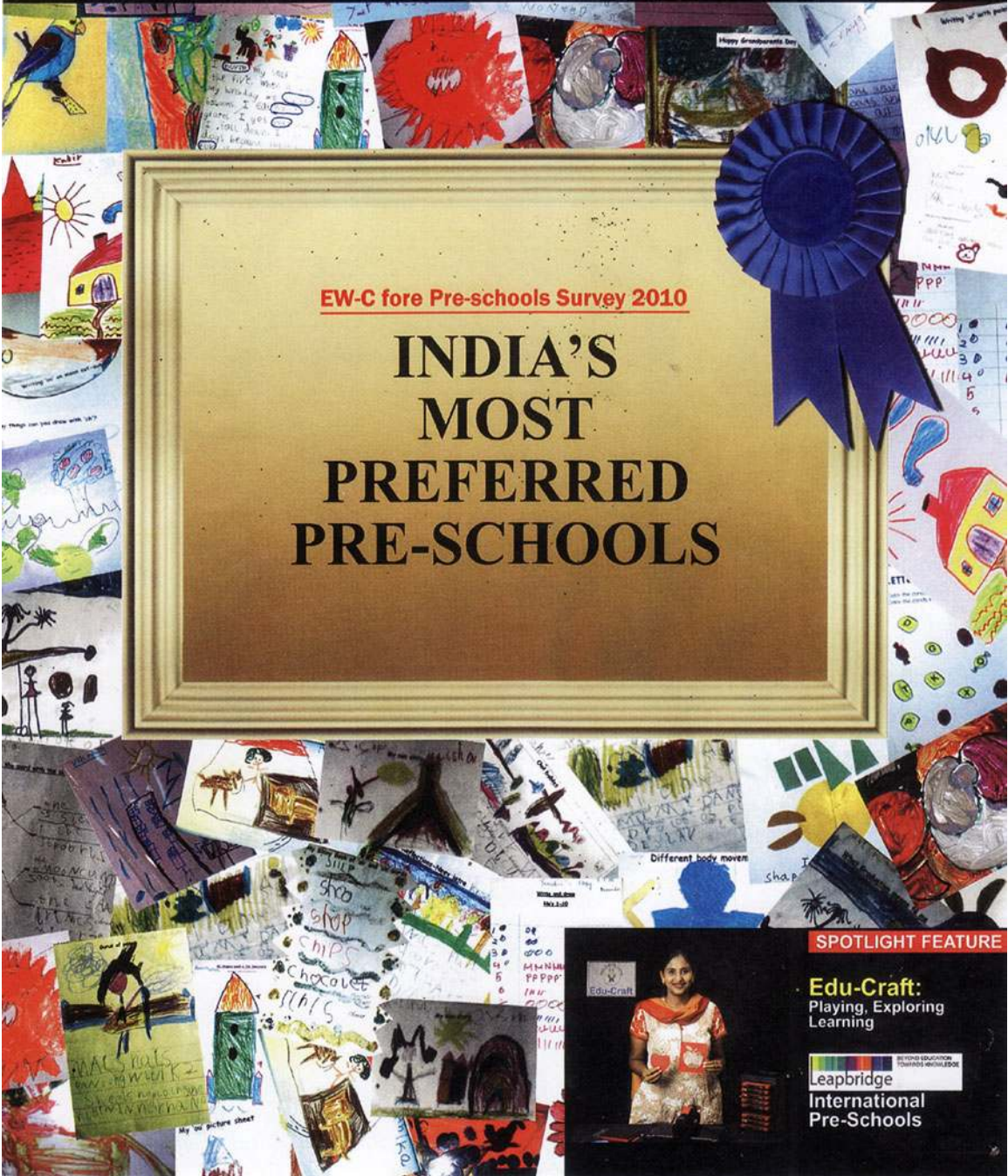


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EW-C fore Pre-schools Survey 2010

INDIA'S MOST PREFERRED PRE-SCHOOLS

SPOTLIGHT FEATURE



Edu-Craft:
Playing, Exploring
Learning

LEAPBRIDGE
International
Pre-Schools

EDUCATIONWORLD.COM SURVEY OF PRE-SCHOOLS 2010

INDIA'S MOST PREFERRED PRE-SCHOOLS

the top ten

DELHI

- 1 The Magic Years, Vasant Vihar
- 2 Step by Step, Panchsheel
- 3 Shishuvan, Vasant Kunj
- 4 Kangaroo Kids, Greater Kailash
- 5 The Study, East of Kailash
- 6 Learning Tree, Sujan Singh Park
- 7 Kangaroo Kids, Vasant Kunj
- 8 EuroKids, Dwarka
- 9 Shemrock Heritage, Rohini
- 10 Kidzee, Nirman Vihar

MUMBAI

- 1 Kangaroo Kids, Bandra
- 2 Headstart, Bandra
- 3 Casa Bambino, Bhulabhai Desai Road
- 4 West Wind, Breach Candy
- 5 Saifee Nursery, Malabar Hill
- 6 Sophia Nursery, Sophia College
- 7 Kangaroo Kids, Santa Cruz
- 8 Sunflower Nursery, Walkeshwar
- 9 Little Bo Beep, Khar West
- 10 EuroKids, Lokhandwala, Andheri

KOLKATA

- 1 Prarambh, B.T. Road
- 2 EuroKids, Salt Lake
- 3 Bal Nilaya, Lake Garden
- 4 Red Apple Montessori House, Lenin Sarani
- 5 I Play I Learn, Salt Lake
- 6 Kangaroo Kids, New Alipore
- 7 Kidzee, Jodhpur Park
- 8 Roots to Wings, Salt Lake
- 9 Kidzee Tulip, Dover Lane
- 10 Stepping Stone, Salt Lake

CHENNAI

- 1 Vael's Billabong High-Kangaroo Kids, Neelankarai
- 2 EuroKids, Anna Nagar
- 3 Bamboola, Raja Annamalaipuram
- 4 Vruksha, Alwarpet
- 5 Bambino Kindergarten & Primary School, Raja Annamalaipuram
- 6 Apple Kids, Royapettah
- 7 Vanilla Play School, R.A. Puram
- 8 Little Angels, T. Nagar
- 9 Apple Kids, Anna Nagar
- 10 Kidzee, Anna Nagar

BANGALORE

- 1 Neev, Indiranagar
- 2 Kangaroo Kids, Indiranagar
- 3 Gaia Preschool & Childcare Centre, RT Nagar
- 4 Kara4Kids, Jayamahal
- 5 Inbloom Montessori and Day Care Centre, Airport Road
- 6 Podar Jumbo Kids, JP Nagar
- 7 Apple Kids International Pre-school, JP Nagar
- 8 EuroKids, Malleshwaram
- 9 Shemrock Young World, Indiranagar
- 10 I Play I Learn, Jayanagar

HYDERABAD

- 1 EuroKids, Banjara Hills
- 2 Bachpan, Road No. 2, Banjara Hills
- 3 Kangaroo Kids, Banjara Hills
- 4 Kidzee, Manikonda
- 5 DRS Kids, Kukatapally
- 6 iDiscoveri Xseed Pre-school, Jubilee Hills
- 7 Roots to Wings, Himayatnagar
- 8 Smartkids, Abids
- 9 Blue Blocks, Gachibowli
- 10 Sunshine, Ameerpet



IN THE POPULAR PERCEPTION, pre-school or early childhood education (ECE) is not important. In middle class India it is widely regarded as a period during which children in the age group two-six are grouped in colourful and cheerful classrooms to socialise and learn to play together.

This perception is evidently shared by the ubiquitous Central, state and local governments which have drafted elaborate rules, regulations and inspection processes for monitoring all primary, secondary and higher education institutions. Indeed one of the major complaints of clued-up academics is that India's infamous licence-permit-quota-inspector regime, which bedeviled the Indian economy restricting annual GDP growth to 3.5 percent for almost four decades before the historic economic liberalisation and deregulation initiative of July 1991 doubled GDP growth, has migrated to the education sector.

Yet miraculously, pre-school/ECE is completely free of government licensing regulations or ubiquitous inspector raj which is an open general licence for the country's notorious education inspectors to shake down private primary to Ph D education providers. Thus the great majority of the estimated 150,000 privately promoted pre-schools in urban India (the Central, state and local governments run an estimated 1.05 million *anganwadis* (crèches) under the

For the EW Most Preferred Pre-schools Survey 2010, perceptions of 1,232 SECA respondents in six major cities, where there is dawning awareness of the significance of foundational pre-school education, were polled.

Dilip Thakore & Summiya Yasmien report

Union government sponsored Integrated Child Development Scheme), are in effect crèches and play schools established in gardens, garages and residential habitations including tiny flats.

Freedom from government controls and supervision has latterly prompted the entry of several heavyweight corporates and entrepreneurs into early childhood education, mainly under the franchise model. Among them: Kidzee (700 pre-schools countrywide); Kangaroo Kids (34); EuroKids (600) and I Play I Learn (75). Moreover, recently specialised education services companies such as iDiscoveri Services and Neev Schools have ventured into pre-school education by promoting high-quality, globally benchmarked, owned (as opposed to franchised) pre-schools in metro cities, even as several offshore ECE majors have commissioned research studies to investigate the potential of entering the huge and under-served pre-

school education sector.

"There's been a radical change in societal attitudes towards pre-school education in the past seven years or so. Now it is valued as a transitional platform which prepares and enthralls children for primary school and life-long learning," says Arun Khetan, former chief executive of the Kidzee and Roots to Wings pre-school chains and currently the promoter-CEO of the Mumbai-based New Age Knowledge Solutions (NAKS, estb. 2009) which has already franchised 75 pre-schools under the I Play I Learn brand countrywide.

This assessment of a sea-change in societal attitudes towards pre-school education is endorsed by CLSA-Asia Pacific, a Hong-Kong based brokerage and market research firm. According to the firm, the aggregate revenue of India's pre-school industry growing at 28.3 percent per year, is expected to exceed \$3.43 billion (Rs.15,620 crore) by 2012.

"Neuroscience studies have clearly demonstrated that experiences in early childhood have a significant impact on brain development. A child's earliest experiences impact her ability to think, speak, learn and establish relationships. The quality of a child's experiences during this critical period establishes the foundation for future cognitive and social development," says Dr. Elanna Yalow, vice chairperson of the US-based

Chennai's most respected pre-schools

In a tightly contested race for top position in this southern port city, Vael's Billabong High-Kangaroo Kids, Neelankarai has been perceived as Chennai's most preferred early childhood education institution

V AEL'S BILLABONG HIGH-Kangaroo Kids, Neelankarai (KKN, estd. 2004), a franchisee of the Mumbai-based Kangaroo Kids Education Ltd, is Chennai's most preferred early childhood education (ECE) institution by a short head in a tightly contested race for the top position in this southern port city (pop. 4.1 million). With an aggregate score of 87 out of a maximum possible 110 across ten parameters, KKN has been rated numero uno on the all-important parameters of teacher competence, leadership, safety and hygiene and special needs education, pipping EuroKids, Anna Nagar (86), ranked No.1 for infrastructure, individual attention to students and second on the parameter of teacher quality.

In turn, EuroKids, Anna Nagar is a solitary point ahead of Bamboola, Raja Annamalaipuram (85). Chennai's top 20



KKN's Ganesh & wards: premier honour

pre-schools were rated and ranked by a selected sample of 219 SECA parents and 25 principals/teachers early this year for the inaugural EducationWorld-Cfore Survey of India's Most Preferred Pre-schools.

"I am excited and thrilled to learn that KKN has been voted the premier pre-school in Chennai. I dedicate this honour to parents who reposed trust and confidence in us right from the day

the school began operations five years ago, and to the dedication and commitment of our teachers. Therefore I am particularly satisfied our teachers have been adjudged the best in Chennai. I am also specially pleased that we have received the highest rating on the parameters of safety and hygiene and special needs education because our efforts have focused upon making KKN a home away from home, where children have excellent play opportunities in a safe and secure environment," says Arthi Ganesh, master franchisee of KKN and a trustee of Vel's Education Trust (estb. 1992) constituted by Dr. Ishari K. Ganesh, which promoted KKN in 2004. The Vel's Education Trust has also established Vel's University and 15 other educational institutions in Tamil Nadu with an aggregate enrolment of 5,200 students and 500 faculty. Currently KKN has an enrolment of 380 children in its play, nursery, junior and senior kindergarten school, and primarily serves as a feeder institution to the CISCE-affiliated I-IX Vael's Billabong High International School, Injambakkam.

Sudha Lakshmanan, proprietrix of the city-based Vedha Enterprises who promoted EuroKids, Anna Nagar (EKAN) as a franchisee of EuroKids International in 2005 for 23 students mentored by four teachers, is perhaps only marginally less delighted by the

EuroKids' Lakshmanan (left): infrastructure pride



outcome of the EW-C fore survey of pre-schools. "I am gratified that we have been rated the best pre-school in Chennai on the parameter of infrastructure, because the world-class infrastructure of EKAN includes air-conditioned classrooms, splash pool, sandpit, Kindermusik and a variety of Montessori toys. I am also very pleased that EKAN has been rated No.1 on the parameter of individual attention to students, because two-six is a very important age for children to develop language, motor, social skills and self-esteem," says Lakshmanan, an alumna

of Madras University and the Xavier Institute of Management, Bhubaneswar (Orissa) who quit a corporate career with Wipro, Chennai and promoted EKAN five years ago with a capital investment of Rs.13 lakh. Currently EKAN (tuition fee: Rs.29,000 per annum) which follows the Montessori and Playway pedagogies has 135 children, ten teachers and ten support staff on its rolls.

The mushroom growth of internationally benchmarked pre-schools in Chennai has been warmly welcomed by the city's educationally

aware parents. "The KKN pre-school experience has transformed my elder daughter aged seven into a skilled, talented and outgoing primary school student. Now my younger daughter Monisha is following in her footsteps," says Roopa Doulagar, a city-based homemaker.

Adds S. Vidyalakshmi whose daughter Reshma studied at the Bamboola Play School, Annamalaipuram: "It was a very satisfying experience for parents and child. Reshma has learned to interact confidently with people of all ages and has excellent manners."

Chennai's best pre-schools league table

Rank		Completion of teachers	Infrastructure provision	Individual attention to students	Value for money	Parental involvement	Innovative teaching	Safety hygiene	Leadership quality	Special needs education	Play facilities	Total score (100)
1	Vael's Billabong High-Kangaroo Kids, Neelankarai	17.6	7.9	8.0	7.0	7.2	7.1	8.5	8.2	8.1	7.5	87
2	EuroKids, Anna Nagar	17.2	8.2	8.4	6.7	7.4	7.6	8.1	7.3	7.6	7.6	86
3	Bamboola, Raja Annamalaipuram	16.6	8.0	7.5	6.9	7.1	7.5	8.0	7.6	7.5	7.8	85
4	Vruksha, Alwarpet	17.0	8.0	7.3	6.3	6.5	7.6	7.7	7.9	6.7	7.3	82
5	Bambino Kindergarten & Primary School, Raja Annamalaipuram	16.0	8.1	7.2	6.7	7.8	7.3	7.2	7.4	6.5	7.2	81
6	Apple Kids, Royapettah	16.2	7.4	6.8	7.6	7.2	6.3	7.6	7.3	6.3	7.7	80
7	Vanilla Play School, R.A. Puram	16.1	8.2	6.7	7.7	6.6	6.4	6.5	7.1	7.0	6.9	79
8	Little Angels, T. Nagar	15.7	7.5	6.5	6.8	7.6	7.3	6.8	6.7	6.2	6.5	78
9	Apple Kids, Anna Nagar	15.1	8.5	5.5	6.0	6.9	8.1	7.4	6.0	5.6	8.1	77
10	Kidzee, Anna Nagar	15.4	7.0	5.7	6.2	6.8	6.6	7.4	7.2	6.8	7.1	76
11	Apple Kids, Adyar	13.6	7.5	6.9	6.5	6.9	6.8	7.2	6.5	6.1	7.0	75
12	EuroKids, Alwarpet	12.5	8.1	7.0	7.2	7.0	6.2	7.3	5.5	6.0	7.7	74
13	Kidzee, Kilpauk Garden	12.6	7.1	6.1	6.6	7.0	6.7	7.1	6.6	6.7	6.8	73
14	Kidzee, T. Nagar	11.9	6.7	5.7	6.8	7.8	5.8	7.8	5.0	6.5	8.1	72
15	Meera Tiny Tots Play School, Puzhuvakkam	11.5	7.3	6.0	7.2	7.3	5.5	7.5	6.5	5.3	7.1	71
16	EuroKids, Adyar	11.1	7.0	6.5	6.9	7.1	5.5	7.0	5.5	6.0	7.0	70
17	Happy Kids Global Pre-school, Thiruvanniyur	10.8	6.8	5.9	6.8	7.5	5.6	7.5	5.3	5.2	6.7	69
18	Shemrock Little Stars, Adyar	10.6	6.2	6.7	6.2	6.8	6.2	6.8	5.4	5.6	6.2	67
19	Daffodil Playschool, Alwarthirunagar	10.5	6.3	6.1	7.0	6.2	5.8	7.0	5.2	5.3	6.5	66
20	Bright Kids, Adyar	11.2	6.2	6.0	6.3	6.0	5.6	6.5	5.3	5.1	6.3	65

Innovative teaching

	Ranking	Rating
1	Apple Kids, Anna Nagar	9.1
2	EuroKids, Anna Nagar	8.5
2	Vruksha, Alwarpet	8.5
3	Bamboola, Raja Annamalaipuram	7.9
4	Bambino Kindergarten & Primary School, Raja Annamalaipuram	7.8
4	Little Angels, T. Nagar	7.8
5	Vael's Kangaroo Kids, Neelankarai	7.7
6	Apple Kids, Adyar	6.8
7	Kidzee, Kilpauk Garden	6.7
8	Kidzee, Anna Nagar	6.6
9	Vanilla Play School, R.A. Puram	6.6
10	Apple Kids, Royapettah	6.5
11	Shemrock Little Stars, Adyar	6.5
11	EuroKids, Alwarpet	6.5
12	Daffodil Playschool, Alwarthirunagar	6.3
12	Kidzee, T. Nagar	6.3
13	Bright Kids, Adyar	6.2
13	Happy Kids Global Pre-school, Thiruvanniyur	6.2
14	Meera Tiny Tots Playschool, Puzhuvakkam	6.2
14	EuroKids, Adyar	6.2

Safety & hygiene

	Ranking	Rating
1	Vael's Kangaroo Kids, Neelankarai	8.5
2	EuroKids, Anna Nagar	8.1
3	Bamboola, Raja Annamalaipuram	8.0
4	Kidzee, T. Nagar	7.9
5	Vruksha, Alwarpet	7.8
6	Apple Kids, Royapettah	7.8
7	Meera Tiny Tots Playschool, Puzhuvakkam	7.7
7	Happy Kids Global Pre-school, Thiruvanniyur	7.7
8	Apple Kids, Anna Nagar	7.6
8	Kidzee, Anna Nagar	7.6
9	EuroKids, Alwarpet	7.5
10	Bambino Kindergarten & Primary School, Raja Annamalaipuram	7.5
10	Apple Kids, Adyar	7.5
11	Kidzee, Kilpauk Garden	7.1
12	Daffodil Playschool, Alwarthirunagar	7.1
12	EuroKids, Adyar	7.1
13	Little Angels, T. Nagar	6.8
13	Shemrock Little Stars, Adyar	6.7
14	Vanilla Play School, R.A. Puram	6.5
14	Bright Kids, Adyar	6.5

Parental involvement

	Ranking	Rating
1	Bambino Kindergarten, Raja Annamalaipuram	7.9
1	Kidzee, T. Nagar	7.8
2	Little Angels, T. Nagar	7.6
3	Happy Kids Global Pre-school, Thiruvanniyur	7.5
4	EuroKids, Anna Nagar	7.4
5	Meera Tiny Tots Playschool, Puzhuvakkam	7.3
6	Apple Kids, Royapettah	7.2
6	Vael's Kangaroo Kids, Neelankarai	7.2
7	Bamboola, Raja Annamalaipuram	7.1
7	EuroKids, Adyar	7.1
8	EuroKids, Alwarpet	7.0
8	Kidzee, Kilpauk Garden	7.0
9	Apple Kids, Anna Nagar	6.9
9	Apple Kids, Adyar	6.9
10	Shemrock Little Stars, Adyar	6.8
10	Kidzee, Anna Nagar	6.8
11	Vanilla Play School, R.A. Puram	6.6
12	Vruksha, Alwarpet	6.5
13	Daffodil Playschool, Alwarthirunagar	6.2
14	Bright Kids, Adyar	6.0

Value for money

	Ranking	Rating
1	Vanilla Play School, R.A. Puram	8.9
2	Apple Kids, Royapettah	8.4
3	EuroKids, Alwarpet	8.3
3	Meera Tiny Tots Playschool, Puzhuvakkam	8.3
4	Vael's Kangaroo Kids, Neelankarai	8.0
4	Daffodil Playschool, Alwarthirunagar	8.0
5	Bamboola, Raja Annamalaipuram	8.0
5	EuroKids, Adyar	8.0
6	Happy Kids Global Pre-school, Thiruvanniyur	8.0
6	Little Angels, T. Nagar	8.0
6	Kidzee, T. Nagar	8.0
7	EuroKids, Anna Nagar	8.0
7	Bambino Kindergarten, Raja Annamalaipuram	8.0
8	Kidzee, Kilpauk Garden	8.0
9	Apple Kids, Adyar	8.0
10	Vruksha, Alwarpet	8.0
10	Bright Kids, Adyar	8.0
11	Shemrock Little Stars, Adyar	8.0
11	Kidzee, Anna Nagar	8.0
12	Apple Kids, Anna Nagar	8.0

Leadership quality

Rank	Pre-school	Rating
1	Vael's Kangaroo Kids, Neelankarai	9.3
2	Vruksha, Alwarpet	8.9
3	Bamboola, Raja Annamalaipuram	8.8
4	Bambino Kindergarten & Primary School, Raja Annamalai Puram	8.7
5	EuroKids, Anna Nagar	8.6
5	Apple Kids, Royapettah	8.6
6	Kidzee, Anna Nagar	8.5
7	Vanilla Play School, R.A. Puram	8.5
8	Little Angels, T. Nagar	8.4
9	Kidzee, Kilpauk Garden	8.4
10	Meera Tiny Tots Playschool, Puzhuvakkam	8.3
10	Apple Kids, Adyar	8.3
11	Apple Kids, Anna Nagar	8.2
12	EuroKids, Alwarpet	8.2
12	EuroKids, Adyar	8.2
13	Shemrock Little Stars, Adyar	8.1
14	Happy Kids Global Pre-school, Thiruvanniyur	8.1
14	Bright Kids, Adyar	8.1
15	Daffodil Playschool, Alwarthirunagar	8.0
16	Kidzee, T. Nagar	7.9



Party time at Vanilla Play School, R.A. Puram

On the telling parameter of leadership quality, Vael's Kangaroo Kids tops the list followed by Vruksha, Alwarpet, ranked fourth overall

Special needs education

Rank	Pre-school	Rating
1	Vael's Kangaroo Kids, Neelankarai	8.9
2	EuroKids, Anna Nagar	8.7
3	Bamboola, Raja Annamalaipuram	8.6
4	Vanilla Play School, R.A. Puram	8.5
5	Kidzee, Anna Nagar	8.4
6	Vruksha, Alwarpet	8.3
6	Kidzee, Kilpauk Garden	8.3
7	Bambino Kindergarten & Primary School, Raja Annamalai Puram	8.2
7	Kidzee, T. Nagar	8.2
8	Apple Kids, Royapettah	8.1
9	Little Angels, T. Nagar	8.0
10	Apple Kids, Adyar	7.9
11	EuroKids, Adyar	7.8
11	EuroKids, Alwarpet	7.8
12	Apple Kids, Anna Nagar	7.7
12	Shemrock Little Stars, Adyar	7.7
13	Meera Tiny Tots Playschool, Puzhuvakkam	7.6
13	Daffodil Playschool, Alwarthirunagar	7.6
14	Happy Kids Global Pre-school, Thiruvanniyur	7.5
15	Bright Kids, Adyar	7.4

Play facilities

Rank	Pre-school	Rating
1	Apple Kids, Anna Nagar	8.1
1	Kidzee, T. Nagar	8.1
2	Bamboola, Raja Annamalaipuram	7.9
3	Apple Kids, Royapettah	7.8
3	EuroKids, Alwarpet	7.8
4	EuroKids, Anna Nagar	7.6
5	Vael's Kangaroo Kids, Neelankarai	7.5
6	Vruksha, Alwarpet	7.4
7	Bambino Kindergarten & Primary School, Raja Annamalaipuram	7.3
8	Kidzee, Anna Nagar	7.2
8	Meera Tiny Tots Playschool, Puzhuvakkam	7.1
9	Apple Kids, Adyar	7.0
9	EuroKids, Adyar	7.0
10	Vanilla Play School, R.A. Puram	6.9
11	Kidzee, Kilpauk Garden	6.8
12	Happy Kids Global Pre-school, Thiruvanniyur	6.7
13	Little Angels, T. Nagar	6.6
13	Daffodil Playschool, Alwarthirunagar	6.6
14	Bright Kids, Adyar	6.5
15	Shemrock Little Stars, Adyar	6.4