

**SANCTA MARIA ECD – FINE TOWN
MISSION STRATEGIC PLAN 2020**

1. Overview of our mission

1.1. A brief history / story of the mission

Sancta Maria Early Childhood Development (ECD), Fine Town, Ennerdale began in 1993. It was started by Salesian Sisters who had come to live in Ennerdale in 1992. The Salesian Fathers were already in residence there and invited the sisters to assist them in the work of Education and Parish Ministry. With the approval of the Bishop – Bishop Osmond, this became a reality.

After a thorough survey carried out by the Salesian Sisters of St. John Bosco in 1992, it transpired the need of providing shelter, education and feeding scheme for children whose mothers were looking for a job. In the informal settlement of Fine Town there were no places of care at that time, no educational establishment, nor jobs. The mothers were leaving their children with neighbours in order to walk in search of a piece job. Father Louis Blundel, S.M.A, was the priest assisting the community spiritually and he had already a precast multipurpose hall in place, on the present Stand 68, used as a church on weekends and as an educational space during the week, used by the Salesian Sisters, who opened the doors to a small number of children, accommodated in that shack, as a temporary measure. The title deeds of the place were in the hands of a local Community Member as the shack was used every week-end as a place of worship. Because of this, it was deemed unsuitable for a school, on a long-term situation.

With time, the shack was replaced by the present Sancta Maria E.C.D., established in 1997, under the management of the Salesian Sisters and registered with the Department of Social Development in May 2005, NPO number 039-918, under the Don Bosco Educational Projects. Training programmes were set up and proper teaching has been there, since

In 2010 new Laws came into force and we were asked to re-register.

The re-registration process has started, but we need the title deeds which we cannot find. The person who had them is no longer among us and no-body can tell us anything.

The service we offer is very much appreciated by the local Community and the children get care, education, spirituality, food and especially a loving and clean environment.

The local Councillors are aware of the presence of the Centre and have given their written approval, in May 2017. This document will be of great support on the legalization process we have to go through.

1.2. Current profile and work of the mission

It has been operating since 1997, enrolling now 117 children from two and a half to six years, coming from different South African Provinces and other countries. They live in the informal settlement of Fine Town.

Sancta Maria receives some children free of charge because of the financial difficulties of parents or on a reduced rate for school fees according to different situations.

The building has all the facilities needed for a place of care and out of 13 Staff members, only 1 is non-South African. Apart from the one Salesian Sister co-ordinating the Mission, one volunteer from VIDES (International Salesian Voluntaries) in Austria, came in September 2019. This was a great support but, unfortunately, she left on the 16th March 2020 because of the Corona virus pandemic.

We have four E.C.D. Educators (Early Childhood Development), one Educator for Grade R, one Administrator, Gardener, Cook, Environmental Care staff member and two Night Security workers. All staff members have received training for their specific tasks.

They are very loyal to the Centre and that is positive for the children and Parents, because they see that we work together and care for all of them.

Not all of them are Catholics, however we have a briefing every week and a meeting for the staff every month with Salesian Spirituality, Liturgy input and/or other needs; we gather every morning, for prayer.

For the children: We have Religious Education classes, a general weekly Assembly (with praying time) and daily prayers before and after classes.

Regarding our assets, we can say that the building where the centre is operating is a good building, built with good face-bricks.

We have basic equipment that responds to the mission.

Regarding the property, we are in the process of asking for the lease and title deed.

We have a seven-seat vehicle, sponsored by Misesan Cara.

1.3. Operating environment

Our 117 children come from different South African Provinces and Southern Countries, such as Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Mozambique, Malawi... and live in the Informal Settlement of Fine Town. Due to the many different home languages, the use of English, the language of Teaching and Learning in the Centre, is acquired at school, which makes the learning process to be slow, in many cases.

In general, the parents' relationship with the school is poor, just as their participation tends to be. They appreciate the school, but to be able to pay for school fees, becomes something else. Many do not manage, many are not employed, alcohol and addictive substances are part of common practices, family instability is quite a normal structure, abuse, violence and crime are abundant.

All staff members, also from the informal settlement, become a reference point on the educative process of the children, as they understand their situation and help us to understand it better, as well.

1.4. Strategic planning process

Involved in the designing of this strategic plan, were the Board of Management of the Projects, the Management Committee of Santa Maria ECD Centre and its Staff.

2. Mission SWOT Analysis

Strengths:

- Our assets:
- Our Human Resources are well trained.
- Good Spirituality
- Good human environment

Weaknesses:

- Lack of inside and outside Educational equipment for the children to develop in English and different skills.
- The lack of title deeds of the property is affecting the re-registration of the school with Social Development.

Opportunities:

- The staff might have an opportunity to upgrade their level.
- The parents collaborate by coming for the meetings

Threats and Limitations:

- The area is not safe, especially during weekends and/or holidays.
- The Finances to run the Centre are always a worry for the Sisters.

- The parents are very reluctant to collaborate at financial level.

3. **Vision for our mission:**

- The vision of Sancta Maria ECD is to uplift and empower disadvantaged children through education in order to give them a good academic foundation for their further studies and take up a meaningful role within their community.
- The mission and primary objective of Sancta Maria Educational Centre is to carry on activities that would benefit and uplift the communities in Fine Town by directly targeting early childhood development. Therefore, all employees including the Board of Trustees commit themselves to create a professional and nurturing environment and they undertake to conduct themselves in accordance with the policies and procedures.

4. **Guiding image for 2023 + 2026 for your mission**

We aim to achieve by end of 2023:

- To have more educational equipment to develop children's learning skills in different areas.

We aim to achieve by end of 2026:

- The Lease of the property in order to make possible the Centre's registration.
- To be self-sustainable in order to pay salaries to the staff.

5. **Our Goals**

Goal 1 - Ownership of our ECD property

1.1 Free legal assistance to register the title deed of the property in our name.

Goal 2 - All staff competent for their positions

Objectives

2.1 Staff trained according to the requirements of the Department of Social Development

2.2 One or two staff members will upgrade their qualifications, from 3rd term 2020

Goal 3 - Sufficient funds are raised to sustain the Centre, including staff salaries

Objectives

3.1 An additional R10 000 from donors for salaries

3.2 Funds needed for educational equipment

3.3 At least 3 annual fundraising events: a Sports day and Raffles during the First and Second Term of the School; Concert; Outing and Christmas Play and Gr R's graduation will be during the Third and Fourth term of the School.

3.4 A fundraising system and strategy

The Principal, Staff and Management Committee organize the fundraising, and encourage the parents to collaborate and support the Centre.

3.5 A funding proposal, plus fundraising budget for three years and for the first year

Goal 4 – Staff upgrading of qualifications

Objectives

4.1 Staff will be trained according to Social Development requirements, from 3rd term 2020.