this situation, a good pre-primary school is the only answer.

The nursery schools do not attempt to replace or substitute the home but is only its extension. Nor is it a school for formal education, which must wait till the child is 5 years old. The pre-school years being very impressionable, children must be provided a healthy and positive environment that helps the child’s personality to develop. It not only prepares them for proper schooling when it is time for that, but also gives a positive beginning. In other words, pre-primary education should aim at providing an environment for the physical, psychological, and educational development of the child.

## **1.2 Nursery Schools managed by SCDD**

There are 88 Nursery Schools working under the aegis of Scheduled Castes Development Department (SCDD) in Kerala. Ernakulam and Trivandrum districts have the highest number of Nurseries i.e. 17, 12 respectively. Thrissur district has 9 nurseries and Malappuram 7. Kollam, Pathanamthitta and Kasaragod districts have 6 Nursery schools each. Kozhikode district has the least number of nursery schools i.e., one, while there is no SCDD Nursery Schools in Wayanad district. Distribution of Nursery Schools of SCDD by type of Local Government is given in Table 1.1.

<b>Table 1.1</b>				
<b>Distribution of Nursery Schools of SCDD by Type of Local Government</b>				
<b>District</b>	<b>Corporation</b>	<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Grama Panchayat</b>	<b>Total</b>
Thiruvananthapuram	1		11	12
Kollam		1	5	6
Pathanamthitta		1	7	8
Alappuzha			3	3
Kottayam		1	5	6
Idukki			3	3
Ernakulam	1	1	17	19
Thrissur	1	1	7	9
Palakkad			4	4
Malappuram		1	7	8
Kozhikode			1	1
Kannur			3	3
Kasaragod			6	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>88</b>
Percent	3.7	7.3	89.0	100.0

*Source: SCDD*

Out of the total number of Nursery schools, 73 (89 percent) are situated in Grama Panchayat areas, 6 (7.3 percent) are in Municipalities and only 3 (3.7 percent) in Corporations.

### 1.3 Objective of the Study

The objective of the present study is to evaluate the current status of the Nurseries in Kerala under the aegis of Scheduled Castes Development Department and provide policy level suggestions to improve their functioning.

### 1.4 Methodology of the Study

As shown above, 88 nursery schools are run by Scheduled Castes Development Department (SCDD) in Kerala. For evaluation of their functioning a detailed questionnaire was used. The teachers and Ayahs of all the 88 nursery schools were invited for a one day workshop to their nearest district centres in which officials from 82 schools

participated. For the same, the study team conducted three regional workshops in Thiruvananthapuram, Ernakulam and Kozhikode. Focus Group Discussions (FGD) were conducted to elicit relevant data, information and opinions about the functioning of the Nursery Schools. The Study Team also conducted field visits to some of the nursery schools to have a first-hand understanding about the status of the nursery schools and students, and conducted discussion with parents of the students.





## **CHAPTER II**

### **NURSERY SCHOOLS UNDER SCDD IN KERALA**

Establishment of nursery schools under SCDD was launched in the year 1966-67. The necessity of establishing nurseries for SC children arose along with the setting up of a large number of SC colonies by SCDD. Most of the SC colonies and settlements were situated in out-of-the way places cut off from the general population and as a result they did not have facilities to send their children to school. It was also often found that the students who joined school from poor SC families were below average in their educational standards. Due to the poor educational background of their parents and unfavourable environment at home, the SC children did not get good quality learning facility at pre-primary level. In order to overcome this, SCDD started nursery schools and Balawadi-cum-feeding centres in SC colonies and settlements.<sup>2</sup>

#### **2.1 Nursery Schools and Balawadi-cum-feeding centres**

After one decade of the establishment of nursery schools, SCDD started Balawadi-cum-feeding centres in SC colonies and settlements from 1979.<sup>3</sup> Similar to nursery schools, Balawadis also aimed to prepare SC children for education and to create affinity for learning. Children between age group 3 to 5 years were admitted to Balawadis. The maximum strength of students in each Balawadi was limited to 40. Pregnant and lactating mothers were also admitted in Balawadis with a maximum of 20 persons and 10 per cent was reserved for non-SC communities. Mid-day meal was provided to children and mothers. One teacher and one ayah were appointed in each Balawadi whose duties and

functions were same as in the nursery schools. There were 200 Balawadis under the control of SCDD out of which 85 were transferred to social welfare department in 1986<sup>4</sup> and others were merged with SCDD nursery schools.

## 2.2 Objectives of Nursery Schools

The chief objectives of this scheme were well defined and periodically modified. Initially it aimed at the physical, mental and social development of SC children<sup>5</sup> and later, their educational and emotional development too were included<sup>6</sup>. The objectives can be listed as follows:

1. **Physical development**, from a well chalked out routine with balanced diet, activities and rest, outdoor play, and health care.
2. **Mental development**, through right environment, varied experiences and contact with understanding, empathetic adults.
3. **Social development**, resulting from contact with other children, teachers and others outside one's familial circle and social environment.
4. **Emotional development**, from a richer emotional life, through learning about what, how, when and why of emotional reactions and expressions.
5. **Educational development**. For a better preparation for adolescent school life by acquiring necessary background skills and attitudes for formal education.
6. **Parental education**. Value to parents through counseling and consultation about parenting

### **2.3 Functions of Nursery Schools**

Nursery schools for SC children were envisioned not to replace learning at home but as an extension to it. It was designed to prepare SC children for proper schooling when they enter primary education. Hence the functions of nursery schools were designed to provide a happy and comfortable early school days for them. The major areas of concern of the pre-primary schools include physical, social, psychological and educational development of the children.<sup>7</sup>

Physical development includes personal hygiene like taking regular bath, special care for teeth, skin, nails etc. Frequent medical inspections are made to prevent acute infections, fevers, communicable diseases etc. For healthy physical development of the children, well balanced diet is provided to them. Play is the main activity of the nursery school to ensure proper physical and mental development. For relaxation and sleep, rest periods before lunch and after the mid-day meal, are scheduled. Nursery schools also look after the mental, intellectual, emotional and social development and provide informal or preparatory stage education. All these activities are conducted in an encouraging and friendly atmosphere without any compulsion or punishment.

### **2.4 Staff and their duties<sup>8</sup>**

Each nursery school has a teacher and one ayah. The teacher should work as a teacher and a guardian, the ayah's role is similar to that of a nurse-maid in a domestic establishment. The ayah should attend to the children, prepare their food and clean the premises.

Activities in a nursery school are divided into free activities and directed activities.<sup>9</sup> Free activities are those which arise spontaneously

from the children's natural energy or from their interests which include playing with toys, tricycles, swing, dolls and other accessories. Directed activities are those over which the teacher exercises a direct influence with a view to encourage the children to engage in co-operative effort, making them realize the potential in themselves of which they are unaware. The directed activities include various activities like music and rhythmic movement, listening to or relating stories, looking at pictures, chanting rhymes, observing or talking about matters of interest etc.

In terms of their duties and responsibilities, the teachers of nursery schools of SCDD are different from the teachers of other schools because they did not have any prescribed syllabus till recently, or any specific course of instructions. The main responsibilities of teachers are to ensure the wellbeing and safety of children, observe their choice and use of material for play, and to give friendly advices and suggestions.



## 2.5 Student Strength

The minimum number of children is 25 for nursery class with a maximum of 45. Twenty five percent of the sanctioned strength is reserved for non-SC/ST children. If sufficient numbers of students under the above categories are not available these seats will be filled up with SC and ST children only. All the children in the nursery schools are entitled to get the same concessions. Age group for admission is between three and half to five years.

## 2.6 Students Strength of Nursery Schools during 2007-17

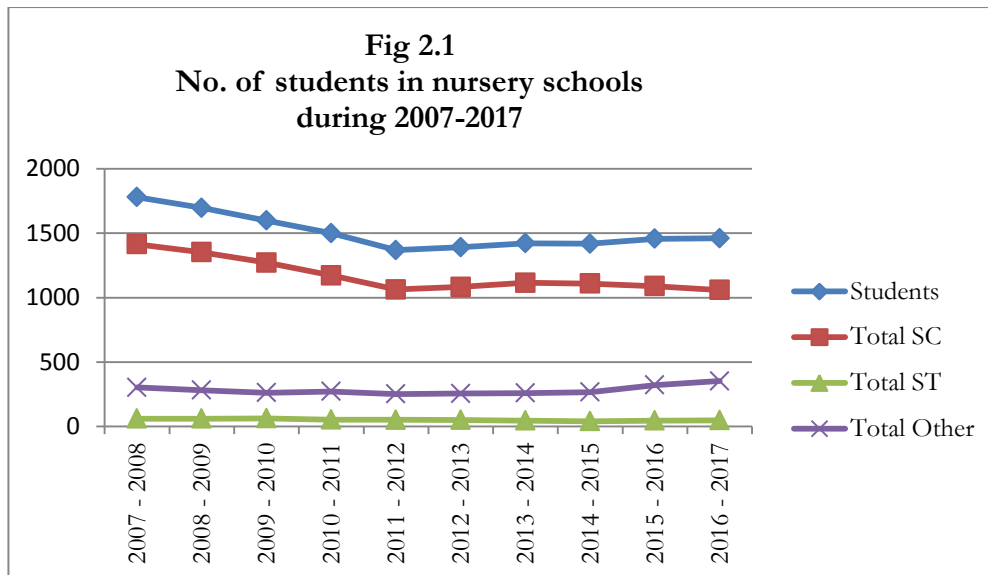
Table 2.1 shows the number of students who attended nursery schools during the ten years period 2007-2017.

Table 2.1 Student Strength of Nursery Schools of SCDD - 2007-17													
Year	No. of Nurseries	Total Students			Scheduled Castes			Scheduled Tribes			Non SC/ST		
		Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
2007 - 2008	77	956	824	1780	752	663	1415	30	31	61	174	130	304
2008 - 2009	78	907	790	1697	714	639	1353	35	27	62	158	124	282
2009 - 2010	78	841	757	1598	667	605	1272	38	26	64	136	126	262
2010 - 2011	78	808	692	1500	630	543	1173	30	24	54	148	125	273
2011 - 2012	79	710	659	1369	548	515	1063	25	28	53	137	116	253
2012 - 2013	80	722	669	1391	563	520	1083	26	26	52	133	123	256
2013 - 2014	80	749	673	1422	587	528	1115	26	21	47	136	124	260
2014 - 2015	80	773	645	1418	604	505	1109	24	17	41	145	123	268
2015 - 2016	81	809	648	1457	591	498	1089	25	21	46	193	129	322
2016 - 2017	81	745	716	1461	561	498	1059	26	23	49	158	195	353
<b>Total</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>8020</b>	<b>7073</b>	<b>15093</b>	<b>6217</b>	<b>5514</b>	<b>11731</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>1518</b>	<b>1315</b>	<b>2833</b>
		<b>53.1</b>	<b>46.9</b>	<b>100</b>			<b>77.7</b>			<b>3.5</b>			<b>18.8</b>

Source: Primary Data

During the period 2007-17, a total of 15093 students attended nursery classes. Among them 53.1%(8020) were boys and 46.9% (7073) girls. 77.7 per cent of the total students are from SC category and 3.5 per cent are ST category. 18.8 per cent of students from non-SC/ST category also attended nursery schools.

The growth trend of students during the period is given in Figure 2.1.



The above figure shows a gradual decline in the number of students in nursery schools during the period 2007 and 2017. Along with the number of total students, the share of SC students is also declining. In the case of ST students, their strength has remained stable throughout the last ten years. In contrast, the strength of general category students is found especially since 2014-2015.

Discussions with stakeholders revealed that this could be due to the change in the preference of parents who wish to send their children to private nurseries which, according to them, offer English medium education. Other major reasons for decrease in strength of students are the lack of infrastructure facilities in some nursery schools. Issues related to the transportation of the students from their home to the school is another reason, while in some areas the SC population has drastically reduced leading to drop in number of students in nursery schools.



## 2.7 Staff Strength

Working in a nursery school involves being part of a team that takes care for children up to the age of five or six. In the school environment, the task is to provide a safe and stimulating environment for children to do a variety of creative activities, taking them out for play and generally making sure they have fun while they learn. The staff should also work with parents to make sure that the children get the best possible care and attention at home too.



Table 2.2 presents the strength (Teachers & Ayah) and nature of appointment of SCDD Nursery School staff during 2016-17.

<b>Table 2.2</b> <b>Staff Strength and Nature of Appointment of</b> <b>SCDD Nursery Schools during 2016-17</b>								
District	No: of Nurseries	Total Staff			Teacher		Ayah	
		Teacher	Ayah	Total	Perma nent	Temp orary	Perma nent	Temp orary
Thiruvananthapuram	12	12	10	22	11	1	7	3
Kollam	6	6	6	12	5	1	3	3
Pathanamthitta	6	6	6	12	5	1	5	1
Alappuzha	3	3	2	5	3	0	1	1
Kottayam	5	5	5	10	5	0	5	0
Idukki	3	3	3	6	3	0	3	0
Ernakulam	17	17	17	34	17	0	16	1
Thrissur	9	9	9	18	9	0	9	0
Palakkad	3	3	3	6	3	0	3	0
Malappuram	7	7	9	16	7	0	6	3
Kozhikode	1	1	1	2	1	0	1	0
Kannur	3	3	3	6	3	0	1	2
Kasaragod	6	6	6	12	5	1	5	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>15</b>
Parentage					<b>95.1</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>81.2</b>	<b>18.8</b>

Source: Data collected from SCDD

In 2016-17, there are 161 employees working in 81 SCDD nurseries across Kerala, in which there are 81 teachers and 80 Ayahs. Out of the 81 teachers 95.1 per cent are permanent and 4.9 per cent are working on contract basis. Among the Ayahs 81.2 per cent are permanent and 18.8 per cent temporary. It is learned from the SCDD that number of contract employees in the position of teachers and ayahs has substantially reduced through recruitment of permanent staff during 2017-18.



## **CHAPTER III**

### **INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITIES OF NURSERY SCHOOLS**

Nursery schools are baby steps of a child to education. Pre-schools influence a child's personality development and help to build a strong foundation for the future. Therefore it is important for parents to choose a nursery school where the child can learn and grow in a healthy atmosphere. And infrastructure plays an important role in building such an atmosphere.<sup>10</sup> Infrastructural facilities include building, electric connection, availability of drinking water, toilet facility, furniture, transportation and gas connection.

#### **3.1 Location of Nursery Schools**

Choosing an appropriate site for establishing a nursery School is based on a number of parameters such as accessibility, safety, availability of electricity, drinking water, sanitation etc. In the case of SCDD, choice of location of nursery schools for SC children, and so, top priority was given to places where SC population was concentrated. Hence starting SC nursery schools, first preference was for SC colonies and settlements.<sup>11</sup>

#### **3.2 Importance of Infrastructure facilities in Nursery Schools**

Indoor settings of Nursery Schools must be safe and appropriate to ensure that children are physically and emotionally secure, their imaginations and intellects stimulated, and their changing needs met over time. Children need spaces where they can learn together or separately and can explore new concepts and master new skills. The physical condition of the space is important because it affects the well-

being, health and safety of both children and adults. Dilapidated spaces may be hazardous and unsafe for children.

### 3.3 Building

Initially nursery schools were established in SCDD-owned buildings as far as possible or in buildings offered free of cost by local people.<sup>12</sup> The structure of building included one class room measuring 20'x18' approximately, a play room measuring 30'x18' and a kitchen. In case of rented buildings, the rent was fixed by the Public Works Department. Table 3.1 shows the nature of ownership of nursery school buildings in Kerala.

<b>Table 3.1</b>				
<b>Nursery School Building – District wise</b>				
<b>Sl.No</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Own</b>	<b>Rented</b>	<b>Total</b>
1	Thiruvananthapuram	8	4	12
2	Kollam	4	2	6
3	Pathanamthitta	4	2	6
4	Alappuzha	2	1	3
5	Kottayam	5		5
6	Idukki	3		3
7	Ernakulam	15	2	17
8	Thrissur	7	2	9
9	Palakkad	3	1	4
10	Malappuram	7		7
11	Kozhikode	1		1
12	Wayanad	-	-	-
13	Kannur	3		3
14	Kasaragod	6		6
<b>Total</b>		<b>68</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>82</b>
Percent		82.9	17.1	100.0
<i>Source: Data collected from SCDD</i>				

Nursery schools under SCDD are functioning in both own (82.9 percent) and rented buildings (17.1 percent). Notably all the nurseries in northern districts like Malappuram, Kozhikode, Kannur and Kasaragod are functioning in own buildings. Table 3.2 shows the list of nursery schools working in rented buildings.

Table 3.2 List of Nurseries working in rented buildings		
Sl.No	District	Name of Nursery
1	Thiruvananthapuram	Muriankara
2	Thiruvananthapuram	Mariyapuram
3	Thiruvananthapuram	Thiruvallam
4	Thiruvananthapuram	Enhapuri
5	Kollam	Chalukonam
6	Ernakulam	Kadavoor
7	Ernakulam	Kumbalangi
8	Thrissur	Mannampetta
9	Thrissur	Nedupuzha
10	Palakkad	Mannarkadu
11	Kollam	Punaloor
12	Pathanamthitta	Velluvettupara
13	Pathanamthitta	Cherickal New
14	Alappuzha	Mannamcheri
<i>Source: Data collected from SCDD</i>		

### 3.4 Drinking Water

For drinking water SCDD Nursery schools depend on various sources. Table 3.3 shows the sources of drinking water of Nursery schools under SCDD.

Table 3.3									
Source of Drinking Water of Nursery Schools									
Sl. No	District	Bore Well	Tap	Public Tap	Well	Public Well	Rain Water Reservoir	Nearby	Total
1	Thiruvananthapuram	-	4	-	1	1		6	12
2	Kollam	-	2	-	2	-	-	2	6
3	Pathanamthitta	-	2	-	1	1	-	2	6
4	Alappuzha	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	3
5	Kottayam	-	-	1	1	-	-	3	5
6	Idukki	-	1	-	-	-	-	2	3
7	Ernakulam	-	10	-	5	-	-	2	17
8	Thrissur	-	8	-	1	-	-	-	9
9	Palakkad	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	4
10	Malappuram	-	3	-	4	-	-	-	7
11	Kozhikode	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
12	Kannur	-	1	-	-	-	1	1	3
13	Kasaragod	1	2	-	1	-	-	2	6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>82</b>
	Percent	3.7	41.5	2.4	22.0	2.4	1.2	26.8	100.0
<i>Source: Data collected from Nursery Schools</i>									

Availability of drinking water is a major problem faced by the Nursery Schools. In a state like Kerala, 26.8 percent of the nursery schools depend for water on nearby sources in schools' proximity. There are also two nurseries that depend on public tap for drinking water. Interestingly, some schools which have their own building are also depending on nearby wells for water.

### 3.5 Electricity

For the smooth running of nursery schools, uninterrupted supply of electricity is inevitable. Table 3.4 shows the status of availability of electric connection in nursery schools.

<b>Table 3.4</b>				
<b>Availability of Electricity in Nursery Schools</b>				
<b>Sl.No</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Total</b>
1	Thiruvananthapuram	9	3	12
2	Kollam	3	3	6
3	Pathanamthitta	2	4	6
4	Alappuzha	1	2	3
5	Kottayam	2	3	5
6	Idukki	3		3
7	Ernakulam	15	2	17
8	Thrissur	7	2	9
9	Palakkad	3	1	4
10	Malappuram	4	3	7
11	Kozhikode	-	1	1
12	Kannur	3		3
13	Kasaragod	3	3	6
<b>Total</b>		<b>55</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>82</b>
Percent		67.1	32.9	100.0
<i>Source: Primary Survey</i>				

Around one third (32.9 percent) of nurseries are working without electricity, and the rest (67.1 percent) of the schools have electric connection.

Table 3.5 shows the list of nurseries without electric connection.

<b>Table 3.5</b> <b>List of Nurseries not having Electricity</b>		
<b>Sl.No</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Name of Nursery</b>
1	Thiruvananthapuram	Perumkadavila
2	Kollam	Kulakkada
3	Pathanamthitta	Kunnamthanam
4	Kottayam	Kaduvakulam
5	Kottayam	Elakkad
6	Kottayam	Mulakulam
7	Ernakulam	Malayatoor
8	Ernakulam	Chellanam
9	Thrissur	Nedupuzha
10	Thrissur	Perumpilisserry
11	Palakkad	Thennur
12	Malappuram	Kolathur
13	Malappuram	Jawahar
14	Kasaragod	Paramba
15	Kasaragod	Kanathur
16	Malappuram	Purathur
17	Thiruvananthapuram	Varkala
18	Kollam	Punaloor
19	Kollam	Vilakudy
20	Thiruvananthapuram	Edakode
21	Kasaragod	Manameni
22	Pathanamthitta	Athalimon
23	Pathanamthitta	Velluvettupara
24	Pathanamthitta	Cherickal New
25	Kozhikode	Panikkattor
26	Alappuzha	Peringalippuram
27	Alappuzha	Mannamcheri
<i>Source: Primary Survey</i>		

### 3.6 Toilet

Proper toilet facility is a must in nursery schools, as it is a basic facility and a prerequisite to ensure personal hygiene as children acquire the practice of using toilet from their early age. Table 3.6 shows the status of toilet facility in SCDD nursery schools.

<b>Table 3.6</b>				
<b>Toilet facility in Nursery Schools</b>				
<b>Sl.No</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Total</b>
1	Thiruvananthapuram	9	3	12
2	Kollam	2	4	6
3	Pathanamthitta	3	3	6
4	Alappuzha	2	1	3
5	Kottayam	5	-	5
6	Idukki	3	-	3
7	Ernakulam	17	-	17
8	Thrissur	9	-	9
9	Palakkad	4	-	4
10	Malappuram	7	-	7
11	Kozhikode	1	-	1
12	Kannur	3	-	3
13	Kasaragod	6	-	6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>82</b>
	Percent	86.6	13.4	100.0
<i>Source: Primary Survey</i>				

Regarding toilet facility, SCDD nurseries maintain a remarkable record. While 87 per cent of nurseries have toilet facility, only 13 per cent are without it. The list of nurseries not having toilet facility is shown in Table 3.7.

Table 3.7 List of Nurseries not having Toilets		
Sl. No	District	Name of Nursery
1	Thiruvananthapuram	Muriankara
2	Thiruvananthapuram	Panavoor
3	Kollam	Chalukonam
4	Kollam	Kadakkamon
5	Pathanamthitta	Ezhikad
6	Kollam	Punaloor
7	Kollam	Veliyam
8	Pathanamthitta	Athalimon
9	Pathanamthitta	Velluvettupara
10	Thiruvananthapuram	Enhapuri
11	Alappuzha	Mannamcheri
<i>Source: Primary Survey</i>		





### 3.7 Furniture

The present study took into consideration the minimum furniture requirements for the smooth functioning of a nursery school, which includes classroom facilities like benches, desks, chairs and sleeping arrangements. Table 3.8 shows the status of furniture availability in nursery schools.

<b>Table 3.8</b>				
<b>Status of Availability of Furniture in Nursery Schools</b>				
<b>Sl. No</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Total</b>
1	Thiruvananthapuram	12	-	12
2	Kollam	4	2	6
3	Pathanamthitta	6	-	6
4	Alappuzha	2	1	3
5	Kottayam	5	-	5
6	Idukki	3	-	3
7	Ernakulam	17	-	17
8	Thrissur	8	1	9
9	Palakkad	4	-	4
10	Malappuram	6	1	7
11	Kozhikode	1	-	1
12	Kannur	3	-	3
13	Kasaragod	6	-	6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>82</b>
	Percent	93.9	6.1	100
<i>Source: Primary Survey</i>				

There are 77 (93.9) nursery schools with good furniture facilities. Only 6.1 percent nurseries do not have adequate furniture facilities.

Table 3.9 lists out the nurseries not having enough furniture facilities.

<b>Table 3.9</b> <b>Nursery Schools Not having Furniture</b>		
<b>Sl.No</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Name of Nursery</b>
1	Kollam	Chalukonam
2	Thrissur	Ananthapuram
3	Malappuram	Pulloor
4	Kollam	Punaloor
5	Alappuzha	Mannamcheri
<i>Source: Primary Survey</i>		

The furniture facility available in any school can be a factor for admission of students' in the Nursery schools.

### **Play Ground**

The status of play grounds in nursery schools is given Table 3.10.

<b>Table 3.10</b> <b>Status of Playground in Nursery Schools</b>				
<b>Sl.No</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Total</b>
1	Thiruvananthapuram	2	10	12
2	Kollam	2	4	6
3	Pathanamthitta	2	4	6
4	Alappuzha	2	1	3
5	Kottayam	2	3	5
6	Idukki	1	2	3
7	Ernakulam	7	10	17
8	Thrissur	3	6	9
9	Palakkad	2	2	4
10	Malappuram	3	4	7
11	Kozhikode	1		1
12	Kannur	3		3
13	Kasaragod	3	3	6
<b>Total</b>		<b>33</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>82</b>
Percent		40.2	59.8	100.0
<i>Source: Primary Survey</i>				

Only 33 out of 82 nurseries (40 per cent) have outdoor play ground space while the rest do not have such facility.

The nurseries without playground is listed in Table 3.11

<b>Table 3.11</b>			
<b>List of Nursery Schools with no Playground</b>			
<b>Sl.No</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>LG Name</b>	<b>Name of Nursery</b>
1	Thiruvananthapuram	Thirupuram	Thirupuram
2	Thiruvananthapuram	Parassala	Muriankara
3	Thiruvananthapuram	Balaramapuram	Thalayal
4	Thiruvananthapuram	Perumkadavila	Perumkadavila
5	Thiruvananthapuram	Chenkai	Mariyapuram
6	Thiruvananthapuram	Neyyatinkara	Perumpazhuthoor
7	Thiruvananthapuram	TVM Corporation	Thiruvallam
8	Kollam	Kottarakara	Chalukonam
9	Kottayam	Panchikad	Kaduvakulam
10	Kottayam	Ettumanoor	Ettumanoor
11	Kottayam	Kurichi	Kurichi
12	Idukki	Peerumade	Ranikovil
13	Ernakulam	Painggottur	Kadavoor
14	Ernakulam	Ezhikkara	Perumpadanna
15	Ernakulam	Kottappady	Kottappady
16	Ernakulam	Kadungalloor	Muppathadam
17	Ernakulam	Kumbalangi	Kumbalaghi
18	Ernakulam	Rayamangalam	Rayamangalam
19	Ernakulam	Puthenvelikkara	Puthenvelikkara
20	Ernakulam	Kochi	Kadavanthra
21	Ernakulam	Ramamangalam	Kizhumuri
22	Ernakulam	Thripunithura	Erumpana
23	Thrissur	Alakappa Nagar	Mannampetta
24	Thrissur	Varantharapilly	Velloppadam
25	Thrissur	Mala	Ashtamichira
26	Thrissur	Thrissur	Nedupuzha
27	Thrissur	Muriyad	Ananthapuram
28	Thrissur	Cherppu	Perumpazhuthoor
29	Palakkad	Parali	Thennur

30	Palakkad	Erimayoor	Alathur
31	Malappuram	Thalakkad	Pulloor
32	Malappuram	Kulathur	Kolathur
33	Malappuram	Nilambur	Jawahar
34	Kasaragod	West Eleri	Paramba
35	Kasaragod	Manjeswaram	Manjewaram
36	Malappuram	Purathur	Purathur
37	Thiruvananthapuram	Chemmaruthi	Varkala
38	Kollam	Punaloor	Punaloor
39	Kollam	Veliyam	Veliyam
40	Kollam	Vilakudy	Vilakudy
41	Pathanamthitta	Thumpaman	Thumpamonmuttam
42	Thiruvananthapuram	Mudakkal	Edakode
43	Kasaragod	West Eleri	Manameni
44	Pathanamthitta	Koipuram	Athalimon
45	Pathanamthitta	Pathanamthitta	Velluvettupara
46	Thiruvananthapuram	Aryanadu	Enhapuri
47	Idukki	Adimaly	Chillithode
48	Pathanamthitta	Pandalam	Cherickal New
49	Alappuzha	Mannamcheri	Mannamcheri
<i>Source: Primary Survey</i>			

Most of the schools do not have sufficient space for playground. Hence the important part of the children's early life, that of games, is denied to the students.

### 3.8 Transport Facility

Table 3.12 shows the availability status of transport facility in nursery schools. There are only 11 nurseries (13.4 per cent) working under SCDD that have their own transport facility. About three fourth of the nurseries do not have this facility.

Table 3.12 Availability of Transport Facility in Nursery Schools					
Sl. No	District	Yes	No	NR	Total
1	Thiruvananthapuram	3	9		12
2	Kollam	1	4	1	6
3	Pathanamthitta	-	4	2	6
4	Alappuzha	-	2	1	3
5	Kottayam	1	3	1	5
6	Idukki	1	2	-	3
7	Ernakulam	3	12	2	17
8	Thrissur	1	7	1	9
9	Palakkad	1	2	1	4
10	Malappuram	-	7	-	7
11	Kozhikode	-	-	1	1
12	Kannur	-	3	-	3
13	Kasaragod	-	6	-	6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>82</b>
	Percent	13.4	74.4	12.2	100.0
<i>Source: Primary Survey</i>					

Table 3.13 shows the list of nurseries having transport facility.

Table 3.13 List of Nurseries with Transport Facility		
Sl. No	District	Name of Nursery
1	Thiruvananthapuram	Thirupuram
2	Thiruvananthapuram	Mariyapuram
3	Thiruvananthapuram	Thiruvallam
4	Kollam	Kulakkada
5	Pathanamthitta	Kunnamthanam
6	Kottayam	Elakkad
7	Ernakulam	Kottappady
8	Ernakulam	Kuthattukulam
9	Thrissur	Kumaranellur
10	Palakkad	Mannarkadu
11	Idukki	Chillithode
<i>Source: Primary Survey</i>		

The importance of quality childcare settings and prerequisites such as safety, hygiene, ventilation, light and cleanliness cannot be over-emphasised. These settings exert a powerful influence on young children's development. Location plays a crucial role, allowing children to ignite their natural curiosity and wonderment through exploration of the physical landscape.

With regard to infrastructure facilities like own land, playground, electricity, water connection, furniture, toilet facilities etc, nurseries under SCDD have a good record. Among the nursery schools, 14 nursery schools are working in rented buildings. 61 nurseries reported about lack of transport facility for students which lead to the reduction of student strength every year. Drinking water facilities are not up to the mark in many schools. There are 27 nurseries that do not have electricity. 11 Nurseries are working without own toilet facility. 5 Nurseries don't have sufficient furniture.



## **CHAPTER IV**

### **TEACHING AND GOVERNANCE OF NURSERY SCHOOLS**

Children make sense of their social world through playing with others which helps them to develop a sense of belonging to a group and to learn how to engage in positive social interactions. The development of a positive sense of self is promoted through early play experiences that help children to feel confident and competent as learners and members of a group. Qualified staff and efficient administration are essential for creating such an environment conducive for learning.

#### **4.1 Qualification of Teachers**

Minimum educational qualification for nursery school teachers is S.S.L.C with a certification for successful completion of nursery training issued by any of the following agencies: (1) Government of Kerala (2) Travancore-Cochin Government (3) Nursery Teachers Training Certificate (Secondary Grade) issued by the Government of Madras (4) Nursery Training Certificate issued by the State Council for Child Welfare (5) Balasevika Training Certificates issued by the Indian State Council for Child Welfare (6) a certificate of successful completion of 2 years Balavadi training from the Training Institute formerly run by the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust, Kerala Branch, Kanimangalam, Trichur. Hence Teachers' Training Certificate is desirable qualification.

The qualification of Ayah is Pass I Form III or old Standard VIII or New Standard VI or S.S.L.C. Experience as an ayah of children is a desirable qualification.

## 4.2 Registers to be Maintained

The school shall maintain the following records and registers as prescribed and it shall be the duty of the teacher to make available all the records for inspection by Officers of SCDD.

- Cash Book
- Permanent Advance Register
- Attendance Register
- Stamp Account Register
- Casual Leave Register
- Admission Register of students
- Stock Register of dress
- Feeding Register
- Despatch Register
- Furniture Register
- Stationary Register
- Stock Register of provisions, etc.
- Acquaintance Roll
- Issue register of provisions, etc.
- Property Register

During the field visit, the Study Team found that most of the Registers were not properly kept/maintained due to lack of time of the staff or lack of such insistence from SCDD officials.



### 4.3 Curriculum

Until recently, there was no uniform syllabus for government-run Nursery Schools across Kerala. The books were prescribed by teachers themselves, and the PTA decided about the purchase of text books. As there is no separate fund for this, teaching aids are provided by the PTA and the teachers.

The curriculum includes action songs, stories, hand work, drawing, games etc along with forenoon rest. The working hours shall be from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. with an interval of 1 ½ hours between 12.30 and 2 p.m.

The daily work schedule is given in Table 4.1.

<b>Table 4.1</b>	
<b>Daily work schedule of Nursery Schools</b>	
09.45 am to 10.00 am	Assembly
10.00 am to 10.30 am	Class (direct activities)
10.30 am to 11.05 am	Milk time and free play
11.35 am to 12.00 pm	Free play
12.00 pm to 12.30 pm	Class (direct activities)
12.30 pm to 01.45 pm	Noon interval
01.45 pm to 02.00 pm	Bell for rest
02.00 pm to 03.00 pm	Rest
03.00 pm to 03.15 pm	Rising up and washing
03.15 pm to 03.30 pm	Free play
03.30 pm to 04.00 pm	Group games
04.00 pm	Departure for home
<i>Source: G.O (Ms) 52/73/DD dated 24.4.1973 Development (C) Department</i>	

The teachers have to do both office work and teaching. The officers of the SCDD conduct periodical inspection of the schools with a view to monitor and improve their functioning.

To enhance the communication skills, the students are motivated to present their abilities through songs, stories, action songs etc. To increase the drawing and writing skills of the students, training is given in colouring, drawing etc. The students are divided into groups and

talented among them are given opportunities to perform at the arts festival of the schools. Prizes will be given in a public function on Annual day.

#### 4.4 Educational Toys

Educational toys are an integral part of play schools and nursery classes for fun as well as learning. Even the regular toys that a child plays at home can be useful to teach the children many things. The status of availability of toys in nursery schools is given in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Availability of Toys in Nursery Schools				
Sl.No	District	Yes	No	Total
1	Thiruvananthapuram	8	4	12
2	Kollam	5	1	6
3	Pathanamthitta	3	3	6
4	Alappuzha		3	3
5	Kottayam	3	2	5
6	Idukki	1	2	3
7	Ernakulam	13	4	17
8	Thrissur	7	2	9
9	Palakkad	3	1	4
10	Malappuram	5	2	7
11	Kozhikode	1		1
12	Kannur	2	1	3
13	Kasaragod	5	1	6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>82</b>
	Percent	68.3	31.7	100.0
<i>Source: Primary Survey</i>				

There are toys in 68.3 percent of the nursery schools and the rest are functioning without adequate toys. This is not a good sign as games and play constitute an important part of child's life. Table 4.3 shows the list of nurseries that not have sufficient toys.

Table 4.3 List of Nursery Schools without sufficient toys			
Sl.No	District	LG Name	Name of Nursery
1	Thiruvananthapuram	Balaramapuram	Thalayal
2	Thiruvananthapuram	Perumkadavila	Perumkadavila
3	Thiruvananthapuram	Panavoor	Panavoor
4	Thiruvananthapuram	TVM Corporation	Thiruvallam
5	Kottayam	Kadaplamattom	Elakkad
6	Kottayam	Mulakulam	Mulakulam
7	Ernakulam	Painggottur	Kadavoor
8	Ernakulam	Neeleeswaram	Malayatoor
9	Ernakulam	Rayamangalam	Rayamangalam
10	Ernakulam	Kuthattukulam	Kuthattukulam
11	Thrissur	Muriyad	Ananthapuram
12	Thrissur	Cherppu	Perumpazhuthoor
13	Palakkad	Parathoor	Parathoor
14	Malappuram	Kulathur	Kolathur
15	Malappuram	Nilambur	Jawahar
16	Kannur	Chirackal	Kattampally
17	Pathanamthitta	Aranmula	Ezhikad
18	Kollam	Punaloor	Punaloor
19	Alappuzha	Venmani	Venmani
20	Kasaragod	West Eleri	Manameni
21	Pathanamthitta	Koipuram	Athalimon
22	Pathanamthitta	Pathanamthitta	Velluvettupara
23	Idukki	Kumaly	Kumaly
24	Idukki	Adimaly	Chillithode
25	Alappuzha	Bhudanoor	Peringalippuram
26	Alappuzha	Mannamcheri	Mannamcheri
<i>Source: Primary Survey</i>			

#### 4.5 Teaching Aids

Kids basically love the fun part of learning. So the teacher should encourage kids to enjoy the fun part. Lessons should always be taught through some playful activities like colouring, drawing, enacting characters and dramatizing the lesson etc which will make the learning more easy and interesting.

Nursery school teachers use various kinds of preschool teaching aids such as skits or sketches, pictures and flash cards, colour-sets to attract the children studying and for keeping them busy with different tasks. Teaching aids play a vital role in nursery schools as it keeps the kids enthusiastic about learning different concepts. These teaching aids are available in various colours and different sizes to suit different needs. Nursery Schools with sufficient teaching aids are shown in Table 4.4.

<b>Table 4.4</b>				
<b>Nursery Schools with sufficient Teaching Aids</b>				
<b>Sl.No</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Total</b>
1	Thiruvananthapuram	6	6	12
2	Kollam	5	1	6
3	Pathanamthitta	3	3	6
4	Alappuzha		3	3
5	Kottayam	3	2	5
6	Idukki	3		3
7	Ernakulam	12	5	17
8	Thrissur	8	1	9
9	Palakkad	3	1	4
10	Malappuram	6	1	7
11	Kozhikode	1		1
12	Kannur	2	1	3
13	Kasaragod	5	1	6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>82</b>
	Percent	69.5	30.5	100.0
<i>Source: Primary Survey</i>				

In terms of teaching aids, 30.5 percent of SCDD nursery schools are not provided with sufficient materials. Nurseries not having sufficient materials for teaching are listed in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5 Nurseries without Sufficient Teaching Aids			
Sl.No	District	LG Name	Name of Nursery
1	Thiruvananthapuram	Thirupuram	Thirupuram
2	Thiruvananthapuram	Parassala	Muriankara
3	Thiruvananthapuram	Perumkadavila	Perumkadavila
4	Thiruvananthapuram	Panavoor	Panavoor
5	Thiruvananthapuram	Neyyatinkara	Perumpazhuthoor
6	Kottayam	Ettumanoor	Ettumanoor
7	Kottayam	Mulakulam	Mulakulam
8	Ernakulam	Kottappady	Kottappady
9	Ernakulam	Neeleeswaram	Malayatoor
10	Ernakulam	Puthenvelikkara	Puthenvelikkara
11	Ernakulam	Ramamagalam	Kizhumuri
12	Ernakulam	Kuthattukulam	Kuthattukulam
13	Thrissur	Muriyad	Ananthapuram
14	Palakkad	Parathoor	Parathoor
15	Kannur	Payyavoor	Vathilmada
16	Malappuram	Purathur	Purathur
17	Pathanamthitta	Aranmula	Ezhikad
18	Kollam	Punaloor	Punaloor
19	Alappuzha	Venmani	Venmani
20	Kasaragod	West Eleri	Manameni
21	Pathanamthitta	Koipuram	Athalimon
22	Pathanamthitta	Pathanamthitta	Velluvettupara
23	Thiruvananthapuram	Aryanadu	Enhapuri
24	Alappuzha	Bhudanoor	Peringalippuram
25	Alappuzha	Mannamcheri	Mannamcheri
<i>Source: Primary Survey</i>			

#### 4.6 IT enabled class rooms

The study found that the information technology has not reached the nursery schools so far. There are only a very few computers available to the teachers for teaching. Only 8 nursery schools among 84is having computers and other schools are yet to receive at least one.

## 4.7 Food

A child's diet in early years is important for their future health and well-being. Good nutrition during this time lays a healthy foundation and nursery schools should provide an excellent setting for promoting positive food habits and attitudes to healthy eating. The provision of nutritious food positively enhances not only a child's health, but also allows the child to take full advantage of the learning opportunities provided in nursery schools.

The food for the students is provided three times a day. The Government's Mid-day meal programme is implemented in all schools and sufficient nutrition for a child is ensured in the school. This is important part of the nursery school because most of the parents of the children are daily wage labourers and they usually go to work early in the morning. They leave children in the morning at the school and come back only by evening to pick them. Until that time the need of the nutrition is taken care of by the school, which is also a relief to the parents. All the Nursery Schools provide food to the children as per prescribed norms and standards.



All the nurseries under SCDD are providing nutritious and well balanced diet to the children. Apart from lunch, arrangements are also made for supply of milk at 11 a.m. and 3 p.m.

#### 4.8 Gas Connection

One of the main facilities that should be available in nursery schools is gas connection. The fuels used for cooking in nursery schools are shown in Table 4.6

<b>Table 4.6</b>					
<b>Fuels used for cooking in nursery schools</b>					
<b>District</b>	<b>Number of Nursery Schools</b>				
	<b>Gas</b>	<b>Fire wood</b>	<b>Electricity</b>	<b>NR</b>	<b>Total</b>
Thiruvananthapuram	5	4	1	2	12
Kollam	3	2		1	6
Pathanamthitta	1	5			6
Alappuzha		2		1	3
Kottayam	1	4			5
Idukki	3				3
Ernakulam	15	2			17
Thrissur	6	3			9
Palakkad	4				4
Malappuram	7				7
Kozhikode	1				1
Kannur	3				3
Kasaragod	5	1			6
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>82</b>
Percent	<b>65.9</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>Source: Primary Survey</i>					

The food for the children of the schools is prepared in other medium rather than gas connection. Among the nursery schools 65.9 percent of schools have cooking gas connection.

## 4.9 Health

Childhood is the age of learning and growing up when a child develops attitudes towards health. It is very important to indicate oral health awareness and demonstration of correct methods for oral hygiene to children. School is considered as place for learning where children learn not only text book knowledge but also life style practices and health seeking behaviours.

It has been proven that schools can provide an ideal platform for the promotion of oral health. They can be nurtured well for their general and oral health which can very well be implemented effectively through schools. Table 4.7 shows the status of medical check-ups in nursery schools.

<b>Table 4.7</b>					
<b>Medical Check-up Facility in Nursery Schools</b>					
<b>Sl.No</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Medical checkup</b>			
		Yes	No	NR	Total
1	Thiruvananthapuram	10	1	1	12
2	Kollam	6			6
3	Pathanamthitta	5	1		6
4	Alappuzha	2		1	3
5	Kottayam	4		1	5
6	Idukki	3			3
7	Ernakulam	14	3		17
8	Thrissur	8		1	9
9	Palakkad	3		1	4
10	Malappuram	5	1	1	7
11	Kozhikode	1			1
12	Kannur	3			3
13	Kasaragod	5	1		6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>82</b>
	Percent	84.1	8.5	7.3	100.0
<i>Source: Primary Survey</i>					



Among SCDD nursery schools, 84.1 percent conducts medical check-ups for children. When it comes to regularity, 76.8 percent of the nursery schools are conducting medical check-ups once in a year. The frequency of medical check-ups in nursery schools is given in Table 4.8.

<b>Table 4.8</b>								
<b>Frequency of Medical Check-up in Nursery Schools</b>								
<b>Sl. No</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Frequency of Medical check-up</b>						
		Last Week	Last Month	Last 6 Months	Last Year	Last 2 years	NR	Total
1	Thiruvananthapuram		3	2			5	10
2	Kollam		3	2	1			6
3	Pathanamthitta		1	3			1	5
4	Alappuzha			2				2
5	Kottayam		1	1			2	4
6	Idukki		3					3
7	Ernakulam	1	5	6	1		1	14
8	Thrissur	1	2	4			1	8
9	Palakkad		1	1		1		3
10	Malappuram		1	1			3	5
11	Kozhikode		1					1
12	Kannur	1		2				3
13	Kasaragod			3		1	1	5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>69</b>
	Percent	4.3	30.4	39.1	2.9	2.9	20.3	100.0
<i>Source: Primary Survey</i>								

Many communicable diseases affect the children of this age. So attention has to be paid by the school in this regard and they should be alert in taking urgent and necessary steps to avoid any catastrophic spread of diseases. Necessary medical care is given by the government through schools and medical experts visit the school frequently for routine check-up of the students.



#### **4.10 Building strong school and family partnerships**

Given the importance of families for child development and learning, parental involvement in education is essential. To increase parent involvement and foster relationships, schools must create frequent opportunities to communicate with parents. In turn the schools too should respond to parents' suggestions and concerns. If involved, parents feel more comfortable, confident and empowered in playing a significant role in their child's development. Strong family-school partnerships are especially important for those families most alienated by conventional schooling practices. Because of their social and cultural backgrounds, these parents' expectations of what is educationally helpful to their children may also differ.<sup>13</sup> If there are family issues it gets reflected in the behaviour of the students. PTA meetings are the best possible ways to build strong relationship between schools and the families of students. Table 4.9 shows the level of interaction between

school and families of children as reflected in PTA meetings and its frequency.

<b>Table 4.9</b> <b>PTA Meetings in the Nursery Schools</b>								
District	PTA Meetings				Frequency of PTA Meetings			
	Yes	No	NR	Total	6 or less	More than 6	NR	Total
Thiruvananthapuram	7		5	12	4	3	0	7
Kollam	5		1	6	2	3	0	5
Pathanamthitta	3		3	6	1		2	3
Alappuzha	2		1	3	2		0	2
Kottayam	3		2	5	3		0	3
Idukki	2		1	3		2	0	2
Ernakulam	13		4	17	10	2	1	13
Thrissur	7		2	9	5	2	0	7
Palakkad	4			4	3	1	0	4
Malappuram	7			7	4	2	1	7
Kozhikode	1			1	1		0	1
Kannur	3			3	2	1	0	3
Kasaragod	4		2	6	3		1	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>		<b>21</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>61</b>
Percent	74.4	-	25.6	100.0	65.6	26.2	8.2	100.0
<i>Source: Primary Survey</i>								

Among SCDD nursery schools, 74.4 percent of them are conducting PTA meetings. When it comes to regularity, 65.6 percent of the nursery schools are conducting PTA meetings at least once in six months.

#### **4.11 Allocation of fund**

Nursery schools need timely availability of funds to meet expenditures like food, maintenance, purchase of school uniform, conducting of celebrations, payment of wages etc. One of the main problems faced by the schools are insufficiency of own funds and delay in release of funds by SCDD. There are several reasons for the same. Firstly funds for the Mid-day meal programme are not released at the right time. Teachers have to often bear the expenditures. This creates burden on the teachers especially part-time teachers. Secondly, school maintenance fund is not released properly. Even if sanctioned, the actual release of maintenance funds gets delayed. The maintenance works are promptly attended to only in time when there are any serious issues or urgencies. Thirdly funds for providing uniforms for the students is very less when compared to the actual expenditure. Usually this expenditure is also borne by teachers themselves. There is also no provision of funds for celebrating festivals like Onam, Independence day, Republic day, study tour, annual day, sports and arts day etc. Part time teachers/ Contingent workers get very low wages, which affect the level of motivation.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

Nursery Schools run by SCDD play a critical role in building young children's personality and feelings of well-being from the early years of their life. They provide children with pre-school orientation, help parents in nurturing healthy habits in their wards and the communities by facilitating the learning and personality development of the new generation. Nursery School programme was launched by the SCDD with the above objectives in view. The objective of the present study was to analyse the present status of nursery schools under SCDD, understand their problems and issues and make some suggestions to improve their functioning. Given below are the major suggestions based on analysis of data and information collected through survey, and discussions with stakeholders. The suggestions are grouped under three heads viz., Teaching, Administration and Infrastructure Facilities

The Pre-requisites of Nursery Schools can be listed as follows:

1. Own Building
2. Committed Staff/Teachers
3. Creative Training
4. Equipped Classrooms
5. Healthy Food
6. Timely Health Care
7. Educational Toys
8. Parent's Participation
9. Hygienic surroundings
10. Play Ground
11. Game Space

In the above context, the study found that the nursery schools under SCDD faced the following weaknesses:

1. **Lack of In-service Training:** Regular in-service trainings are not provided to enhance the efficiency of nursery staff and to update their knowledge in preschool training.
2. **Family Environment:** In the case of many children, there are several problems in the family that disturb their study and behaviour. At present, the nursery schools or their staffs are not equipped to address such issues.
3. **Lack of IT enabled education:** Computers can provide exciting ways and means to learn, especially for young children. With many IT tools for education available, it is imperative on the part of SCDD to prompt nursery schools to use the same under the guidance of teachers. Many nursery schools do not have computer facilities and need interesting learning software.
4. **Lack of Teaching Aids:** Some nursery schools lack sufficient teaching aids and toys.
5. **Lack of Playground:** Forty nine nurseries are functioning without playground facility.
6. **Lack of Monitoring:** Proper monitoring and evaluation mechanism is not working to co-ordinate and evaluate the functions.
7. **Lack of Regular Reporting:** The system of filing Annual Report of the work done by nursery schools is not followed.
8. **Administrative Work:** The teachers, apart from teaching and taking care of children, also have to do administrative work. Many teachers were finding it difficult and are not sufficiently trained in this area.

9. **Delay in fund allocation:** The funds for the Mid-day meal scheme etc are received by the school only after four or five months after the opening of the school in an academic year.
10. **Rented building:** Steps are needed to find permanent space for schools which have sufficient number of pupils.
11. **Less accessible Location:** Some schools are situated in remote locations. Steps may be taken to shift the schools to more accessible and conducive locations.
12. **Lack of Cooking Gas facility:** Some nursery schools do not have gas connections which causes delay in food preparation.
13. **Lack of Playgrounds:** Some nursery schools have no playgrounds which affects the development of physical, emotional, social and cognitive skills of children.
14. **Lack of piped water facilities:** Drinking water facilities are not up to the mark in many schools. In some cases it is procured from nearby wells or pipes.

### 5.1 The Rationale for SC Nursery School

The continued need for and rationale for Nursery Schools exclusively meant for SC children in Kerala have been debated in different forums. The Study Team reiterates the need for this institution for the following reasons:

1. Most of the SC settlements/colonies are situated in isolated areas away from the mainstream, and so SC parents find it difficult or may feel reluctant to send their children to the Anganwadis that are situated away from their settlements/colonies.
2. Since majority of SC population are daily wage labourers, effective parenting in day time is not viable or possible. Nursery schools established by SCDD for SC children resolve this issue to

a significant extent, and also provides a feeling of security to SC parents with regard to their infants.

3. There are many SC children who dwell in dilapidated houses need a good, safe and hygienic environment to spend their early childhood years and the SCDD Nursery Schools serve as a second home to them.
4. The mal-nutrition of most of the SC children is also taken care of and resolved by the provision of balanced and nutritious diet at the SCDD nursery schools.
5. Last but not the least, the Teachers & Ayahs are dedicated and treat the children well giving them proper care, love and education.

## **5.2 SUGGESTIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings and analysis of the data collected from various nursery schools, and inputs from Focus Group Discussions with stakeholders, some suggestions for improving the functioning and services of SC nursery schools are listed below. Suggestions are grouped under three heads viz., Teaching, Administration and Infrastructure Facilities.

### **5.2.1 Teaching**

1. **Common Syllabus:** Until recently, there was no common syllabus for Nursery schools across Kerala. The parents are showing more interest in opting for CBSE instead of Kerala State Syllabus. Therefore a unified syllabus for SCDD Nursery schools in Kerala is suggested. It is understood that a common syllabus for nursery schools has been introduced this year. Once implemented, it should be evaluated and modified based on inputs from teachers and other stakeholders.



2. **New Approach to Curriculum:** There is no curriculum for nursery schools across Kerala. Therefore a curriculum may be developed, based on **‘Teaching and Learning through Play’** perspective. Such a curriculum should take into account the social conditions of SC communities in Kerala and develop appropriate learning techniques and tools like local songs and stories that will stimulate their faculties and address their issues. Books, teaching aids and tools including learning/teaching software also need to be developed and prepared by incorporating puzzles, games, and learning activities for children.
3. **In-service Training:** In order to keep the nursery teachers updated about pre-school learning practices and child care, they may be given an in-service training. This is especially needed for dealing with the specially challenged and differently-abled students in their schools. Apart from pedagogy and child care, the training may also include basic administration and maintenance of accounts, registers etc. A tie-up with Education Department may be sought for providing regular annual training.
4. **Improving Family Environment:** In many cases, the students come from families facing several social and economic problems that disturbs the learning environment and affects the behaviour of the children in the class. In order to address their emotional and learning problems, counseling programmes may be organized for students, teachers and parents to address those issues in a coordinated manner. The advice and help of NGOs working in this field may be sought for this.
5. **Teaching Aids:** Teaching materials are crucial to pre-school learning. They have to be identified and provided to nursery schools and constantly updated, to help in making learning and

teaching more easy and playful. All nurseries may be provided with enough materials for Sketching, Drawing, Painting, Sculpting etc.

6. **Educational Toys:** During the survey, 26 nurseries reported about lack of sufficient toys. Enough educational toys may be supplied to all nursery schools. All toys supplied to the schools may be standardized as per UNESCO guidelines for toys.
7. **Medical Check-up:** Arrangements may be done to ensure mandatory medical check-ups at least once in three months.
8. **Awards for Performance:** The Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) is encouraging the schools/teachers that have an outstanding record in a particular academic year. In the same way the performance of the nursery schools may also be recognised, and an award given for excellent work in an academic year.
9. **Alumni Meet:** SCDD nursery schools have a history of more than three decades, and thousands of children have been groomed and nurtured by them. It is possible to conduct alumni meets annually along with annual day celebrations, in order to emphasise the celebrate the role of these institutions and also to inspire the students' of the school to succeed in life.

### 5.2.2 Administration

1. **Effective Monitoring:** There may be timely inspections from the higher authorities/local governments and deliver timely response and decisions/interference to the problems faced by the school in a year. In order to monitor and evaluate the functioning of the nursery schools a web enabled monitoring system may be developed.

2. **Transfer Facility:** The transfers facilities to staff may be introduced to nursery schools.

3. **Unfilled vacancies:** Vacant staff positions may be filled as soon as possible.
4. **Annual Performance Report:** An Annual Performance Report may be designed for submission by all nursery schools under SCDD. The proforma may elicit basic information about the students, staff and infrastructure of the school. It may also include information about the status and functioning of the nearest nursery school in the locality which is run by other agencies.
5. **Work Load:** The teachers have to do office works along with teaching. This involves frequent office visits to SCDD/GP office etc. Hence web enabled services may be developed for this.
6. **Timely fund allotment:** There is delay in disbursement of funds to nursery schools especially for the midday meal scheme, conduct of Annual day, study tour, observance of Independence and Republic day, purchase of study materials, teaching aids, computer, food expenses, maintenance of transport facility, building/Furniture, disbursal of festival allowances etc. Necessary arrangements may be taken with cooperation with local governments concerned to release the funds for these purposes in time to ensure the smooth functioning of the school and not to overburden the staff with such expenses.
7. **Master Plan:** A master plan to carry out development activities of nursery schools in a time bound manner may be developed at the SCDD level.

### 5.2.3 Infrastructure Facilities

1. **Own building:** 14 nursery schools are working in rented buildings. Steps are needed to construct permanent buildings for

the nursery schools that have sufficient number of pupils but are working at present in rented buildings.

2. **Cooking Gas facility:** A gas connection may be provided wherever there is no gas connection.
3. **Safe Drinking Water facilities:** Drinking water facilities are not up to the mark in many schools. In some schools, it is procured from nearby wells or public taps. Facilities for safe drinking water are a must and arrangements for the same may be made at the earliest.
4. **Playground:** In the case of 49 nurseries, they have no playground. As play is crucial in creating an amicable learning and growing environment, it should be given top priority. Wherever possible, space for playgrounds may be identified and developed, or schools shifted to locations where play space is available or nearby.
5. **Maintenance of Buildings:** Action may be taken for timely maintenance of buildings at the earliest.
6. **Electricity Connection:** There are 27 nurseries that do not have electricity. Necessary steps may be taken for the immediate sanction and installation of electricity connection in these schools.
7. **Toilets:** 11 Nurseries are working without own toilet facility. Child-friendly toilets may be constructed in these schools at the earliest. All the nurseries under SCDD must ensure construction of child-friendly toilets.

Hence by providing the above suggestions in systematic and time bound manner the SCDD can ensure a bright and vibrant next generation SC population in Kerala.

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<sup>1</sup>UNICEF said in the “The State of the World’s Children Report 2016”<http://www.livemint.com/Politics/whTlgL7itj7QxnD9vfgpKO/At-least-27-of-Indian-kids-not-attending-preschool-Unicef.html>

<sup>2</sup> Handbook of SCDD, Vol.I, page 105.

<sup>3</sup> G.O(Ms)28/79/DD dated 21.2.79

<sup>4</sup>G.O (Ms) 8/86/Plg.dated 12.2.86.

<sup>5</sup>Handbook of the SCDD, Vol.I, page 100.

<sup>6</sup> G.O (Ms) 52/73/DD dated 24.4.1973 Development (C) Department

<sup>7</sup>G.O. (Rt.) No. 1038/70/L and SWD, dated 8<sup>th</sup> July 1970), G.O.(Rt.) No. 534/69/L and SWD, dated 13<sup>th</sup> March 1969

<sup>8</sup>G.O. (Rt.) No. 1038/70/L and SWD, dated 8<sup>th</sup> July 1970), G.O.(Rt.) No. 534/69/L and SWD, dated 13<sup>th</sup> March 1969

<sup>9</sup> G.O (Ms) 52/73/DD dated 24.4.1973 Development (C) Department and Handbook of the SCDD, Vol.I, page 100.

<sup>10</sup>Priyanka Sharma of Elets News Network (ENN)

<sup>11</sup> G.O (Ms) 52/73/DD dated 24.4.1973 Development (C) Department

<sup>12</sup>G.O (Ms) 52/73/DD dated 24.4.1973 Development (C) Department

<sup>13</sup>Keyes, Carol R., ‘A Way of Thinking about Parent/Teacher Partnerships for Teachers’, *International Journal of Early Years Education*, vol. 10, no. 3, 2002, pp.177–191.

## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR NURSERY SCHOOL

1. Questionnaire Schedule Code No
2. Date of Interview
3. District
4. Corporation/Municipality/Block Panchayat
5. Grama Panchayat
6. Name of the Institution
7. Name of the respondent :
8. Designation : Teacher/Ayah
9. Mobile:-

### 10. Student strength during 2007 to 2017

Years	Sanctioned Strength of children	Actual strength			Others		Total (col 4+5+6)
		SC Boys	SC Girls	Total (4)	Boys (5)	Girls (6)	
2007-08							
2008-09							
2009-10							
2011-12							
2012-13							
2013-14							
2014-15							
2015-16							
2016-17							

**11. Present Staff Strength**

Total		Permanent		Temporary	
Teacher	Ayah	Teacher	Ayah	Teacher	Ayah

**12. Present Status - Infrastructure and other facilities**

Particular	Yes	No	Comment/Suggestions
Buildings			
Electricity			
Toilet			
Furniture			
Play ground			
transport facility			
Toys			
Teaching Aids			
Food			
Type of Cooking Fuel			Cooking Gas/ Fire Wood/ Kerosene/Electricity/Others
Medical check-up			Mention the frequency of check-up
PTA Meetings			Mention the frequency of meeting

13. Compare SC Nursery schools and nearest Aganwadis and give your comments

14. Any other opinions and suggestions







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