

INCLUSIVE PRACTICES

A PRESCHOOL PERSPECTIVE



"Inclusion happens when every child is able to successfully participate in their everyday routines, in any environment they're in. It is having strategies in place to help a child with additional needs achieve this participation, It is when every child has a voice, is able to make choices, and is seen as a valued member of our society."

- Dianne Seet, ECDA Fellow
Director of Early Childhood Development Centres (Anglican Preschool Services)
Principal of The Ascension Kindergarten

INCLUSION BEGINS WITH A DESIRE TO UNDERSTAND OTHERS, AND TO BE UNDERSTOOD.

Having had experience in both special school and early childhood settings, Mrs Dianne believes that the key element to foster inclusion is one's commitment to understand every child, and the intent to communicate with them meaningfully. This is especially so for children with additional needs, who may often be marginalised or misunderstood. It is important for people to understand how to better communicate with children with additional needs, so that they can be understood and their voices are heard. Children with language and communication difficulties, for example, benefit from the use of visuals to complement verbal information.

Mrs Dianne and her team at The Ascension Kindergarten and Kindercare believe in advocating for the child's needs by first helping caregivers understand the developmental milestones of children in general, and then to assist them in identifying some areas of their child's needs through the sharing of teachers' observations. Caregivers are given the opportunities to engage in fruitful discussions with teachers in order to maximise their children's learning and development in school.

"I certainly understand that it is not an easy task for our teachers to be able to support the diverse needs of children within a class, and it does take a committed teacher to get to know every child well, to be able to identify his/her interests and triggers."

Communication Styles

Having a better idea which communication style a child displays allow us to understand their communicative strengths and challenges, and guide our support.



Sociable

Sociable-communication style refer to children who easefully initiate interactions with others and are quick to respond to others' initiations, regardless of their language ability.



Reluctant

Reluctant-communication style refer to children who are more likely to respond to others than to initiate an interaction on their own. They may be seen as "shy" or may need more time to "warm up".



Passive

Passive-communication style refer to children who don't usually respond or initiate interactions with others. They may be hard to connect with because they may seem uninterested in people or objects such as toys.



Own Agenda

Own Agenda-communication style refer to children who may seem to tune others out and tend to play on their own. They seldom start interaction with others, unless they need something. They do not usually share play with others.

Images and information from hanen.org

To learn more about inclusion, go to www.include.sg

