

Summary

Early childhood education is the first and most important step in the structure of the modern school system. The reason why it should be considered a top priority is the fact that it represents a fundamental and propaedeutic level, ensuring the continuity of teaching and educational processes in kindergarten and primary school, and prepares for further education in the more senior grades.

Early childhood education is defined as “the golden age” of child development; it is in this period that we can see: a fast pace in understanding the surrounding world, an excellent memory, the tendency to participate in the life of a school group, activeness in games, performing social roles, a tendency for expansion. The basic forms of children’s activities are: fun, learning, and working in the kindergarten; and learning, work, and fun at school. The key value here is the subjectivity of the individual and the highest stage – the plenipotentiary. Education of the youngest is known to be open and friendly, opening many opportunities to develop creativity, responsibility, independence and freedom in taking any action and tasks. Its primary objective is to stimulate the development of children, preparing them to take compulsory schooling and, in classes I-III to assist the student in the development of physical, mental, social, emotional, ethical, and aesthetic dimensions.

Modern education has had and is still facing a period of many dynamic changes that are taking place in the education of a small child. To meet all the problems it seems necessary to take subjects which are considered to be important, in terms of establishing the changes which have already occurred, as well as in stimulating further transformations, which will follow on from this process. The key role in early education has three entities: student, teacher and parents, and the common educational space that they create through their own actions.

The publication *Journal of Preschool and Elementary School Education* is a scientific journal representing the effects of international scientific cooperation between the Polish, Slovak and Czech Republics, and Hungary and Bulgaria; it is a forum to exchange views on the present and the future states of the kindergarten and early education in European Union countries, and around the world. The journal is directed to those who are professionally involved in school: teachers working in kindergartens and schools (grades I-III), educators, psychologists, sociologists, therapists, specialists in all aspects of the process of the upbringing and education of a child, teaching staff, candidates for the teaching profession, and student teachers’ colleges.

We hope that the scope of the journal will address the scientific needs of professional circles, dealing in the theory and practice of the upbringing and education of a young child, whilst at the same time emphasizing the need for integration and dialogue across boundaries between representatives of various specialties. The title of the journal encourages a broader, multi-functional look at the education of young children, motivates to seek a common language and interdisciplinary cooperation. It emphasizes openness, flexibility, originality and inspiration by presenting work of high quality in terms of scientific value. The structure of the journal consists of three sections: Articles, Reports and Reviews.

The mission of the journal is to provide readers with a comprehensive and up to date knowledge about the child’s early education, active participation in the development of early education and the propagation of achievements and experience of both, domestic and foreign experts in this

field. As authors, we will strive to achieve the status of an influential academic publication throughout this country and beyond. The reader may expect, therefore, a high degree of reliability and validity in providing him with information and can participate in improving education at the preschool and early education levels. An important area of the mission that this journal is undertaking is to promote the scientific development of young talents.

This will be expressed through opening the columns of the journal for doctoral candidates from Polish and foreign universities, and for employees involved in post-doctoral dissertations. We propose a systematic publication of notices of research work and the implementation of its results in Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Bulgaria, and Hungary.

The first issue of the *Journal of Preschool and Elementary School Education* is devoted to topics related to modern trends in the kindergarten and early education, and to paradigmatic transformations.

We encourage the sharing of experiences, ideas, introduced innovations and empirical research, as well as insights and doubts.

The individual point of view is essential, as well as concrete proposals for solutions. Any theoretical assumptions, ideas, and proposed changes, which are so important for modern education, will be discussed by practitioners, and practitioners will be able to read the opinions from many other environments.

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