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Serra pre-school looks at pan-India operations

Ties up with EtonHouse of Singapore

Our Bureau

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The buzz around pre-school education space seems to be matching that of B-school (business school).

The latest entrant, Serra International Pre-school, has entered into a joint venture with EtonHouse International Education Group of Singapore to launch a chain of international pre-schools across India.

Serra, promoted by Edvance Pre-School, operates 35 schools in Mumbai, Pune, Ahmedabad, Indore, Nagpur, Delhi and Kolkata. It has chalked out plans to open 100 pre-schools in next one year in Hyderabad, Chennai, Coimbatore, Cochin in the south; Chandigarh, Ludhiana, Mohali, Faridabad in the North; Patna, Bhubaneswar, Guwahati, Ranchi, Jamshedpur, Rourkela in the east; Surat, Bhopal and Baroda in the

Destinations

Now in Mumbai, Pune, Ahmedabad, Indore, Nagpur, Delhi and Kolkata.

Eyes on Hyderabad, Chennai, Coimbatore, Cochin, Chandigarh, Ludhiana, Mohali, Faridabad, Patna, Bhubaneswar, Guwahati, Ranchi, Jamshedpur, Rourkela, Surat, Bhopal and Baroda.

west.

The pre-school education valued is at Rs 1,300 crore and is poised double by next year, according to a recent study. The rise in disposable income and growing number of working mothers has pushed up the demand for quality pre-school education for toddler. The potential of sector looks bright as organised players account for just 17 per cent of the aggregate industry.

Educational services provider Tree House Education and Accessories, which focuses primarily on pre-school education, recently tapped the

capital market to raise funds for expansion. Other prominent players in the field include Eurokids, Brainworks, Kidzee, Roots to Wings and Kangaroo Kids.

Mr Ranjan Goyal, CEO, Serra International Pre-Schools, said: "We have stringent scrutiny for appointing franchise. Of the 200 applications received a month, only five are selected for franchise."

Availability of open space for children to play and build up area of 2,000-3,000 sq.ft is among the main criteria for the franchises, he added.

Depending on the city, the

management charges fees of Rs 2,000-Rs 5,000 a month. Serra will mentor kids between one-and-a-half to five years and has pre-nursery, nursery, K1 and K2 (kindergarten).

The Serra curriculum has been inspired by globally-accepted best teaching and learning practices such as inquiry-based learning and the Reggio Emilia educational approach of Northern Italy, Mr Goyal said.

"The European approach is one of the most widely practiced education philosophies in the world having a presence in the US, Australia, Europe, New Zealand, the Middle East and Asia."

To attract quality teachers and avoid attrition, Serra focuses on constant upgrade of their skills by getting experts from EtonHouse, he said, and teachers are paid more than the market salary.