
Development of a Social Preparation Curriculum System for Children's Transition from Kindergarten to Primary School

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Abstract: The transition from kindergarten to primary school represents a crucial stage that significantly influences children's adaptation to formal schooling and their subsequent academic and social growth. According to the *Guidelines for Kindergarten School Readiness Education*, school readiness should be cultivated across multiple developmental domains, among which social preparation plays a fundamental role in supporting children's successful adjustment to primary school life. Based on the developmental characteristics of senior kindergarten children at Wenchang Central Kindergarten in Changqing District, this study develops a school-based social preparation curriculum framework. The curriculum is structured around five key dimensions: task awareness, rule awareness, interpersonal communication, sense of collective belonging, and self-management. Clear curriculum objectives, thematic modules, systematic implementation strategies, and diversified evaluation methods are designed to support children's social development. Through the integration of daily routines, play-based learning activities, and collaborative efforts among kindergartens, families, and primary schools, social preparation education is embedded throughout kindergarten life. The implementation of this curriculum framework is expected to enhance children's social adaptability, reduce anxiety related to school entry, and provide a solid foundation for a smooth transition to primary school and long-term development.

Keywords: Kindergarten-primary school transition; social preparation; school readiness; curriculum development; early childhood education

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1. Introduction

With the continuous promotion of high-quality preschool education, the transition from kindergarten to primary school has become an important concern in early childhood education^[1-2]. This transitional stage not only represents a shift in educational level, but also involves substantial adjustments in children's learning environments, behavioral expectations, and social relationships. Supporting children's smooth adaptation to primary school has therefore become a key issue for educators, policymakers, and families.

The Guidelines for Kindergarten School Readiness Education issued by the Ministry of Education highlight that school readiness should be cultivated in a comprehensive manner across multiple developmental domains^[3]. Among these

domains, social preparation is considered particularly significant in supporting children's adjustment to the structured learning environment and collective life characteristic of primary school. It emphasizes the development of rule awareness, task awareness, interpersonal communication skills, a sense of collective belonging, and self-management abilities. These competencies enable children to participate actively in classroom activities, collaborate with peers, and complete tasks with increasing independence^[4-6]. In recent years, a growing body of research has explored curriculum approaches aimed at facilitating the transition from kindergarten to primary school^[7-8].

Wenchang Central Kindergarten in Changqing District, Jinan, mainly serves children from nearby residential communities. Most of these children grow up in relatively stable family environments and generally exhibit outgoing personalities and a willingness to engage in group activities. However, daily observations and developmental assessments conducted by teachers have revealed noticeable variations in children's levels of social readiness. For instance, some children show limited persistence when completing tasks and may withdraw when confronted with difficulties. Others demonstrate insufficient awareness of rules during collective activities. In addition, a small number of children display relatively weak communication skills and lack effective strategies for managing peer conflicts. In response to these practical challenges, this study aims to develop a systematic social preparation curriculum for senior kindergarten children.

2. Basis and principles for curriculum construction

2.1. Basis for curriculum construction

The curriculum is developed based on the Guidelines for Kindergarten School Readiness Education and the developmental characteristics of senior kindergarten children at Wenchang Central Kindergarten. Through systematic observation, teacher-parent communication, and behavioral assessments, teachers gained a comprehensive understanding of children's strengths and developmental needs. Most children demonstrate curiosity about primary school life and enthusiasm for collective activities. However, some developmental challenges remain, including limited persistence in task completion, insufficient awareness of rules, and relatively weak interpersonal communication abilities among certain children. These findings provide an important basis for designing targeted curriculum content.

2.2. Principles of curriculum construction

To ensure effectiveness and developmental appropriateness, the curriculum follows five key principles. First, the principle of developmental appropriateness ensures that activities respect children's developmental characteristics and avoid premature academic instruction. The focus is placed on cultivating social adaptability, responsibility, and positive behavioral habits. Second, the life-oriented principle emphasizes integrating social preparation into daily kindergarten routines. Through participation in real-life activities such as morning arrival, collective activities, outdoor play, and classroom responsibilities, children gradually learn to follow rules and take responsibility. Third, the play-based principle recognizes play as the primary learning approach for young children. Various forms of games and experiential activities, including role-playing and cooperative challenges, are incorporated to support social learning in an engaging environment. Fourth, the collaborative principle highlights the importance of cooperation among kindergartens, families, and primary schools in forming a consistent educational environment for school readiness. Finally, the process-oriented principle focuses on children's developmental progress rather than solely on outcomes, emphasizing continuous observation, guidance, and respect for individual differences.

3. Construction of the social preparation curriculum goal system

Based on national guidelines and children's developmental characteristics, a three-level goal system consisting of general goals, sub-goals, and specific goals is established. The general goal is to help senior class children develop rule awareness,

task awareness, interpersonal communication ability, sense of collective belonging, and self-management skills, thereby fostering positive attitudes toward school entry and enabling them to adapt to the collective life and learning rhythm of primary school. Sub-goals are structured around five core dimensions.

3.1. Task awareness

Children are encouraged to develop a responsible attitude toward completing tasks. They learn to listen carefully to instructions from teachers and parents, attempt to complete tasks independently, and demonstrate persistence when encountering difficulties. Children are also guided to reflect on whether tasks have been completed effectively.

3.2. Rule awareness

Children gradually learn to understand and follow various rules in kindergarten life, including classroom rules, game rules, and safety rules. Through practice, they develop a sense of order and learn the importance of respecting collective norms.

3.3. Interpersonal communication

Children are encouraged to interact positively with peers and teachers. They learn to greet others, share resources, cooperate during group activities, and resolve conflicts through communication, negotiation, and mutual understanding.

3.4. Sense of collective belonging

Children develop emotional attachment to their class community and participate actively in collective activities. They learn to take responsibility for maintaining classroom order and contribute to the well-being of the group.

3.5. Self-management

Children gradually learn to organize personal belongings, regulate their emotions, and control their behavior during group activities. These abilities help them become more independent and responsible learners.

4. Curriculum content and thematic design

Based on the curriculum goals, four thematic modules are designed to structure the social preparation curriculum throughout the senior class semester. Each thematic module focuses on a specific developmental direction and is supported by corresponding activity content to ensure that the curriculum remains closely connected to children's daily lives and is practical for implementation.

4.1. Theme 1: I Am a member of the class

The core goal of this theme is to cultivate children's sense of collective belonging and responsibility, enabling them to learn to care for and serve the collective while developing the awareness that "the class is my home, and everyone shares the responsibility for taking care of it." This theme is consistent with the school-based educational focus of Wenchang Central Kindergarten on cultivating children's sense of responsibility. The theme is implemented through activities centered on understanding the collective, serving the collective, and safeguarding the collective, and the following specific activities are designed.

4.1.1. Core activity "I am on duty today"

The specific responsibilities of duty students are clarified, including organizing the class book corner, placing tableware, wiping tables, and reminding peers to follow rules. Children take turns performing duty tasks, allowing them to experience the satisfaction of serving the collective through practical participation and gradually develop a sense of responsibility. Teachers provide daily evaluations and encouragement for the work of duty students in order to reinforce responsible

behaviors.

4.1.2. Auxiliary activity “We make the class conventions”

Children are organized to discuss the rules that should be followed in the classroom, such as not interrupting during class, putting toys back after use, and maintaining a quiet environment. Children are encouraged to formulate class conventions independently. These conventions are presented in the form of drawings and posted in prominent places in the classroom. Through this process, children are guided to consciously follow the rules and strengthen their sense of collective identity.

4.1.3. Extended activity “I help teachers do things”

Children are encouraged to actively assist teachers with simple tasks within their capability, such as distributing exercise books, organizing teaching materials, and taking care of plants. Through these practical experiences, children can feel their own value within the collective and further enhance their sense of belonging to the class community.

4.2. Theme 2: Learning to follow rules

The core goal of this theme is to help children understand the significance of rules, consciously follow various rules, and develop a strong sense of order, thereby laying a foundation for adapting to classroom rules and campus order in primary school. In order to avoid the tediousness often associated with rule education, the following activities are designed in connection with children’s daily life experiences.

4.2.1. Core activity “Class model student”

Primary school classroom situations are simulated, allowing children to role-play as primary school students and teachers. Through this role-playing activity, children experience primary school classroom rules, such as raising hands before speaking, not interrupting others, and maintaining a quiet learning environment. Teachers provide timely guidance and corrections for inappropriate behaviors in order to strengthen children’s understanding and awareness of classroom rules.

4.2.2. Auxiliary activity “Rule chess”

Interesting chess pieces representing kindergarten rules, primary school rules, and public place rules are designed. Children learn various rules while playing the game, and they also understand the possible consequences of violating rules. This activity helps enhance children’s awareness of rules in an enjoyable and interactive manner.

4.2.3. Extended activity “Queue up without pushing”

Children’s awareness of queuing is strengthened during daily routines such as outdoor activities, handwashing before meals, and going up and down stairs. Teachers guide children to learn to take turns and wait patiently, thereby developing the habit of consciously queuing. At the same time, basic campus safety rule education is naturally integrated into these daily activities.

4.3. Theme 3: Making friends and cooperating

The core goal of this theme is to cultivate children’s interpersonal communication skills by encouraging them to communicate proactively, cooperate with others, share resources, and resolve conflicts through negotiation. These abilities lay an important foundation for establishing positive peer relationships after entering primary school. Based on the current characteristics of children’s communication abilities, the following experiential activities are designed.

4.3.1. Core activity “Cooperative challenge”

Game tasks that require cooperation among peers are designed, such as three-legged races, group puzzles, and relay races. Through these cooperative games, children experience the importance of teamwork, learn to divide responsibilities, and

cooperate effectively with peers, thereby improving their cooperative abilities.

4.3.2. Auxiliary activity “Good friends hold hands”

Children are encouraged to share their own experiences and strategies for making friends. Teachers guide them to take the initiative to greet and communicate with peers, introduce themselves, and invite others to participate in games. For children who are more introverted or reluctant to communicate actively, teachers provide individual guidance and encouragement to help them gradually develop confidence in social interaction.

4.3.3. Extended activity “Tips for solving conflicts”

Through situational performances, teachers simulate common conflicts among children, such as competing for toys or accidentally bumping into others. Children are guided to discuss possible solutions to these conflicts and learn appropriate strategies such as apologizing, forgiving, and negotiating. These activities help improve children’s ability to resolve interpersonal conflicts in a constructive way.

4.4. Theme 4: I can do it myself

The core goal of this theme is to cultivate children’s task awareness and self-management abilities, enabling them to complete tasks independently, manage their belongings and emotions, and prepare for independently managing learning tasks and daily life after entering primary school. Based on the current situation of children’s self-management abilities at Wenchang Central Kindergarten, the following activities are designed.

4.4.1. Core activity “My task card”

Teachers assign simple daily tasks to children, such as organizing their schoolbags, completing a drawing, or helping parents with small household chores. Task cards are created so that children can record the completion of their tasks, which helps cultivate their task awareness and persistence. In addition, weekly task-sharing meetings are organized, allowing children to share their experiences and feelings about completing tasks.

4.4.2. Auxiliary Activity “21-day good habit check-in”

A self-management habit check-in activity is implemented, covering areas such as organizing personal belongings, eating independently, and controlling emotions. Children check in every day to gradually develop positive self-management habits. Teachers and parents jointly supervise the process and provide timely encouragement and recognition.

4.4.3. Extended activity “I am a little expert”

Children participate in self-service ability competitions, such as organizing schoolbags, folding clothes, and tying shoelaces. Through these competitions, children improve their self-service abilities, enhance their self-confidence, and strengthen their awareness of self-management.

5. Curriculum implementation strategies

5.1. Integrating into daily kindergarten life

Social preparation is embedded within children’s everyday routines, enabling the gradual development of social competence in natural contexts. During morning arrival, children greet teachers and peers, which provides opportunities to practice basic communication and social interaction. Through classroom duty activities, children take on responsibilities such as organizing materials and maintaining classroom order, thereby cultivating responsibility and self-management skills. In regional activities, children collaborate and share materials, which strengthens their cooperative awareness and communication abilities. Outdoor play further reinforces rule awareness, as children follow game rules and learn to queue

in an orderly manner. Mealtimes offer opportunities to develop independence, such as arranging tableware and maintaining table etiquette. At departure time, children review the day's activities and responsibilities, helping to reinforce their sense of task awareness. Throughout these processes, teachers closely observe children's behaviors and provide timely guidance when difficulties arise.

5.2. Play-based experiential activities

In addition to daily routines, specially designed play-based and experiential activities are organized to increase children's interest and participation in social preparation. For example, the role-playing activity "Primary School Experience Day" allows children to simulate key aspects of primary school life, including attending classes, taking breaks, and having lunch, thereby helping them become familiar with the school routine. Situational performance activities are also conducted to recreate typical classroom and peer interaction scenarios, enabling children to practice communication, cooperation, and problem-solving skills. Furthermore, task challenge activities integrate elements such as task completion, rule compliance, and teamwork, encouraging active participation while strengthening children's comprehensive social abilities. After each activity, teachers facilitate reflective discussions to help children summarize their experiences and consolidate their learning.

5.3. Supportive classroom environment

A supportive classroom environment serves as an important foundation for children's social preparation. Various visual and interactive elements are incorporated to reinforce learning. For instance, a Task Wall displays children's classroom responsibilities and progress, encouraging accountability and participation. A Convention Wall presents class rules jointly formulated by the children, which helps strengthen their awareness of rules and collective responsibility. A Growth Check-in Wall records children's habits and achievements, providing visible encouragement and enhancing their sense of confidence. Additionally, a Good Friend Tree showcases photos and drawings representing peer relationships, promoting interaction and friendship among children. The classroom is also equipped with materials such as rule-based board games, cooperative play resources, and task cards, allowing children to explore independently and practice social skills through hands-on experiences.

5.4. Kindergarten collaboration

Effective cooperation between families and kindergartens plays a crucial role in enhancing the effectiveness of the curriculum. To support parents, the kindergarten provides a "Guideline for Family Social Preparation", offering practical suggestions for cultivating children's independence and rule awareness in the home environment. Parent education workshops are also organized to explain the concept, significance, and key considerations of social preparation. In addition, communication platforms are established to facilitate the exchange of information about children's progress between teachers and parents. Parent-child activities, such as family task check-ins and cooperative games, are regularly conducted to strengthen children's social abilities while promoting positive parent-child interaction.

5.5. Kindergarten-primary school collaboration

Close collaboration with local primary schools helps ensure a smoother transition from kindergarten to primary education. Senior kindergarten children are given opportunities to visit primary school campuses, where they can observe classrooms, break times, and activities such as flag-raising ceremonies, allowing them to become familiar with school routines and rules. At the same time, primary school teachers are invited to visit the kindergarten to introduce aspects of primary school life and respond to children's questions. Joint teaching and research activities are also conducted between kindergarten and primary school educators to align educational expectations and curriculum content, thereby enhancing the continuity and effectiveness of the transition process.

6. Curriculum evaluation methods

Curriculum evaluation is guided by the principles of process orientation, developmental assessment, and diversified participation, involving teachers, children, and parents.

6.1. Teacher observation evaluation

Teachers conduct systematic observations of children during daily routines, play activities, and thematic learning experiences. Observation records document children's developmental progress as well as the challenges they encounter. Particular attention is paid to children's ability to complete tasks independently, follow established rules, communicate effectively with peers, demonstrate collective responsibility, and regulate their emotions appropriately.

6.2. Children's self-evaluation and mutual evaluation

Children are encouraged to reflect on their own behaviors and learning experiences through questions such as "What did I accomplish today?" and "Who performed well today?". Such reflective practices help foster self-awareness and promote the ability to recognize and appreciate peers' strengths. Self-evaluation and peer evaluation are typically conducted following thematic activities or during weekly sharing sessions, providing opportunities for children to review their experiences and reinforce learning outcomes.

6.3. Parent evaluation

Parents contribute to the evaluation process by providing feedback on children's behaviors at home through interviews, questionnaires, and online communication platforms. The feedback mainly focuses on children's task completion, rule awareness, social interaction, and self-management abilities in the family environment. These insights serve as valuable references for teachers when adjusting curriculum implementation and offering targeted guidance.

6.4. Growth file evaluation

Each child maintains a social preparation growth portfolio that documents their developmental trajectory. The portfolio may include task cards, habit check-in records, artwork, photographs, teacher observation notes, and parent feedback. As a comprehensive record of children's progress, the portfolio not only reflects individual growth but also provides an important basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the curriculum implementation.

7. Conclusion

The social preparation curriculum has been developed at Wenchang Central Kindergarten to support children's smooth transition from kindergarten to primary school by systematical cultivation of task awareness, rule awareness, interpersonal communication skills, sense of collective belonging, and self-management abilities. Under the guidance of national school readiness policies and children's developmental characteristics, the proposed curriculum integrates thematic activities, daily life experiences, play-based learning, and collaborative support from families and primary schools. Through diversified implementation strategies and process-oriented evaluation methods, the curriculum not only enhances children's social adaptability and independence, but also provides teachers with practical and operable guidance for school readiness education. Overall, this school-based curriculum offers a feasible model for promoting children's comprehensive development and improving the effectiveness of kindergarten-primary school transition practices.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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