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PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOLS - INFRASTRUCTURES

(No. B/222) Mrs F. Labelle (Second Member for Beau Bassin and Petite Rivière) asked the Minister of Education and Scientific Research whether he will state what measures are being taken by the pre-primary schools Trust Fund to improve the infrastructures of pre-primary schools of the country.

The Minister of Economic Development, Financial Services & Corporate Affairs: Mr Speaker, Sir, pre-primary schools are governed by section 38 of the Education Act which provides for regulations pertaining to the pre-primary sector.

The Ministry of Education and Scientific Research is coming in the near future with a new set of regulations that will spell out mandatory norms with detailed specifications pertaining to pre-school premises, including classrooms and school yard, sanitary conditions, furniture and equipment and health and safety.

All pre-primary schools will be given a moratorium period to allow them to take necessary measures to upgrade their existing facilities.

The Pre Primary School Trust Fund will set up an administrative framework that will facilitate the registration and inspection processes of all pre-primary schools.

The Ministry of Education and Scientific Research is developing infrastructural projects for pre-primary schools attached to Government primary schools, namely, the construction of toilet blocks and kitchenettes adjacent to the pre-primary school unit. The need for a special toilet block for pre-primary school children is to meet minimal standards as well as protect small children from hazards or risks.

As from this year, under the Programme 'Better Health for Pre-Primary School Children', the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research is implementing a food and nutrition programme in our pre-primary schools. The construction of kitchenettes is an additional facility which is in line with this general effort to improve the health status of our pre-primary school children.

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Mr Dowarkasing: I have one supplementary question, Mr Speaker, Sir. Could I impress upon the Minister to see to it that this Trust Fund deposits its statement of accounts? Since 1995, it has not laid down its statement of accounts.

Mr Khushiram: I will forward this request, Mr Speaker, Sir, to the substantive Minister.