

PRESCHOOL MANAGEMENT · SOUTH AFRICA

The South African Preschool Management Toolkit

Printable tools, templates, checklists and planners for all six management systems of a registered South African ECD centre — in one toolkit.

- 1 Six-System Self-Assessment — score your school out of 18
- 2 Four-term preschool management planning calendar
- 3 ELDA and Grade R quick reference card
- 4 DSD incident quick reference card — laminate this
- 5 Staff qualification expiry tracker and weekly observation log
- 6 30-checkpoint inspection readiness self-assessment

1,848

Pre-loaded skills

6

Management systems

Free

No sign-up needed

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The Six Management Systems of a Registered South African Preschool

Every registered South African ECD centre must run all six of these systems simultaneously. The compliance requirements come from three sources: the Children's Act (DSD), the DBE curriculum framework (ELDA and Grade R), and the Bana Pele registration programme. A school that manages five out of six well is still exposed during an inspection.

<p>01 Assessment Records</p> <p>ELDA (492 skills) and Grade R CAPS (98 skills) — rated, commented, approved, and delivered as branded PDF reports every term.</p>	<p>02 DSD Incident Documentation</p> <p>15-section DSD forms with body map, three signatures, sequential numbering, and an inspection-ready incident register.</p>	<p>03 Attendance and Ratios</p> <p>Daily registers, absence follow-up, and real-time child-to-staff ratio monitoring against Children's Act requirements.</p>	
<p>04 Staff Records</p> <p>Qualification certificates, first aid expiry dates, Child Protection Register clearances, leave balances, and clock-in records.</p>	<p>05 Parent Communication</p> <p>Report delivery, incident notification, absence alerts — all with read confirmation and a POPIA-compliant audit trail.</p>	<p>06 Fee Management</p> <p>Monthly invoicing, payment tracking, arrears management, and monthly reconciliation — so fee collection is a system, not a chase.</p>	
<p>1,848 Pre-loaded SA skills</p>	<p>492 ELDA skills per child</p>	<p>15 DSD form sections</p>	<p>6 Management systems</p>

The Bana Pele reality: Schools moving from Bronze to Silver registration face a physical site inspection across all six systems. A gap in any one of them — missing incident records, expired staff certificates, incomplete assessment documentation — can delay Silver certification and trigger a compliance improvement process.

Six-System Self-Assessment – Score Your School Out of 18

For each system, circle or tick your score. 1 = Paper/manual/no system 2 = Partial system, some gaps 3 = Complete, inspection-ready system

Management system	1	2	3
System 1 – Assessment Records ELDA and Grade R frameworks pre-loaded, principal approval, PDF delivery, parent confirmation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
System 2 – DSD Incident Documentation All 15 sections complete, sequential numbering, 3-signature chain, retrievable incident register	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
System 3 – Attendance and Child-to-Staff Ratios Digital register, absence follow-up system, real-time ratio monitoring by age group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
System 4 – Staff Records and Qualifications Certificates current, expiry alerts, leave balances tracked, clock-in with timestamps	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
System 5 – Parent Communication Structured delivery, read-confirmation on reports, incident acknowledgement trail, POPIA-compliant	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
System 6 – Fee Management Automated invoicing, payment tracking per learner, arrears alerts, monthly reconciliation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Total: _____ / 18	6-9 Start with System 2 and 3	10-14 Focus on lowest-scoring systems	15-18 Inspection-ready — stay consistent

Four-Term Preschool Management Calendar — Key Dates and Priorities

Mark your school's specific dates in the blank columns. Use this calendar to plan each term before it starts — not during it.

Milestone	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
ELDA/Grade R grids ready	Day 1 of term	Day 1 of term	Day 1 of term	Day 1 of term
Mid-term obs check-in	Week 5	Week 5	Week 5	Week 5
Principal review opens	Week 8	Week 8	Week 8	Week 8
Reports to parents	Last week	Last week	Last week	Last week
Staff cert audit	January		July	
Fire evacuation drill	✓ Record date	✓ Record date	✓ Record date	✓ Record date
Incident register tally	End of term	End of term	End of term	End of term
Attendance register close	Last Friday	Last Friday	Last Friday	Last Friday
My school dates				

Term 2 only — Grade R

Formal CAPS assessment mid-year. Term 2 subsections differ from Term 1 — check CAPS structure before opening assessment grids. Principal sign-off required before mid-year reports go to parents.

All terms — DSD incident register

Reset your sequential incident numbering on 1 January. New year, new register — INC-2027-001. File the previous year's register with all forms attached. Keep for 5 years minimum.

The one planning habit that prevents term-end crisis: Open your ELDA or Grade R assessment grid on Day 1 of every term, not Week 8. A teacher who has been marking observations for nine weeks has nothing to write from memory. A teacher who starts in Week 9 writes everything from memory.

ELDA and Grade R CAPS — Side-by-Side Quick Reference

ELDA

Early Learning and Development Assessment

492

Total skills

6

Domains

5

Age brackets

6 LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT AREAS

1. Well-being
2. Identity and Belonging
3. Communication
4. Exploring Mathematics
5. Creativity
6. Knowledge and Understanding of the World

RATING SCALE

NYA

Not Yet Achieved

PA

Partially Achieved

A

Achieved

Age brackets: Babies (0–18m) · Toddlers (18–36m) · Young Children (36–48m) · Older Children (48–60m) · Towards Grade R (60–72m)

Grade R CAPS

Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement

98

Total skills

3

Subjects

2

Per year

3 SUBJECTS

1. Home Language
2. Mathematics
3. Life Skills

RATING SCALE (NUMERIC 1–4)

1

Not Achieved

2

Part.
Achieved

3

Achieved

4

Outst.
Achieved

Key rule: A rating of 1 or 2 requires a written comment with next steps. A comment without a rating, or a rating without a comment for levels 1 or 2, is an incomplete record.

DSD Incident Report — Quick Reference Card for Every Incident

All 15 Form Sections

1 Incident reference number

2 Date, time, and precise location

3 Child's full registered details

4 Factual description — 3rd person

5 Body map — mark ALL injuries \triangle

6 Nature and extent of injury

7 First aid — by whom, what, when

8 Witnesses — full names \triangle

9 Photographic evidence

10 Immediate action taken \triangle

11 Follow-up action \triangle

12 Risk assessment — what and why

13 Teacher signature ✓ first

14 Principal signature ✓ second

15 Parent signature ✓ third

\triangle = Most frequently blank during inspections ✓ = Signature chain order

Three-Signature Chain

- 1** **Teacher** — same day, Section 13
- 2** **Principal** — same or next day, Section 14
- 3** **Parent** — in person at collection, Section 15

Serious Incidents — Notify DSD

- Death of a child in your care
- Life-threatening injury
- Suspected staff abuse
- Abduction of a child
- Emergency hospitalisation

Complete DSD form PLUS written notification to DSD/DBE regional office within 24 hours. Keep copies filed together.

The Five-Minute Test

Can you retrieve any specific incident record from the past 12 months — by date or reference number — within five minutes? If not, your filing system is not inspection-ready.

Staff Qualification and Certificate Expiry Tracker

Complete one row per staff member. Update the expiry dates as certificates are renewed. Flag any certificate expiring within 60 days — and action it before it lapses.

Staff member name	Role	NQF level & expiry	First aid cert expiry	CPR clearance date	Last leave balance	Status

● **Current** — valid, more than 60 days

● **Renew soon** — expires within 60 days

● **Lapsed** — expired, action required

Child Protection Register clearance is required for every person who works with children under the Children's Act — including cooks, gardeners, and drivers. This is not optional and does not have a standard expiry date, but must be on file for every current staff member and checked when any new staff member is appointed.

Weekly Observation Log – ELDA and Grade R

TEACHER NAME	CLASS / AGE GROUP	WEEK OF	FRAMEWORK	
			ELDA	Grade R

Child name	Domain / Subject observed	Observation – what you saw, heard, or the child said (exact words)	Rating NYA / PA / A or 1 / 2 / 3 / 4	Follow-up needed?	Day & time

The observation that becomes the comment: Record the child's exact words where possible — "Thabo said he counted five stones and then counted three more and he knows it's eight." That sentence, recorded at 10:15am on a Tuesday, becomes the evidence inside the assessment comment that no other teacher could have written. Generic comments come from generic observation habits. Specific comments come from this log.

30-Point Inspection Readiness Checklist — Score Before Any Inspector Does

Tick each item that your school can verify right now. Score: 25–30 = inspection-ready 18–24 = review gaps urgently Below 18 = prioritise immediately

System 1 — Assessment Records

- ELDA and Grade R grids are pre-loaded and current for this term
- Every learner has a completed assessment record for the current term
- All assessments have been signed off by the principal
- Reports have been delivered and parent receipt confirmed
- Previous term's assessment records are filed and retrievable

System 2 — DSD Incident Documentation

- A sequential incident register exists and is up to date
- All incident forms for the past 12 months are complete (all 15 sections)
- Every incident record has all three signatures
- Any serious incidents have DSD regional notifications filed alongside
- Any specific record can be retrieved within five minutes by number or date

System 3 — Attendance and Ratios

- Daily attendance registers are complete for the current term
- Absence follow-up records exist for every absent child
- Child-to-staff ratios by age group are being monitored and documented
- Attendance data is accessible to the principal at any time

System 4 — Staff Records

- All staff qualification certificates are current and on file
- All first aid certificates are valid (not lapsed)
- Child Protection Register clearances are on file for every staff member
- Staff attendance and clock-in records are maintained
- Leave records are current and accurately reflect each staff member's balance

System 5 — Parent Communication

- Assessment reports have read-confirmations from parents on file
- Incident notifications have parent acknowledgement records
- Sensitive child information is not being distributed via uncontrolled WhatsApp
- A communication trail exists that can be produced during a dispute or inspection

System 6 — Fee Management

- Monthly invoices are issued on a consistent schedule
- Payment records per learner are current and reconciled
- Arrears are tracked and being actively followed up

My score: _____ / 30

earlytrack.co.za



Ready to connect all six systems in one platform?

EarlyTrack is the only South African platform built specifically for registered private ECD centres — with ELDA and Grade R pre-loaded, DSD incident reporting with all 15 sections, real-time ratio monitoring, staff qualification tracking, and a secure parent portal with read-confirmation. All six systems. One platform. Built for South Africa.

R299

Standard / month

R499

Professional / month

14

Day free trial

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No credit card required · Full Professional access · English and Afrikaans · Cancel any time

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