



PEMANDU
UNIT PENGURUSAN PRESTASI DAN PELAKSANAAN

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Liberalising Pre-School Teacher Training

PUTRAJAYA: By 2012, one of the Government Transformation Programme (GTP)'s National Key Results Area (NKRA) initiative to improve student outcomes envisions pre-school enrollment nationwide to be at the 87 percent level, and by 2020, it is the government's intention to raise that number to a 'near universal' enrollment of 97 percent.

This simply means there is a great need for quality pre-school teachers, said Datuk Asariah Mior Shaharuddin, the deputy director-general of the Ministry of Education's Teacher Professional Development Sector.

The training of private pre-school teachers has already been completed as of December. The teachers training institutes (IPG) and public tertiary institutions (IPTA) commenced training on November 22 whilst the training by private tertiary institutions (IPTS) commenced on November 29. The training of pre-school teachers, as Asariah put it, is to raise the professionalism of early childcare education (ECCE) in Malaysia.

To date, the first batch of 6,580 private and Department of National Unity and Integration (JPNIN) pre-school teachers have completed training of which 3,299 have

been trained by 10 IPTS and private training centres whilst the remaining pre-school teachers were trained by IPG and IPTA.

“This is also the first time the training of private pre-school teachers is being funded by the government,” Asariah said. “The idea,” she pointed out, “is to make teacher training more professional and competitive to ensure quality. Pre-school education cannot be taken for granted. Building a strong educational foundation for our children is top priority for us, and we are doing everything we can to raise the quality of pre-school teaching and the standard of our teachers nationwide.”

Currently, the minimum qualification for a pre-school teacher is a diploma in ECCE, Asariah said. “This is not good enough considering the gargantuan task of shaping and providing a solid foundation for our children, often regarded as the future pillars of society,” she said. “It’s a fantastic start though. And we will be looking into requiring future pre-school teachers to be qualified university graduates in ECCE.”

Asariah said by engaging the private sector to be involved in pre-school teacher training would mean liberalising teacher training as the government has never been involved in doing this in the past. “The sheer volume of the pre-school teachers that we have to train means we have to leverage on the resources of the private sector to ensure all the pre-school teachers are properly trained,” she pointed out.

Between 2010 and 2012, the government will be training over 21,000 pre-school teachers, an NKRA initiative under the GTP. The reason: for the first time in Malaysian history, there are close to 700,000 students in pre-schools throughout the country.

The Ministry of Education had earlier requested for various IPTS to put their bids to train pre-school teachers online using e-Perolehan, a competitive bidding exercise that was conducted transparently within the ministry. The teachers training centres and IPTS appointed to conduct the training include: SEGI College, DiKA College, Taj International College, Institut Teknologi Info-Sains Mahir, MCS College, Institut

Perkembangan Awal Kanak-Kanak, Kolej Uniti, Thames Technology, Iras Mewah and Institut Megatech.

This initial batch of selected institutions have completed the pre-school teacher training in 10 states as part of the upskilling of pre-school teachers in Malaysia to meet the increasing enrollment of children in pre-schools as well as the need to upgrade the quality of pre-school teachers.

Each year, approximately 7,000 pre-school teachers who will be trained will come from all across the country, including Sabah and Sarawak. The upskilling of the 7,000 plus pre-school teachers per year (for the next two years) is required as 93 percent of existing teachers currently do not have ECCE certificates and there is a need to build the professionalism in early childhood education.

“By raising the quality of early childcare education, our children will be better poised to undertake the challenges of higher education later in their lives,” Asariah said. “Our children are the nation’s intellectual asset and we must take good care of these assets. In the years to come, some will even become our national leaders. Dare we not take this seriously?”
