Integrated and Holistic Development through 3 Goals.

The NEP 2020 has focused on the holistic development of the child. There are different domains of development like physical and motor development, socio-emotional development, literacy and numeracy development, cognitive development, spiritual and moral development, art, and aesthetic development which are interrelated and interdependent. These developmental aspects make child competent to deal with complex life situations.

All these domains have been subsumed into three major goals which are briefly discussed here

**Developmental Goal 1: Health a children Maintain Good health and Well being (HW).**

**Developmental Goal 2: Children Become Effective Communicators (EC)**

**Developmental Goal 3 ;children become involved learners and connect with their immediate environment (IL)**

**Developmental Goal 1**: Children Maintain Good Health and Wellbeing (HW)

a. The foundational years are of critical importance for laying the foundation for optimal physical, socio-emotional, and psychological health and well being of children for life. These are the years when children, given the right opportunities and encouragement, are developing the five senses, strengthening their larger and finer bones and muscles, and refining their eye hand coordination, which is also one of the prerequisites for being able to write in later years.

Alongside, their sense of identity and social skills are developing, as they initiate and engage in more and more play activities with other children, initially in pairs and then gradually in smaller and then larger groups. Thus, they learn to play, work, and live with others in harmonious ways.

They also begin to appreciate how each one of them is different and how these differences need to be not only accepted but respected.

This goal continues to provide experience for health and well-being, socio emotional development, health, nutrition, hygienic **practices**, and safety from FY1-FY6 which covers age group 3 to 9 (Pre School to Class III - consisting of 2 years of Anganwadi/pre-school, one year of Balvatika and 3 years in primary school)

Developmental Goal 2:

Children Become Effective Communicators (EC)

a. By the time three-years old come into a preschool in monolingual cultures, they have typically already begun to communicate their needs, likes and dislikes orally in their home language, which is also the school language.

b.The experiences provided during the foundational years are required to build on all these early experiences and exposure and further enhance their communication skills so that they can orally share their thoughts and feelings or describe their experiences more effectively. c. It also ensures that children can receive and share information and develop higher order skills such as critical and creative thinking. They gradually learn to read and write with comprehension in that language.

c.However, this scenario is possible only in contexts where the medium of instruction or interaction in schools is the same as the child’s home. Given our country’s multilingual context, we have many children whose home language is different from the medium of instruction in school or preschool. These include contexts such as that of tribal languages or dialects of regional languages and the contexts of English medium preschools where children come in with little or no familiarity with oral English/school language. Starting children on reading and writing without ensuring their oral language base results in children learning to read mechanically through simple decoding, but without much comprehension. Since all school subjects are language-mediated, this early learning gap inevitably has an adverse impact on children’s later performance in school. In addition to this challenge, we have many children who are first generation learners and do not have an environment of literacy at home. They may not have seen books or had anyone reading to them or have a vague concept of print, text or meaning and value of reading and writing activity.

Therefore, it is imperative that teacher communicate with the child in his language in pre-school and once the child is comfortable and learns to express himself, the teacher may introduce school language or language used in the state as medium of instruction. This will lay the foundation of language and literacy at the pre-school (3-6 years) and this goal will lead to subject- first/second language for example Hindi/state language/English.

**Developmental Goal 3: Children become involved learners and connect with their immediate environment (IL).**

Children are born curious and enchanted about the world – its colours, its shapes, its sounds, its sizes, and its forms. This ability to connect with others and to share feelings with them lays a special basis for learning- the cultural social basis of human learning. Children notice and explore patterns, shapes, and other mathematical dimensions in their immediate world. Children begin to understand the world around them by making sense of it as they ‘see’ it. Children’s learning in the cognitive domain needs to be facilitated through development of their five senses and encouragement of the 3E’s, i.e., Exploration, Experimentation and Enquiry, based on children’s prior knowledge and immediate context.

A major goal of foundational years education is, therefore, to help children move towards more logical thinking by helping them graduate from their perception-bound to more concept-based understanding. This gets addressed by helping children form concepts related to the world around them through direct experience and interactions with the physical, social, and natural environment.

A sound framework for planning their learning experiences could help them develop understanding or knowledge for the environment, through the environment and of the environment.

Mathematical thinking and reasoning is an important domain of cognitive development. The foundation for this abstract rule-based thinking gets laid through activities that are meaningful for the child. Mathematical thinking involves thinking about objects and their quantitative and spatial relationships. To begin with, a sense about these relationships emerges and based on these, the patterns and the more abstract concepts develop. During early childhood, we can see a path of development for the foundational ideas of mathematics-from what are known as pre-number concepts related to a sense of quantity, size, distance, length, width, weight, and height to sense of numbers and algebraic ideas and from sense of shape and space to geometrical ideas.