BRIDGE
LINKING INNOVATORS IN EDUCATION

R3a

ECD Quality Toolkit Pilot Project 2016
Resource 3a: Prompt Resource for Mediators

Use this Prompt Resource to prepare for your site visit and conversation with the practitioner and centre manager/principal. Keep it with you to refer to during your conversation.

1. What are my views on how children learn, and my views on the best way of interacting with them?	
Think of how to mediate the conversation process in the Practitioner's own context – e.g. babies and toddlers, Grade R, children with barriers to learning etc.	
What are my views on how children learn? How do I encourage learning in young children?	*Listen for:* hands-on, concrete learning, learning through exploration and discovery, sensory-motor learning, social learning (learning from other children); children's participation. *More possible questions:* How can children use their senses to learn? How can children learn from each other? How can you encourage children to learn through self-activity?
What do I think about learning through play, and how do I help this to happen?	*Listen for:* free choice, structured/organised play, the value of play, indoor and outdoor play, play resources. *More possible questions*: Do children choose what they play? How do you encourage play? Where do children play? What do children play with?
What other methods of teaching do I use? What kinds of activities do we do?	*Listen for:* teacher-guided, whole-group or small group activities, routines or daily programme. *More possible questions:* How do you guide activities? What do children learn in groups? Are routines (snack, toilet) an important part learning? What do children learn during ring-time?
How do I deal with different developmental areas, such as physical, intellectual, emotional and social development? How do I create a sense of well-being in	*Listen for:* different types of activities, learning corners/areas, age/stage appropriate, adapting or differentiating activities, integrated early learning, safe, trusting learning environment. *More possible questions:* Please give examples of different activities for physical, intellectual, emotional and social development? How do you manage different activities for different children?

these areas?	
How do I manage a group of children who might be at different ages and different stages of development?	*The practitioner may work with only one age group but there may still be different stages of development. Think specifically of practitioners who work with babies and young children.* *Listen for:* Adapting activities, changing the environment, changing the programme, children engaged in meaningful learning, children appropriately challenged, mediating/facilitating learning. *More possible questions:* How do you change activities for different children? How do you use activities/toys to challenge children? How do you manage children who are having difficulty with an activity?
What do I do if I see children have learning difficulties? Am I always aware of these children?	*Listen for:* Observes and records possible difficulties, confidentiality, supporting the child, adapting activities (See 1.4). *More possible questions:* What makes you aware that children might be struggling? Is it sometimes hard to identify difficulties? How do you help children who are struggling? How do your refer children for further help?
How do children develop a good sense of self?	*Listen for:* Affirming / praising children, talking to children respectfully, listening to children, children making decisions, individual learning needs. *More possible questions:* How do you affirm/praise children? How do you let children know that you are listening? How do you encourage children to talk to each other in a respectful way? How do you encourage children to express themselves? How do you encourage children to make their own decisions? What do you do if children make a mistake?
How do I talk to the children in my care, and get them to talk me? How do we communicate if the children can't talk?	*Listen for:* respectful, instructions, asking questions, giving children time to think about answers, listening to children, aware of possible hearing and speech challenges, different languages. *More possible questions:* Can you give some examples of questions and instructions that you ask children? How do you answer children's questions? How do you expect children to answer your questions? What if children can't talk? How do you respond to babies? How do you help children to communicate with you?
How do I accommodate different languages in the group of children?	*Listen for:* children learn best through home language, which different languages are spoken, supporting children's languages, code switching, using visual examples, using different languages, asking another teacher/parents making use of signing and gesturing. *More possible questions:* Why do you think it is important for children to learn through their home language? How do you talk to children if you do not speak their home language? What do you do to help children understand what you are saying?

What do I know about the ECD curriculum?	*Listen for:* National Curriculum Framework, 0-4 curriculum, NELDS, daily programme, planning.
	More possible questions: Can you give some examples of how you use the curriculum? How do you plan what children will learn? How do you decide on teaching methods? How do you decide on appropriate activities?
How do I assess the children in my site?	*Listen for:* observation, formative assessment, observation instruments and records, sharing with other teachers and parents, tests, progress.
	More possible questions : How do you assess children? When do you assess? Why is observation an important part of assessment for young children? How do you record observations? How do you share information with others?
Name one thing about learning theories and teaching methods that you would most like help with.	*Prompt:* If practitioner is not sure make some suggestions based on the answers already given. But allow practitioner to make the final choice of type of help wanted.

2. What are my views on values, attitudes and beliefs?

| How do my own values and beliefs affect my work as an ECD practitioner?

*A **belief** is accepting something is true even if there is no evidence or proof. **Values** are the things that are important for you and guide the way you live and work. They are closely related to morals which are guided by principles and are influenced by social, religious and cultural norms and practices.* | *Listen for:* different cultural practices, religious beliefs, values such as honesty, integrity, tolerance, parents, the community, own views influence practice.

More possible questions: How do you share children's different cultural and religious beliefs? How do you encourage children to solve conflict? How do you encourage children to accept differences in each other? How do you interact with parents who have different beliefs and practices? |

How do my attitudes and beliefs about children and what they can do or learn affect my work? *An **attitude** refers to an enduring set of emotions, beliefs, and behaviours (an expression of favour or disfavour) toward a particular object, person, thing, or event.*	*Listen for:* encouraging independence, children making choices, children's opinions, children's participation, children can do things for themselves. *If practitioner is not sure, turn these ideas into questions such as:* How do you include children in making choices? How do you set rules with children? How do you encourage children to become independent?
What ethical issues do I think are most important for an ECD practitioner? ***Ethics** is about telling the difference between right and wrong, just and unjust. Ethics is a set of moral principles that guide a person's behaviour.*	*Listen for*: appropriate work ethic, being punctual, commitment, confidentiality, working as a team, having an 'ethic of care', the best interests of children. *More possible questions:* Are there right and wrong ways to behave in your work?
What are my views about my own professional development? How do I improve my knowledge and skills?	*Listen for:* life-long learning, keeping up to date, improving knowledge and skills. *More possible questions:* H ow do you keep up to date with new ideas? What do you read about ECD matters? Do you share ideas with other practitioners? Who supports you to improve your practice?
Name one thing about values, attitudes and beliefs that you would most like help with.	*Prompt*: If practitioner is hesitant make some suggestions based on the answers already given. But allow practitioner to make the final choice of type of help wanted.

3. What are my views on quality in the ECD environment?

Do I have a good teaching environment that stimulates children?	*Listen for*: physical, social and emotional environment, indoor and outdoor environment, safety and security, simple and consistent rules, reasonable boundaries, cultural relevance, special needs, ages and stages of development, balanced, flexible daily programme *More possible questions:* How do you make sure that the environment gives all children the opportunities they need? How do you make sure there is enough time for free-play, routines and teacher-guided activities?
What resources do I have in my classroom and in my environment? Where do I get resources from?	*Listen for:* sufficient resources, rotating resources, differentiating resources, making resources, appropriate resources, indigenous toys, contributions from community and parents, educational toy providers, funders, DBE, toy libraries, municipal libraries. *More possible questions:* How do you make sure you have enough resources? What resources do you need?
How do I create a caring environment for children?	*Listen for:* sense of security, routine, enough for children to work; transition times, children make and correct mistakes, encouraging perseverance, exploring, curiosity, asking questions, free choice, appropriate boundaries, respect, solving conflict. *More possible questions:* How do you help children to feel emotionally safe and secure? How do you make sure children have enough time to complete activities? How do you manage changing from one activity to another? How do you encourage children to explore? How do you help children when they make mistakes?
How do I make sure my teaching environment is safe?	*Adapt according to context* e.g. if babies, think about nappy changing areas, making of feeds, appropriate toys (no small pieces etc.). *Listen for:* indoor and outdoor safety, recording problems, fixing damaged or unsafe equipment, clean and hygienic, first aid, emergency numbers. *More possible questions:* How do you check for damaged equipment? How do you supervise children? How do you remind children of rules? How do you keep the site clean and hygienic?
Do I know what to do and who to contact in an emergency?	*Listen for:* calling emergency services, collaborating with other staff, accident records, informing parents, practising with children. *More possible questions:* How do you contact emergency services? How does staff know what to do? What first aid knowledge and equipment do you have? What are the first aid rules? How do you record accidents? How do you inform parents?

How does a child's home and community environment affect my teaching practice?	*Listen for:* knowing each child's home background, child's context, appropriate activities. *More possible questions:* How do you know children's home circumstances? How do you accommodate children's home or socio-economic circumstances?
How do I involve caregivers and other community members in children's learning and development?	*Listen for:* share and explain daily programme to parents, parents come into site, record of parents details, notices, notes, sms, parent meetings, discusses learning with parents, accessible reports, parent activities such as show and tell, parental input. *More possible questions:* How do you encourage parental involvement? How do you communicate with parents? How do you reach out to other community members?
How can I share basic knowledge about ECD to parents and communities?	*Listen for:* information posters, brochures, sms, conversations with parents, school meetings, community gatherings. *More possible questions:* Can you give some examples of how you communicate general ECD issues with parents?
Name one thing about your environment (internal and external) that you would most like help with.	*Prompt:* If practitioner is hesitant make some suggestions based on the answers already given. But allow practitioner to make the final choice of type of help wanted.

4. What are my views on support for ECD?
What do I know about government policies and procedures for ECD?	*Listen for:* different policies from DBE, DHET, DH, DSD, National, Provincial and local level procedures; relevant legislation. *More possible questions:* How do you find out about different policies? Can you give examples of ECD policy documents that have relevance for you?
What curriculum documents do I use? What other documents do I need and where do I get them	*Listen for:* documents such as CAPS, NCF, NELDS, Guidelines for ECD sites (DSD), access to copies of documents. *More possible questions:* How do you find out about curriculum documents? How do you get copies of these documents?

from?	
What ECD training have I received?	*Listen for***:** attending courses, further training. *More possible questions:* Practitioner's ECD qualification/s? Where did you get your training?
What do I do or who do I go to if I need help or support with any aspect of my work?	*Listen for:* ECD networks, government officials, local clinic or hospital, principal, colleagues, ECD Union or Association, referrals, professional development. *More possible questions:* Do you ask the principal or other colleagues for help? Do you contact a training organisation or a departmental official?
Name one thing about support that you would most like help with.	*Prompt:* If practitioner is hesitant make some suggestions based on the answers already given. But allow practitioner to make the final choice of type of help wanted.

5. QUESTIONS FOR PRINCIPAL OR SITE MANAGER: What are my views on my leadership role?	
What are the core values of my site?	*Listen for:* mission and vision, quality ECD service, growth and improvement, development and learning, best interests of child, motivated, well qualified staff. *More possible questions:* What do you want to achieve through your ECD programme? How do your goals impact on children, staff and parents?
How do I share this with my staff and make sure that they implement this?	*Listen for:* regular meetings, work as a team. *More possible questions:* How do you help staff to adopt the vision and mission statement? How do you encourage staff to share ideas? How do staff know what is expected of them?
How do I know what kinds of	*Listen for:* on-going staff support, staff strengths and weaknesses; relevant courses/workshops/conferences, staff involvement.

support my staff need, and how do I provide this support?	*More possible questions:* How do you find out what support your staff need? How do you make the time to talk to staff? How do you plan for staff training?
Where do I go for support in implementing ECD?	*Listen for:* networks with NGOs, Departmental officials, good relationships, appropriate documents, reading. *More possible questions:* How do you establish networking relationships with NGOs/other organisations? Who do you invite to assist with programme delivery?
How do I ensure that my staff gets professional development?	*Listen for:* appropriate people for input, other schools, regular meetings, shares appropriate input. *More possible questions:* How do you make sure that staff keeps up-to-date? How do you motivate your staff?
How do I give feedback to my staff?	*Listen for:* trusting relationship with staff, respect staff ideas and input, good channels of communication, negotiation *More possible questions:* How do you encourage staff to listen to your feedback? How do you establish a relationship of mutual trust?
How do I encourage my staff to share practices with others?	*Listen for:* Role model for sharing ideas, opportunities for sharing. *More possible questions:* How do you make time for staff to share ideas?
How do I manage my operations? (e.g. scheduling, financial systems, sustainability, human resources)	*Listen for:* good planning systems, recording systems, supervision schedules, site policies, management procedures, office and filing systems, staff management, site maintenance *More possible questions:* How do you make sure the site runs smoothly? How do you control the finances of the school? How do you manage the staff?
What quality assurance system do I have in place?	*Listen for:* copies of site policies, procedures and processes, registration certification, routine maintenance of equipment, open door policy for parents. *More possible questions:* What quality assurance systems are in place? How do you make sure that all staff knows the quality assurance systems?
How do I manage relationships with my stakeholders (parents,	*Listen for:* good networking, relationship of trust with stakeholders. *More possible questions:* How do you make sure that you maintain good communication channels with stakeholders?

community, district)?	
How do I involve parents in their children's development and education?	*Listen for:* honest, respectful communication, listens to parental concerns, discusses issues in a sensitive manner. *More possible questions:* How do you share information with parents? Can you give some examples of how you encourage parents to be involved with activities?
What are the ethical issues for leaders in ECD?	*Listen for:* providing quality services, adequate work conditions, cost of ECD services, relationships with parents. *More possible questions:* Can you give some examples of when you have had to deal with sensitive issues?
Name one thing about leadership that you would most like help with.	*Prompt:* If practitioner is hesitant make some suggestions based on the answers already given. But allow practitioner to make the final choice of the type of help wanted.