

Connecting Communities: Celebrating Our **PASTELS**



Celebrating the achievements of our ECLC Cycle 2 PASTELS

Welcome to the vibrant world of the Early Childhood Learning Communities (ECLC), where every Learning Community (LC) session brings new discoveries, shared wisdom, and collective growth!

This special edition of **PASTELS** Connect celebrates the works of our **P**edagogists **A**nd **S**pecialists in **T**Eaching and **L**earning from our 2nd cycle of ECLC. Our 82 **PASTELS** led 35 Communities of Practice (CoP) sessions, benefiting over 500 educators across the sector! At the recent ECLC Professional Exchange on 5 February 2026, which marked the conclusion of their two-year journey, we celebrated the **PASTELS**' remarkable achievements as they shared their learnings with close to 400 EC professionals.

From different organisations, **PASTELS** are developing professionally through Learning communities, **E**vidence-based practices, **A**mplifying impact, and **D**eveloping others.



Taking the LEAD

The dedication to excellence that PASTELs have is exemplified by taking the LEAD:



ECDA's Chief Executive, Ms Ku Geok Boon, recognising the importance of the work our PASTELs have done in her opening speech at the Professional Exchange

- L** Learning Communities
- E** Evidence-based Practice
- A** Amplify Impact
- D** Developing Others

PASTELs lead learning communities (LCs) where educators learn from one another, share resources and actively collaborate to meet the diverse needs of children in their care, with the guidance of Resource Persons (RPs).

PASTELs anchor everything in evidence-based practice. As champions of innovation, these pedagogical leaders bridge the gap between theory and practice, turning complex educational concepts into engaging, child-friendly experiences. **PASTELs** engage deeply with current research and bring fresh perspectives that drive meaningful change in centres and beyond.

The impact and influence that **PASTELs** create multiplies. As promoters of collaborative learning, **PASTELs** create vibrant communities of practice (CoP) built on shared purpose and mutual support, strengthening the quality of early childhood education far beyond their individual centres.

PASTELs serve as mentors and guides, playing an active role in the professional development of other educators, strengthening their capabilities and confidence to become better educators for our children.



Transforming Teaching & Learning Practices

Our learning communities span across six domains: Social & Emotional Development, Early Years Competencies, Outdoor Learning, Language & Literacy, Inclusive Practice, and Mother Tongue Languages (Chinese Language and Malay Language).

Learning Communities emphasise a fundamental shift from routine-based teaching to intentional practices with thoughtfully designed experiences.



Social & Emotional Development



Early Years Competencies



Outdoor Learning



Language & Literacy

Each community is a treasure trove of rich experiences and potential for innovation through a spirit of collaboration. Educators could then use the learning gained to impact their teaching.

Let us explore how these remarkable professionals are shaping the future of early childhood education, one child, one classroom, and one community at a time.



Inclusive Practice



Mother Tongue Language (CL)



Mother Tongue Language (ML)

Social & Emotional Development

Nurturing Hearts and Minds of Educators and Children

PASTELs in the Social & Emotional Development domain identify emotional intelligence as the foundation for effective teaching, and it begins with educators' understanding of themselves in the areas of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management.

Similar to young children, they identify that educators need to develop these competencies to create positive classroom cultures and support children's social-emotional growth.

During their LC sessions, PASTELs recognise the importance of practising self-regulation skills by recognising their own personal triggers. They learn to take a pause before reacting and seek support when overwhelmed.

The importance of acknowledging the actions and validating the emotions of children using mindful language (e.g. avoiding the use of common responses and critical remarks) was also forged through deep discussions.





Early Years Competencies

Building Strong Foundations

Early Years Competencies PASTELs examine how intentional, play-based experiences can be thoughtfully designed to support active exploration and meaningful interactions with young children.

Creating “Thick Conversations”, as introduced by the EYC PASTELs during their LC sessions, emphasised the move beyond simple interactions to meaningful dialogue. Educators can ask relatable questions that encourage children to share experiences, make predictions, explain their thinking, and connect learning to authentic experiences. They can explore this essential strategy to expand children’s words into proper sentences, supporting language development naturally.

Other key teaching strategies covered during LC sessions include having sufficient time for discovery and observing children’s natural play patterns. EYC PASTELs believe that identifying children’s play patterns and asking thoughtful questions help children think deeply and be excited about learning.



Language & Literacy: The Power of Words

Recognising the trend of digital literacy in children, PASTELs from the Language and Literacy domain view technology as an efficient complementary tool for quality education. In their LC sessions, PASTELs interact with a myriad of effective pedagogical digital tools such as Chatterpix, stop-motion pictures, sound buttons, talking pens, KUBO robots, torches and digital cameras to effectively support children’s communication and self-expression.

Combining purposeful integration with intentional planning, PASTELs also explore how differentiated instructions, together with hands-on literacy experiences such as story boxes, drama, and play-based activities, support children at varying stages of language and literacy development. These essential play-based literacy approaches effectively engage children of all learning abilities.



Mother Tongue Language (CL) 三人行必有我师

維高斯基的文化历史理论 Vygotsky’s Sociocultural Theory 强调社会互动、文化工具和语言在认知发展中的核心作用。皮亚杰的认知发展理论 (Piaget’s theory of cognitive development) 是指的是个体自出生后在适应环境的活动中, 吸收知识时的认知方式以及解决问题的思维能力, 其随着年龄增长而改变的历程。

根据所提的两个理论, 华语的 PASTELs 结合了幼儿读写萌发与全语言教学观, 践行“教学做合一”原则。在 Learning Communities (LC) sessions, PASTELs 集体相信环境与教学要素分为三大关键: 环境布置, 语言氛围, 积极互动。以 iTeach 系统性教学原则, 教育工作者需通过真实情境和游戏促进学习, 玩中学融入生活情境来促进幼儿们对学习华语的热爱和兴趣。

PASTELs 认同借助日常熟悉物品进行生活化学习能设计贴近生活经验的简化活动并且加深与巩固幼儿对于学习华语的能力。此外, 运用故事延伸法 (角色扮演、故事创编、音乐律动、手工制作) 重复阅读能建立安全感、强调感官体验与情绪参与、积累词汇和培养讲述能力 (提问示范)。



Outdoor Learning: The Outdoors as Co-Teacher



PASTELs from the Outdoor Learning domain believe that nature is an active partner in children’s holistic development, supporting physical, social, emotional, and cognitive growth through meaningful exploration and purposeful play.

During LC sessions, PASTELs embarked on “learning beyond the four walls”. It meant utilising loose parts and natural materials to encourage problem-solving skills, dramatic play, and relationship management whilst connecting children with their natural environment. Another strategy explored was “bringing indoors outdoors”, which is the extension of indoor learning concepts to outdoor spaces. This promotes responsible decision-making and continuity of diverse learning experiences.

PASTELs experimented with activities and resources, such as storytelling in natural settings, edible sand play and picture talk using outdoor elements, to ignite curiosity, exploration, and respectful engagement with the environment.

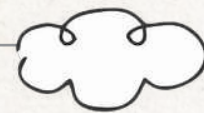


Inclusive Practice: In an inclusive environment, we create a place where every child belongs

PASTELs from the Inclusive Practice domain believe that children do not have to fit into a fixed system. Instead, they create learning spaces that change and adapt to meet each child's needs. They use a framework called Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to guide their practices.

In their sessions, PASTELs use three main approaches: they engage children in different ways, present information in various formats, and let children show what they know through different methods. This means they might create quiet spaces for children who need them, use pictures to help children who are less vocal, and adjust activities based on what each child likes and can do.

Understanding that inclusion requires collective effort, PASTELs prioritise collaborative partnerships with families and stakeholders to extend inclusive practices beyond the classroom. They strengthen these relationships through enhanced communication and employ strategies to prevent challenging behaviours and to respond appropriately when these behaviours occur, ensuring that inclusive practices are sustained across all learning environments.



Let's hear it from the **PASTELs**!

Early Years Competencies

LC sessions have deepened my pedagogical knowledge in the EYC domain. As a leader, I am able to share these insights with my team of educators in my centre and guide them better.

EYC PASTEL Lai Mei Sum, Deputy Centre Leader, MFS@219 Serangoon

Inclusive Practice

I am able to gather inputs on how EI professionals can work together with each other as I interact with EC professionals of the same beliefs and goals of helping children with needs.

IP PASTEL Senior EI Educator, Fei Yue EIPIC (Wellington Circle)

Malay Language

Participating in the ECLC programme had a profound impact on my teaching and leadership practices. I have become more reflective and intentional in my approaches when it comes to developing children's communication skills in Malay Language.

ML PASTEL Hamilah Bte Osman, Curriculum Specialist, Kidz Meadow Childcare & Development Centre Limited

Outdoor Learning

I am able to see different perspectives of educators in this industry and learn from each other ways to improve our teaching strategies in Outdoor Learning.

OL PASTEL Nur Hardiyana Binte Azman, Senior Preschool Educator, E-Bridge Preschool 308C Punggol Walk

Chinese Language

本次课程让我遇见了很多资深的老师,从他们的分享中,我得到了更多的新知,了解到更多学校正在进行的不同的教学活动。此外也从老师们的经验分享中获得新的创意带回园所去执行与分享。

CL PASTEL 赖金莹, Senior Preschool Educator, Holy Grace KinderCare

Language & Literacy

I have gained a better understanding of the knowledge and skills in Language & Literacy through the exchange of ideas. It has boosted my confidence in conducting L&L lessons in the classroom.

Araneta, Eden Berongoy, Senior Preschool Educator, PCF Sparkletots@Tanjong Pagar (CC)

Social & Emotional Development

The sessions inspired me to be more open to ideas that can be applied to my practices and help colleagues increase their awareness of SED, as well as understand how it can be incorporated into their daily planning and practices.

SED PASTEL Nur Hidayah Binte Abdul Wahid, Senior Preschool Educator, Little Footprints Preschool Yishun 366

JOIN US

Scan the QR code to join our 2026 Community of Practice (CoP) sessions.

