



THE WEEK AT CEREJEIRAS

Guided by the teaching team, children at Cerejeiras participate in a series of activities both in our center and in other public facilities that give them the opportunity to have greater contact with nature and with the community.

Activities are undertaken individually, in partnerships or small groups, or together as a single group and organised by the Weekly Plan (WP). The WP is a flexible and dynamic timetable that constantly evolves as it responds to the shifting and expanding needs, interests and offerings of community members. At times, different activities for 1st Cycle and 2nd Cycle are implemented simultaneously.

Throughout the week, children experience learning and knowledge acquisition in different ways. Based on the MEM methodology, these moments are described as the five 'learning moments'. Each activity in the WP relates to one or more of these five moments.

The learning moments are colour coded in the WP as a quick reference and an explanation of activities that relate to each learning moments are below.

THE CEREJEIRAS TEAM

PERMANENT TEAM	
Supported by	Pedro Branco - Pedagogical Consultant Catarina - management support
Daniela	1st cycle Tutor
Anna	English Tutor
Adriano	1st and 2nd cycle Tutor, Capacity Building

ACTIVITIES TEAM	
Pedro and Beatriz	Sports and Games Teachers
Margarida	Music Teacher
Janette	Craft Teacher
	Volunteer/trainee

LEARNING MOMENTS

MOMENT	DESCRIPTION
STUDY AND PRACTICE	This is the time for practicing, production, collaboration and for children to select their preferred way of learning.
AUTONOMOUS WORK TIME AWT - English TTA - Portuguese	<p>Autonomous Work time is a time when children select an activity from the main academic subjects: Language (reading, writing in Portuguese and English), Maths or Sciences and work individually, in pairs or small groups.</p> <p>Children choose their own resources (flash-cards, books, computer, Montessori materials, etc.) and set their own pace. They can request support from the teaching team or classmates.</p> <p>At the beginning of each week children use their Individual Work Plan to plan and organise how they will use their AWT/TTA which occurs every morning and in the weekly meeting with the tutor they assess and regulate the work done, and reflect on the forward planning.</p>
PARTNERSHIPS	Partnerships occur during AWT/TTA and may or not be previously arranged in a child's Individual Work Plan. Working in pairs is a significant driver of learning; its dynamics offer moments of growth and development for both parties. Trusting partnerships is a solid approach to engage children in learning, consolidate skills and competences, and for building a true learning community.
SPORTS AND GAMES	A certified and experienced volunteer develops and facilitates a session of physical activity, based on games and challenges. Children learn fundamental motor skills and explore the benefits being physically and mentally active, fit, and healthy.

COMMUNICATION	Promotes social and collaborative improvement of the human mind and endeavours. These activities strengthen the ability to regulate and negotiate thoughts, feelings, and actions individually and within the group.
GROUP MATH	These sessions are for collective exploration and reflection, to discuss possible solutions for a math-based problem. The theme for these sessions is based upon questions students ask during the week, that come from their own work, explorations, thoughts and doubts. If the children do not have any challenges or questions, tutors are prepared to present some.
GROUP LABORATORY	In this session, the teaching team develop and explore with the children experiments that raise questions about Natural and Social Sciences. There is a focus on using repurposed materials for experiments and activities.
BOOKS AND READING	The Books and Reading activity starts with a democratic selection, by the children, of a book to be explored. Alternatively, a rotation system ensures each child has an opportunity to have their book choice explored by the group.
INTRODUCTION TO WRITING	The session focus on working on concepts underlying an introduction to writing. Children and tutors work together in aspects such as phonemes, graphemes, syllabic break, spelling rules, etc, using texts written by the children or the tutors.
CREATIVE WRITING	Children work together or individually to produce a piece of creative prose with the focus on supporting children to develop the skills and confidence to produce accurate and expressive text.
SCHOOL CORRESPONDENCE	In school correspondence, children are supported to exchange letters with children from a partner school. Ideally this session will lead to a reciprocal exchange and create an interactive writing relationship.
GROUP TEXT REVIEW	In this collective moment a text written by one of the children or, as a second option, a text proposed by the tutor will be reviewed. A review will define the type of text presented and focus on spelling, punctuation, consistency, flow and interpretation. The purpose of this session is to improve the competence (autonomy) of the children's writing and to bring their writing closer to literature.
PROJECT PRESENTATION	On each day of the week, children have an opportunity to present small productions (written texts, drawings, interesting objects, etc) they have created at home or at Cerejeiras and they wish to share with their peers and the teaching team.

RESEARCH & PRODUCTION	Producing a project or cultural piece that promotes the development of research methods and the use of IT. Through these activities school work becomes more motivating and improves in quality.
PROJECT	Children develop a personal, or a small group projects on a theme they choose. Following MEM methodology, they undertake a number of development stages, from research and developing their own ideas, to presenting their findings, opinions and conclusions.
CRAFT CLASS	Developed and facilitated weekly by a volunteer (a retired English school teacher), children work on small sewing and craft projects, that may be related to project work or inspired by seasonal or cultural moments.
MUSIC CLASS	A music teacher facilitates a musical expression activity where children explore songs, sounds, musical instruments, movement and song writing.
ART CLASS	In this session, children take the lead and are encouraged and supported to share a creative idea or art technique with their peers as a group activity.
DRAMA CLASS	Children have the opportunity to explore space, body and voice as well as group dynamics as a mean of expression in an artistic performative perspective.
PREPARATION FOR OUTINGS	The Cerejeiras community, including parents, visit a local place of interest. These outings are planned and prepared by the children, who decide the place to visit and what they need to know before going.

ASSESSMENT & REGULATION	Inclusive, action-centered assessment, focused on the knowledge of self and others, understanding, and collaboration. This assessment is to be taken as a mean rather than an end.
DAILY/ WEEKLY PLANNING	Daily/ weekly planning prepares the children and teaching team for the activities of the day/ week, and promotes collaboration, autonomy and responsibility. In this moment, project presentations, challenges to be tackled in group sessions, autonomous work and partnerships are planned.
SCHOOL COUNCIL	Children and the teaching team gather in a weekly council to discuss and debate important topics or problems that have emerged during the week. Many issues have been recorded in the Class Journal, sorted by the categories of 'I liked', 'I didn't like', and 'I suggest'. At the end of this session, the goal is for solutions reached through group reflection, discussion of different viewpoints, and democratic processes that, even though favouring consensus, may have to undergo a voting system.
ENJOYMENT TIME	To be brave enough to look for, in these less formal moments, the invaluable and countless learning opportunities that make school a more enjoyable, more empowering, more artistic and a place that is more in touch with life. A place where learning flows more naturally and reaches more deeply.
FREE PLAY	Play – and most of all, free play – is one of the pillars of our community. It is in these moments that each child shows and gives the most of itself, expresses his or her innermost self or gets upset, creates, solves problems, reveals desires, reach out for others or to be alone... this moment, demonstrates the utmost respect we have for each individual's nature. Contrary to popular belief, free play doesn't hold back learning or other moments. To the contrary: it engages children even deeper in their/our learning community.

GUIDANCE, MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

At Cerejeiras, children, families and tutors use a series of tools for planning, recording, and to monitor and evaluate the learning processes.

TOOL	GUIDANCE/MONITORING/ASSESSMENT SYSTEM	WHAT IS IT FOR? WHY DO WE USE IT?
INDIVIDUAL		
INDIVIDUAL WORK PLAN	At the start of each week, each child, reflecting on the (self and collaborative) assessment of the previous week's learnings, designs their Individual Work Plan. Using a customised template they plan what he or she will develop throughout the week in their AWT/TTA, i.e. what they will do, how they will work and who they will work with.	The Individual Work Plan is where autonomous work is planned, recorded and assessed.
WORKSHEET GRIDS	This grid records of the worksheets that have been worked on and completed. These are numbered and filed by school grade and learning unit.	When school work is supported by an range of materials, in this case worksheets, for recollection and practice of learnings, there must be a filing system that allows for organisation and orientation.
READING REVIEW	This can be an individual or collective record depending on how the reading was done. It allows children to register the book information (author, title, editor, year) and a simple summary and personal opinions.	By registering the readings done in the community, children have the possibility to access their self-created database, inspiring each other, debating ideas and producing a variety of pieces, visual or performative deriving from literary or documental texts.

RESEARCH PLAN	<p>This tool records a child's project theme, authors, research strategies, schedule and an estimate date for presentation.</p> <p>It acts as a record of the project and provides a self-assessment of what was achieved.</p>	<p>Assessment and organisation of work processes, project-related or otherwise, are a fundamental part of its success and its structure. This tool is therefore a part of the whole dynamic.</p>
SELF AND TUTOR ASSESSMENT GRIDS	<p>This table contains the academic content from the Portuguese national curriculum and enables regular monitoring and assessment of learning.</p>	<p>It is used to help the child, tutors and families to monitor progress in line with the Portuguese National Curriculum. This can be useful to understand and prepare children (depending on each family's desire) for the evaluations of the national education system at the end of each learning cycle as defined by the Portuguese system.</p>
GROUP		
TASK MAP	<p>A table with pictures and name labels with velcro so children can select or rotate tasks (clear the table, do the dishes, tidy up the rooms, etc) in the community. Tasks are defined with the children.</p>	<p>In a learning community it makes ethical and common sense, that daily chores are shared by everyone. This way, each child becomes a responsible part in a whole, and the tasks promote both individual and group development. It offers a sense of social accountability a child assumes within the group.</p>
PARTNERSHIP BOARD	<p>A wooden board with chalk board pieces, built by a school family, helps the management and articulation of partnerships. The board is dynamic and accessible to all children.</p>	<p>Planning partnerships and group work allows for better organisation of learning and resources. Planning does not preclude accepting casual and spontaneous partnerships.</p>
WEEKLY PLANNING	<p>A chalk board documents the weekly plan and allows children and the teaching team to register their participation in different activities E.g. presentations, group activities etc.</p>	<p>When a community supports its daily work life with clearly defined routines, discussed and approved by all, all the tasks become more sustainable and the liberty to change them more consistent. It is important to have a solid structure around which individual and social learning can take place.</p>

GROUP MOMENTS	<p>A sheet with a descriptive heading of each session and a grid for children's self-assessment of learning. This tool promotes a reflection on what is being learnt and is also recorded by the children in their notebook as a representation of what they have observed.</p>	<p>In any given moment of learning, in group or otherwise, there are 3 situations that must be assessed and recorded to better organise future learning and school work; a) the child has fully understood the selected contents and feels capable of helping others; b) the child has understood fairly well, but still needs some practice; c) the child has not understood and needs the group's help E.g. In a partnership, to solve the situation.</p> <p>In collaborative work an individual only reaches his or her goal when all the individuals have reached it too. This is why this dynamic is so important.</p>
PROJECT MAP	<p>Posted next to where children work on their projects. This map lists the project author/s, project name, production stage, and presentation date.</p>	<p>Working on projects is a fundamental activity in the whole learning process, since it allows for purpose, meaning, and enjoyment, and much more in touch with the way human thinking works: we think by projects. To have a collective idea of what everyone is working on, is again, essential for the sustainability and accountability of the learning community.</p>
PRESENTATIONS	<p>Registration of presenters.</p> <p>A monthly record registers the number of presentations made by each child and the sort of piece that was presented (a reading, a text, a challenge or other). Any member of the Cerejeiras community is invited to present: teachers, families and children.</p>	<p>Nominating a day to present on the Weekly Plan Chalkboard is the best way to manage time and commitment.</p> <p>Registering the participation and tracking the history of the interests of the group is important for the community to better understand the group and individual members.</p>

CLASSROOM JOURNAL	A board on the wall allows children to write down the aspects they've liked/disliked (conflicts between students and/or tutors, goals reached, changes that could be made in the space or in group rules, and so on) and proposals/suggestions to be discussed later in school council.	All human relationships must accept the existence of misunderstandings, conflicts, desires, frustration...In turn all of these aspects need to be mediated and shared and addressed in a healthy way, using the right tools and at the the right moment. The Classroom Journal serves this purpose, as well as promoting a more peaceful way to solve issues that may, naturally (and hopefully) arise in the community of engagement and commitment.
MINUTES OF SCHOOL COUNCIL	Record of all speakers in the session and record of all decisions taken.	Written records hold a community accountable, which is essential when life runs democratically and free. It is important that these moments are organised and recorded, with a two-fold purpose of preserving memory and taking responsibility for the decisions reached.