



EIGHTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

TUESDAY 06 MAY 2025

PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOLS – ASSISTANT TEACHERS – RECRUITMENT CRITERIA

(No. B/414) Dr. Ms B. Thannoo (Second Member for Quartier Militaire & Moka) asked the Minister of Education and Human Resource whether, in regard to the post of Assistant Teacher in pre-primary schools, he will state if consideration will be given for the waiving of the 5 credits requirement as a recruitment criterion for those who already possess a proficiency course from the Mauritius Institute of Education.

Dr. Gungapersad: Madam Speaker, early childhood care and education lay the cornerstone for a child's lifelong journey of discovery, growth and achievement. These earlier years are not just formative; they are transformative, shaping the minds and hearts of our youngest citizens while laying the foundation for literacy, numeracy and personal development.

Recognising this vital stage, this Government remains steadfast in its commitment to delivering inclusive, equitable and high-quality early childhood education for all.

With regard to the post of Assistant Teacher in pre-primary schools, I am informed that in August 2023, approval of the then government was sought to the implementation of the Grant-in-Aid Formula for the pre-primary sector, whereby it was agreed that a new post of Assistant Teacher be created. The incumbents would be required to hold a Cambridge School Certificate or a General Certificate of Education.

Assistant Teachers play a vital role in pre-primary schools by providing individualised support to pupils who required tailored instruction and pastoral care. They help pupils to adapt to the pre-primary environment, assist them in feeding and hygiene. They also support teachers in activity planning, creating learning materials, help to supervise and maintain discipline both indoors and outdoors.

Madam Speaker, my ministry is proposing to review the criteria, including the possibility of waiving the five credits requirement for candidates who already possess a recognised proficiency course from the Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE), particularly where such qualifications demonstrate the necessary competencies for effective early childhood education. Those who possess MIE proficiency course will not be penalised during selection process, especially those who have experience in the early childhood sector.

I am further informed that currently, there are 267 Assistant Teachers in pre-primary schools at the ECCEA. Those Assistant Teachers possess five credits, including Mathematics, English and French, respectively, but do not possess Proficiency Course from the MIE. They will have to follow the MIE Teacher's Certificate soon. In case the five credits requirement for Assistant Teachers will be waived, it will have an impact on the salary accordingly.

It can be noted that the MIE Proficiency Course is lower than the MIE Teacher's Certificate course. Consequently, the Assistant Teachers who do not possess five credits, but possess a proficiency course should be graded as Assistant Teachers, will have a different salary scale.

Madam Speaker, following Les Assises de l'Éducation, which were held from 15 to 17 April 2025, proposals have been received for a comprehensive review of the education sector which also include the free pre-primary scheme. These include recommendations for adapting recruitment requirements to better reflect the practical skills and specialised training for the quality early childhood education.

Madam Speaker: Are you happy with this?

Dr. Ms Thannoo: Can I ask the hon. Minister to what extent the years of experience will be taken into account with regard to planning for the future salary? Thank you.

Dr. Gungapersad: Their years of experience, definitely, in case they do not have...

Madam Speaker: In pre-primary.

Dr. Gungapersad: In pre-primary. We are talking about the Assistant Teachers in that particular case. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, hon. Minister!