PRIMARY SCHOOL EDUCATION

Preparing Your Child for Tomorrow
YOUR CHILD’S BEST INTERESTS AT HEART

The primary school years are an important phase of your child’s education. During these formative years, the Ministry of Education (MOE) wants to build every child’s confidence and desire to learn. We also want to expose your child to a broad range of activities for him to discover his talents and interests.

Primary School Education at a Glance

- Six years of compulsory education.
- No school fees for Singapore Citizens except for a standard monthly miscellaneous fee of $6.50 and another second-tier miscellaneous fee of $6.50 maximum as required by schools.

For more information on school fees payable for your child, please visit www.moe.gov.sg/education/primary/ and www.moe.gov.sg/education/admissions/international-students/general-info/#monthly-school-fees.

- Subject-based Banding offers your child a combination of standard or foundation subjects, depending on his strengths.
- Your child is encouraged to take part in co-curricular activities and community involvement programmes.
- At the end of six years, your child sits for the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE).
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Schooling for Every Child

In Singapore, every child receives a six-year compulsory primary school education, during which he will be nurtured for his future.

How do our schools prepare each child to thrive in a future driven by globalisation and technological advancements?

Our schools develop in each child 21st century competencies so he is equipped with skills to navigate a fast-changing world and grows up to become:

- a **confident person** who has a strong sense of right and wrong, is adaptable and resilient, knows himself, is discerning in judgment, thinks independently and critically, and communicates effectively;

- a **self-directed learner** who questions, reflects, perseveres and takes responsibility for his own learning;

- an **active contributor** who is able to work effectively in teams, is innovative, exercises initiative, takes calculated risks and strives for excellence; and

- a **concerned citizen** who is rooted to Singapore, has a strong sense of civic responsibility, is informed about Singapore and the world, and takes an active part in bettering the lives of others around him.
Nurturing our Young for the Future

In school, your child will be able to gain the knowledge, skills and values he needs to thrive in the 21st century.

Our framework for the 21st century competencies encapsulates values and competencies which we have identified as being particularly important for the development of every child. The framework incorporates:

- **Core values** (respect, responsibility, resilience, integrity, care, harmony);
- **Social and emotional competencies** (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship management, responsible decision-making); and
- **Emerging competencies** (critical and inventive thinking; communication, collaboration and information skills; civic literacy, global awareness and cross-cultural skills).

All these values and competencies are an integral part of the total curriculum.

Teachers develop these values and competencies in their students through subject disciplines, Character and Citizenship Education (CCE), enrichment programmes, as well as teachable moments.

The diverse range of Co-Curricular Activities (CCA) offered in each school also provides a natural platform for students to apply the values and competencies.

As part of our efforts to enhance the development of 21st century competencies in our students, the MOE has strengthened the quality of Physical Education and Art and Music education. These subjects contribute to the students’ holistic education. They enable our students to develop physical robustness, enhance their creative and expressive capacities, and shape their personal, cultural and social identity.
Primary school education is designed to give your child a strong foundation that includes:

- Nurturing sound values
- Loving Singapore
- Developing language and numeracy skills
- Cultivating habits for an active and balanced lifestyle

The primary school curriculum offered by the ministry focuses on three main aspects of education – subject disciplines, self-directed learning, and character development.

- **Subject disciplines** comprise subject areas such as languages, humanities & the arts, and mathematics & sciences, designed to give your child good grounding in different fields of study.

- **Knowledge skills** focus on developing your child’s thinking, process, and communication skills. Knowledge skills are taught through a variety of subjects and often through a project work approach. This enables students to use the full range of knowledge skills, work together, and clearly demonstrate what they have learnt.

- **Character development** is facilitated through daily teacher-student interactions, as well as programmes in the non-academic curriculum. They focus on instilling sound values in your child to take him through life as a responsible adult. Your child will have many opportunities to develop skills for life and a love for Singapore through Character and Citizenship Education, Social and Emotional Learning, National Education and Co-Curricular Activities.

Following the introduction of **Subject-based Banding**, your child will be offered English, Mother Tongue Language, Mathematics and Science as either foundation or standard subjects at Primary 5 and 6, depending on his needs and abilities.
Primary School Curriculum

SUBJECTS TESTED IN PSLE*

Standard Subjects:
English, Mother Tongue Language, Mathematics, Science

Foundation Subjects:
Foundation English, Foundation Mother Tongue Language, Foundation Mathematics, Foundation Science

Optional Subject:
Higher Mother Tongue Language

LEGEND
CCA Co-Curricular Activities
CCE Character and Citizenship Education
NE National Education
PAL Programme for Active Learning
PE Physical Education
PW Project Work
VIA Values in Action

* Students offer standard or foundation subjects based on their aptitude in each subject.

* Science is taught from Primary 3 onwards.

^ CCE includes the Form Teacher Guidance Period (FTGP).

^ PAL will be progressively rolled out to all primary schools by 2017.

~ Project Work is conducted during curriculum time but is not an examinable subject.
Language Mastery

**English and Mother Tongue Language**

Your child will learn English as a first language in primary school. English is the *lingua franca* of international business, science and technology. Therefore, the ability to speak and write English well remains an essential skill to develop in our young.

Your child will learn his Mother Tongue Language (Chinese Language, Malay Language or Tamil Language) as a second language. Bilingualism, a cornerstone of our education system, has been a valuable asset to our students, enabling them to tap the opportunities that can be found in the global environment.

With more Primary 1 students coming from households where English is the dominant language spoken at home, we will continue to refine the teaching of Mother Tongue Languages. Schools adopt differentiated teaching approaches to cater to students from different backgrounds of languages spoken at home.

We promote the functional use of the Mother Tongue Languages, with greater emphasis on listening and speaking skills.

**Revised Mother Tongue Language Curriculum: Key Features**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese Language Curriculum (Modular)</th>
<th>Malay Language Curriculum</th>
<th>Tamil Language Curriculum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• More emphasis on listening, speaking, and reading.</td>
<td>• Students will be taught according to their different levels of achievement.</td>
<td>• Students will be given more opportunities to practise Spoken Tamil.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teaching tailored to meet the different learning needs of students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• More engaging and appealing teaching materials that capture students’ interest.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• All students will take the Core Module.</td>
<td>• Students will be taught according to their different levels of achievement.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Students with little or no exposure to the Chinese Language will take Bridging Modules.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Students with the interest and ability to go further will take the Enrichment Modules.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Conducive Learning Environment

Learning Support Programmes
Schools have Learning Support Programmes to ensure that help is at hand for students who need it.

These programmes, which provide learning support for students entering Primary 1 with either weak literacy or numeracy skills, ensure that students are able to keep up with core subjects like English and Mathematics.

Learning Support Programmes include daily lessons with smaller groups of students taught by specially trained teachers. These programmes use structured teaching approaches that meet the learning needs of these students.

Programmes for Intellectually Gifted Students
The Gifted Education Programme (GEP) caters to students who are intellectually gifted.

Your child’s school will invite him to sit for a screening test when he is in Primary 3 to determine his eligibility for the GEP.

The GEP students will be placed in selected primary schools from Primary 4 to Primary 6. They will receive an advanced curriculum that matches their abilities in the academic subjects in separate classes. They will be taught by teachers specially trained in these subjects, while they intermingle with fellow students for other lessons and activities.

For students with high abilities in specific subject disciplines, but who are not in the GEP, there are opportunities to enrich their learning through both school-based and MOE centrally-run activities during or outside of school hours.

Co-Curricular Activities
Co-curricular activities are an integral part of a well-rounded education and play an important role in building character. They help nurture in your child qualities such as resilience, tenacity, confidence and perseverance, which prepare him to adapt and thrive in a rapidly changing world.

There is a whole spectrum of exciting co-curricular activities for your child to choose from, ranging from physical sports, uniformed groups, visual and performing arts, to clubs and societies.
Subject-Based Banding
Subject-based Banding begins in Primary 5 and continues till Primary 6.

It provides greater flexibility for your child by offering him the option of a combination of standard or foundation subjects, depending on his strengths. This will help him focus on and stretch his potential in the subjects that he is strong in while building up the fundamentals in the subjects that he needs more support in.

How does Subject-Based Banding work?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>At Pri 4</th>
<th>Your child sits for school-based examinations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School recommends a subject combination based on the student’s results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parents fill up an option form indicating the preferred combination.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>At Pri 5</th>
<th>Your child takes subject combination chosen by parents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English, Mathematics, Science and Mother Tongue Language are available at standard and foundation levels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mother Tongue Language is also available at the higher level.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>End of Pri 5</th>
<th>Takes 1 or more foundation subject(s) and does very well in the subject(s)</th>
<th>Takes standard subjects and has difficulty coping</th>
<th>All other children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School may allow him to upgrade 1 or 2 subjects to standard level if school believes he can cope.</td>
<td>School may allow him to take 1 or more subjects at foundation level in Pri 6.</td>
<td>School will allow them to continue the same subject combination in Pri 6.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| At Pri 6 | Your child takes subject combination decided by his school |

| End of Pri 6 | Your child sits for the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) |
Holistic Education: Learn and Play

The MOE has progressively implemented a series of enhancements to primary school education from 2009 onwards, so as to incorporate the recommendations made by the Primary Education Review and Implementation (PERI) committee. These enhancements aim to make learning more enjoyable and meaningful for your child, and seek to develop in him a better balance of skills and values.

More Engaging Teaching Methods
Our teachers are adopting more creative learning strategies in the curriculum to make lessons come to life. For example, your child will be able to learn mathematical concepts through investigative tasks and real-life activities, and language skills through role-play and drama.

Programme for Active Learning
To encourage learning beyond the classroom, we offer the Programme for Active Learning (PAL), which will give your child the chance to discover new interests, learn new skills, and develop his character.

Your child will have the opportunity during curriculum time to try out activities in sports and outdoor education, as well as in the performing and visual arts.

PAL is being introduced progressively to all Primary 1 and 2 students by 2017.

Holistic Assessment to Support Learning
Assessment is an important aspect of learning and teaching.

Holistic Assessment emphasises the development of skills and values, as well as the acquisition of knowledge to enable your child to build greater confidence and develop a stronger desire to learn. This will in turn help him to fully develop his potential.

With Holistic Assessment, schools are moving beyond tests and examinations and using other means of assessment to provide useful information that supports your child’s learning and holistic development.

At Primary 1, less emphasis will be placed on semestral examinations so that your child can ease into formal schooling more smoothly.

As parents, you will receive richer and more regular feedback to highlight areas where your child has done well, and also ways to improve his learning.

Form Teacher Guidance Period
As Form Teachers play a central role in shaping the development of their young charges, the Form Teacher Guidance Period (FTGP) has been introduced in all primary schools since 2012.

The allocated one period per week carves out time for more quality teacher-student interaction, and allows teachers to equip students with social and emotional competencies.

Single-Session Primary Schools
The majority of government primary schools will transit to single session by 2016. This means schools will have more time and space to focus on non-academic aspects such as leadership training and character building.

A single-session structure does not mean a full day of school; it only means an extension of one to two hours on certain days to facilitate your child’s non-academic activities. Schools will also be given the flexibility to adjust when to do so based on their specific needs.

New infrastructure will be put in place for support. School facilities and spaces are being redesigned, and this includes outdoor learning spaces and additional venues for performing arts.

School-Home Partnership
As a parent, you play a critical role as our partner in the mission to prepare our young for the future. We need your support so that your child can benefit fully from a balanced and holistic primary education.

Visit our primary education website at: www.primaryeducation.sg/ for the latest information.
Choosing the Right School

To help you choose a school that matches the needs of your child, below are some possible factors to consider.

**Travel Time and Distance to School**
A shorter distance from the school to your home means a shorter travelling time and reduced transport costs. It also provides better opportunities for you to forge a strong relationship with the school of your choice.

Stronger ties with the school means better co-operation in raising and educating your child.

For a list of schools near (within 1 km and 1-to-2km) your residential address, visit the Singapore Land Authority’s One Map School Query Service (www.onemap.sg).

**Mother Tongue Languages**
There are Mother Tongue Language options offered at the school. Parents should note that:
- Chinese Language is offered in all schools;
- Malay Language is offered in all except Special Assistance Plan schools; and
- Tamil Language is offered in most schools, but do confirm this with the school of your choice.

**Your Child’s Interests**
Consider your child’s non-academic interests like sports, performing arts, music and technology, and find out if the school offers activities that match these interests.

- **Co-Curricular Activities**
  Schools offer a variety of co-curricular activities that include physical sports, uniformed groups and visual and performing arts.

- **School-based Programmes or School’s Niche Areas**
  If your child has specific interests in sports or dance, for example, you may want to check out the schools that offer these as part of their niche areas.

This booklet includes a comprehensive list of schools that offer these programmes for your reference. (Please see Primary One Registration insert in back cover pocket.)

**School’s Identity**
Each school has its own special strengths. Learning about the school will enable you to find out about the:
- School’s vision and mission;
- Culture of the school; and
- Parent Support Groups.

**Affiliated Schools**
Some primary schools (mostly those with religious/ clan associations) have close ties with certain secondary schools, in the form of affiliation.

Your child can enjoy priority for admission to the secondary school affiliated to his primary school, provided he meets the school’s admission criteria, and he indicates the affiliated secondary school as his first choice.

**Special Assistance Plan Schools**
Special Assistance Plan schools nurture in their students a deep understanding of the Chinese Language, culture and heritage, and enable them to be effectively bilingual in both English and Chinese.

**Special Education Schools**
Special Education (SPED) Schools provide an alternative education pathway for children with special educational needs who are unable to benefit from mainstream education.

SPED Schools provide customised educational and training programmes to cater to the diverse needs of children with special needs.

Since January 2012, the number of SPED schools run by Voluntary Welfare Organisations has grown to 20. Visit www.moe.gov.sg/education/special-education/ for more details.
Special Needs
Special provisions have also been made to help children with mild learning disabilities.

If your child has mild learning disabilities such as Dyslexia and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), schools have teachers trained in special educational needs and Allied Educators (Learning and Behavioural Support) to help him integrate into the school environment.

There are also designated schools with full facilities for students with physical disabilities, and designated secondary schools for students with visual and hearing impairment. These schools are located in different parts of Singapore to provide convenience to parents. (Please see Primary One Registration insert in back cover pocket for a list of designated schools.)

Need to Know More?
Please visit www.moe.gov.sg
Information on individual primary schools is available in the School Information Services section on the MOE website.

To find out more about the school of your choice, you may visit the school’s website, attend the school’s Open House, or call the school.
Financing Your Child’s Schooling

Fees
MOE has put in place initiatives to help children whose parents may be financially strapped to put them through school.

School and miscellaneous fees in our local schools have been kept affordable so that every child can enjoy the benefits of primary school education.

Edusave Awards are also available to reward and motivate students who perform well in school.

School Fees and Miscellaneous Fees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monthly Fees Payable in Government and Government-aided Primary Schools</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Fees</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore Citizen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Singapore PR</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


Edusave Scheme
The Edusave Scheme maximises educational opportunities for all Singaporean students by providing both students and schools with funds to pay for enrichment programmes, or to purchase additional resources. It also rewards those who perform well, or who make good progress in their academic and non-academic work.

Your child will receive an annual contribution in his Edusave account, if he is a Singapore Citizen and studying full-time in a government or government-aided primary school. The amount contributed for 2014 is $200.
Your child may use the funds in his Edusave account to pay for:
- Enrichment programmes organised by his school; and
- Second-tier miscellaneous fees in government or government-aided primary schools.

Your child’s school will also receive annual grants to purchase teaching tools or organise enrichment activities that will benefit your child.

Your child may qualify for **Edusave Awards** if he is a Singapore Citizen, has good conduct, and performs well in different areas in school (see the eligibility criteria below):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Edusave Awards</th>
<th>Eligibility</th>
<th>Value (per year)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Edusave Character Award                              | Outstanding students from each school who demonstrate exemplary character and personal qualities through their behaviour and actions (2% of Singaporean students from each school). | • $200 for Pri 1 to Pri 3  
• $350 for Pri 4 to Pri 6 |
| Edusave Scholarship                                  | Top 10% of students in Pri 5 and Pri 6 in each school based on academic performance. | • $350                                                                          |
| Edusave Awards for Achievement, Good Leadership and Service (EAGLES) | 10% of Singaporean students from Pri 4 upwards in each school, who display leadership qualities, perform service to community and schools and achieve excellence in non-academic activities. | • $250 for Pri 4 to Pri 6                                                      |
| Edusave Merit Bursary                                | Top 25% of students in each level from each school based on academic performance and with gross household income not exceeding $5,000 per month, or per capita income* not exceeding $1,250. | • $200 for Pri 1 to Pri 3  
• $250 for Pri 4 to Pri 6 |
| Edusave Good Progress Award                          | Top 10% of students from Pri 2 upwards in each level from each school who make significant improvements in their academic performance compared to the previous year. | • $100 for Pri 2 to Pri 3  
• $150 for Pri 4 to Pri 6 |

* Per capita income is the Gross Household Income divided by the number of household members which include the student, his parents, unmarried siblings and grandparents.
Financial Assistance Schemes

Financial assistance schemes are available to ensure that no child is denied an education because of his financial situation.

The MOE Financial Assistance Scheme (FAS) provides needy students with free textbooks, school attire, free breakfast, and waiver of school fees and standard miscellaneous fees.

In addition, schools also provide discretionary assistance (e.g. transport allowance and meal coupons) using school-based funds. This school-based assistance can benefit those who do not meet the qualifying criteria for the MOE FAS, as well as provide additional assistance to those on the MOE FAS.

Parents and students can approach the schools directly if they require financial assistance.

| MOE Financial Assistance Scheme (FAS) for Government and Government-aided Primary Schools |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Eligibility                     | Standard Miscellaneous Fees     | Textbooks                        | School Attire                   | Breakfast                       | Examination Fees                |
| • Family with gross household income not exceeding $2,500 per month | 100% Waived                     | Free                             | Free                            | Free (under the School Breakfast programme) | 75% subsidy of national exam fees (100% subsidy for students under the Ministry of Social and Family Development’s Public Assistance Scheme) |
| • Per Capita Income* not exceeding $625 per month |                                |                                  |                                 |                                 |                                    |

* Per capita income is the Gross Household Income divided by the number of household members which include the student, his parents, unmarried siblings and grandparents.
Opportunity Fund
Beyond the financial assistance schemes, schools have the Opportunity Fund which provides further subsidies to students from lower income families. The fund allows them to own personal computers and to participate in developmental programmes. This ensures that they will not be denied learning opportunities due to family circumstances.
Parents and Schools as Partners

Bringing up a child is a voyage, and as a parent, you are the key navigator of your child’s growth. His development is set primarily at home and in school, and when these two environments are attuned to each other, your child benefits the most. Working hand-in-hand with schools will help you better understand the needs and development of your child, so that you may give him the necessary family care, support and reinforcement at home.

Here are some tips on how you can help your child in his early years of education so he can enjoy his learning experience while in primary school.

Help Your Child Know his School Environment

The earlier your child becomes familiar with his new environment, the more positive he will feel about going to school.

• Visit or tour the school grounds with your child or show him pictures of the school.

• Talk to your child about the new routines he will be going through every day, such as wearing a school uniform, going to the canteen and playing with his peers at recess.

• Encourage your child to practise skills such as asking for permission, buying food, organising his school bag, and passing of messages between his school and parents.

• Help him to know the sources of help available in school (such as his Form Teacher or School Counsellor) and how he can seek assistance. You can even role-play with your child.

• Get him excited about new experiences, such as making new friends or learning new things.

Value Your Child

• Value your child for who he is, not just what he has achieved.

• Maintain a good relationship with your child. Respect his opinions and listen to what he has to say.

• Love your child regardless of his results.

• Appreciate your child’s effort – focus on the process, not the marks or grades.

• Avoid comparing your child’s performance with that of others.

• Be generous with your praise.

• Make time to play with your child and enjoy his company.

• Encourage your child, especially when he is disheartened.

• Listen to your child’s needs.
Building Your Child’s Character

Parents play a key role in values education. In the primary school CCE curriculum, a new segment titled ‘Family Time’ has been included to promote parent-child bonding through suggested activities that parents and children can carry out together. This helps to reinforce what is taught in school.

- Understand your child’s strengths and weaknesses. Help your child develop his strengths further.
- Have realistic expectations and achievable goals for your child.
- Set step-by-step goals to enable your child to achieve them and experience success.
- Discipline with empathy and care. Your child’s misbehaviour, though incorrect, may be his best attempt to meet his needs at that moment. Misbehaviours require correction with understanding and love. Help your child understand why his chosen behaviour is wrong, and what the right way is to meet his needs without hurting himself and others.

Help and Guide Your Child in his Learning

- Help your child to develop a routine for school and homework.
- Create a conducive learning environment that suits your child’s learning style or habits.
- Teach your child to monitor his own behaviour so as to develop self-discipline.
- Be alert to his needs and fears. Seek help from school personnel such as the Form Teacher, School Counsellor, Head of Department (Student Welfare), Learning Support Coordinator, or other professionals, if necessary.
Singapore’s Education System: An Overview

The Singapore education system aims to help our students discover their talents, realise their potential, and develop a passion for learning that lasts through life.

This infographic provides an overview of the Singapore education landscape.

**SECONDARY 4-6 years**

- **13-16 years old**
- **SPECIAL EDUCATION SCHOOL 4-6 years**
- **INTEGRATED PROGRAMME 4-6 YEARS**
- **SPECIALISED INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS 4-6 YEARS**
- **PRIVATELY FUNDED SCHOOLS 4-6 YEARS**
- **GCE 'O' LEVEL**
- **SEC S/N(A) 1 YEAR**
- **GCE 'N(A)' LEVEL**
- **NORMAL (TECHNICAL) (N(T)) 4 YEARS**
- **GCE 'N(T)' LEVEL**
- **SPECIALISED SCHOOLS* 3-4 YEARS**
- **ALTERNATIVE QUALIFICATIONS**

* Specialised Schools offer customised programmes for students who are inclined towards hands-on and practical learning. These schools include Northlight School, Assumption Pathway School, Crest Secondary School and Spectra Secondary School.

** Alternative Qualifications refer to qualifications not offered by the majority of mainstream schools in Singapore.

*** Continuing Education and Training (CET) is designed for adult learners or companies looking to upgrade the skills and knowledge of their employees.
Support and Contact

Find out more about the various school programmes and be in regular contact with your child’s teachers. The partnership established between parents and the school will help you stay constantly informed and involved in your child’s progress.

Your child’s holistic development is the focus of our schools’ efforts. Together, we can help your child realise his full potential.

Visit MOE’s website at www.moe.gov.sg or call the MOE Customer Service Centre at 6872 2220 if you need further information on primary school education.

For the latest news on education and features on schools and teachers, please visit parents-in-education.moe.gov.sg and www.schoolbag.sg.

A free mobile application can be downloaded from the parents-in-education.moe.gov.sg website for easier access to information on education and parenting.

Parents keen to serve in their child’s school can consider joining its Parent Support Group (PSG). As part of the PSG, parents will have opportunities to work with school personnel on programmes and projects that will benefit their child and the school.

The MOE regularly organises education seminars for parents on primary and secondary school education. For the latest updates and details, please refer to www.moe.gov.sg.