

Primary School Education



Ministry of Education
SINGAPORE

Preparing your child for tomorrow



Your child's best interest at heart

The primary school years are an important phase in your child's education, as they lay the foundation for his learning. It is also the time when he is most inquisitive – what he asks and how his questions are answered will be crucial to his development later on in life. During these formative years, we want to build his confidence and desire to learn, and expose him to different aspects of learning, in both academic and non-academic areas, so that your child will have a well-rounded primary education. We also want to give your child a broad exposure to a range of activities so that he can discover his talents and interests.

This brochure will help you understand primary school education as you and your child prepare for this journey. You will find information and advice on how to support your child in partnership with his school.

Entering primary school is the first milestone in your child's education. As your child progresses from primary to secondary and then to post-secondary education, there will be several key decisions you will be making together. We will be providing you and your child with more information at relevant stages to help you make these important decisions.

Primary School Education at a Glance

6 years of compulsory education

No school fees for Singapore Citizens except for monthly standard miscellaneous fees of \$5.50 in 2012, and second-tier miscellaneous fees capped at 100% of the standard component.

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

Subject-based Banding allows pupils to offer a combination of standard or foundation subjects, depending on their strengths

Pupils are encouraged to take part in co-curricular activities and community involvement programmes

At the end of 6 years, pupils sit for the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE)

Key Milestones in Your Child's Education

Primary

Secondary

Pre-P1	P4	P6	Sec 2	Sec 4/5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choosing a Primary School 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choosing Subject Bands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSLE Choosing a Secondary School 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choosing a Subject Combination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GCE 'O'/'N' Levels Choosing a Post-Secondary Institution

Contents

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- A young girl with dark hair, wearing a light blue school shirt and a blue tie, is smiling and holding a large yellow sign. The sign contains a table of contents. The background is a classroom with a globe, a microscope, and a bookshelf.
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Primary Education

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

To navigate a fast-changing world that presents new opportunities and challenges, we need to nurture each child 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.
- 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.





A curriculum designed for a well-rounded learning experience

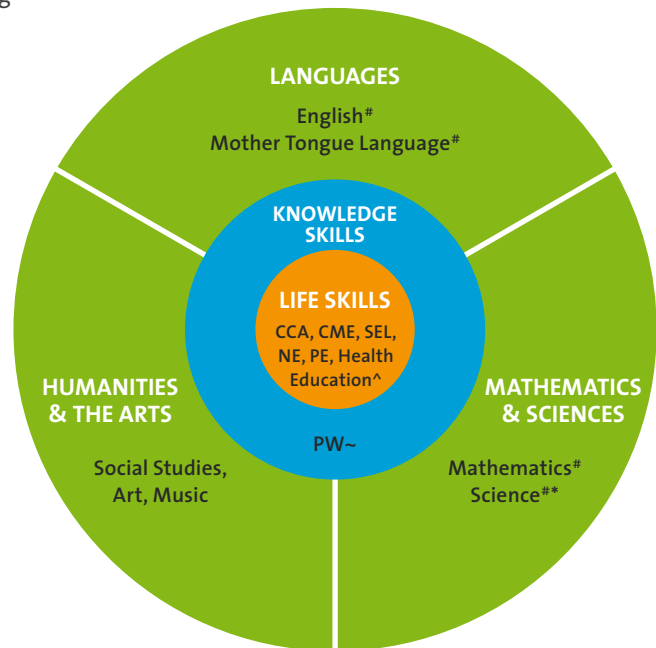
Primary school education is designed to give your child a strong foundation. This includes developing language and numeracy skills, building character and nurturing sound values and good habits. The primary school curriculum focuses on three main aspects of education – subject disciplines, character development and knowledge skills.

Subject disciplines comprise subject areas such as Languages, Humanities & the Arts and Mathematics & Sciences which ensure that your child has a good grounding in subjects across different areas of study. With Subject-based Banding, English, Mother Tongue Language, Mathematics and Science will be taught at the appropriate level at both Primary 5 and Primary 6 according to the ability of your child.

Knowledge skills focus on developing your child's thinking, process and communication skills. These are all essential skills for learning. Knowledge skills are taught through a variety of subjects and often through a project work approach. This enables pupils to use the full range of knowledge skills, work together and clearly demonstrate what they have learnt.

Character development is facilitated through daily teacher-pupil 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 life skills through Co-Curricular Activities, Civics and Moral Education, Social Emotional Learning, National Education and Physical Education.

Primary School Curriculum



SUBJECTS TESTED IN PSLE

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

Optional:
Higher Mother Tongue Language

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

LEGEND

CCA Co-Curricular Activities
CME Civics and Moral Education
SEL Social Emotional Learning
NE National Education
PE Physical Education
PW Project Work

English, Mother Tongue Language, Mathematics and Science will be taught at the appropriate level according to the ability of the student.

* Science is taught from Primary 3 onwards.

^ For Primary 1–4, Health Education is not a separate subject but relevant topics are included in the learning of English.

~ Project Work is conducted during curriculum time but is not an examination subject.



Developing your child's language skills

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. The ability to write and speak English well therefore remains an essential skill to cultivate 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 pupils, enabling them to connect and tap into opportunities in the global environment.

With more Primary 1 pupils coming from households where English is the dominant home language, we will continue to refine the teaching of Mother Tongue Languages. Schools will use differentiated teaching approaches to cater to pupils from different home language backgrounds. They will promote functional use of the Mother Tongue Languages, with greater emphasis on listening and speaking skills.



Key Features of the Revised Mother Tongue Language Curriculum

Chinese Language Curriculum (Modular)	Malay Language Curriculum	Tamil Language Curriculum
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More emphasis on speaking, listening and reading • Teaching tailored to meet the different learning needs of pupils • More engaging and appealing teaching materials that capture pupils' interest 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All pupils will take the Core Module. • Pupils with little or no exposure to the Chinese Language will take Bridging Modules. • Pupils with the interest and ability to go further will take the Enrichment Modules. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils will be taught according to their different levels of achievement at Primary 2, 4 and 6. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils will be given more opportunities to practise Spoken Tamil.



A learning environment that caters to your child's strengths and needs

Learning Support Programmes

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

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

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

Programmes for intellectually gifted pupils

The Gifted Education Programme (GEP) caters to pupils who are intellectually gifted. GEP pupils will be placed in separate classes in selected primary schools for Primary 4 to Primary 6, and receive an advanced curriculum that matches their abilities. They will be taught by specially trained teachers. 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.

For pupils 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 (CCAs)

CCAs are an integral part of a well-rounded education and play an important part in building character. They help nurture in pupils qualities such as resilience, tenacity, confidence and perseverance, which prepare them to adapt and thrive in a rapidly changing world.

There is a whole range of exciting CCAs for your child to choose from, ranging from sports, uniformed groups, visual and performing arts, to clubs and societies.

Subject-based Banding

Subject-based Banding begins in Primary 5 and continues in Primary 6. Subject-based Banding provides greater flexibility for your child by giving him the choice to take a combination of standard or foundation subjects, depending on his strengths. This will help him focus on the subjects that he is strong in while building up the fundamentals in the subjects that he is weak in.

How does Subject-based Banding work?

At P4

Pupil sits for school-based examinations

Based on pupil's results, school recommends a subject combination. Parents fill up option form indicating preferred combination.



At P5

Pupil takes subject combination chosen by parents

English, Mathematics, Science and Mother Tongue Language are available at standard and foundation levels. Mother Tongue Language is also available at the higher level.



End of P5

Pupil who takes 1 or more foundation subject(s) and does very well in the subjects	Pupil who takes 4 standard subjects and has difficulty coping	All other pupils
School may allow him to upgrade 1 or 2 subjects to standard level if school believes he can cope; or continue the same subject combination in P6	School may allow him to take 1 or more subjects at foundation level in P6	School will allow them to continue the same subject combination in P6



At P6

Pupil takes subject combination decided by school



End of P6

Pupil sits for Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE)





Holistic education for your child

In line with the recommendations of the Primary Education Review and Implementation (PERI) committee in 2009, a range of enhancements are being progressively implemented in primary school education over the next few years. These enhancements aim to make learning more enjoyable and meaningful for your child, and seek to develop in them a better balance of skills and values.



More engaging teaching methods

Our teachers will adopt 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, the Programme for Active Learning (PAL) 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 the areas of sports and outdoor education, as well as performing and visual arts activities. PAL will be introduced progressively to all Primary 1 and 2 pupils by 2017.

MOE will also strengthen the quality of Physical Education, and Art and Music education. These subjects are integral to a holistic education experience for our students. They enable our students to develop physical robustness, enhance their creative and expressive capacities, and shape their personal, cultural and social identity.



Holistic Assessment to support learning

Assessment is an important aspect of learning and teaching. With Holistic Assessment, schools are moving beyond tests and examinations and using 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 ways to improve his learning. Holistic Assessment emphasises the development of skills and values as well as 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 develop his potential more fully.



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 better cater to each student's holistic development, including their Social and Emotional Learning needs.

Single-session primary schools

The majority of government primary schools will transit to single session by 2016. Going single session allows more time and space for schools to focus on non-academic aspects such as leadership training and character-building.

Single session 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 their start and end time based on their specific needs.

New infrastructure will be put in place to support the delivery of holistic education. School facilities and spaces will be redesigned, and this may include outdoor learning spaces and additional venues for performing arts.

Home-school 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.

To stay updated on the implementation progress, visit our primary education website at: <http://www.primaryeducation.sg/>





Choosing the right school

As a parent, you have a vital role to play in choosing a school that matches the needs of your child. Below are some factors you may wish to consider when choosing a school for your child.

Travel time and distance to school

Consider the distance from the school to your home. A shorter distance can offer the benefits of a shorter travelling time for your child, reduced transport costs and 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.

To find out the distance between the school of choice and your home, you may wish to visit the Singapore Land Authority's OneMap SchoolQuery Service (<http://www.onemap.sg>) to obtain a list of schools within the 1km and 1–2km distance categories from your residential address.

Mother Tongue Languages

Finding out what Mother Tongue Language options are offered by the school of choice is important. You should also note that:

- Chinese Language is offered in all schools;
- Malay Language is offered in all except Special Assistance Plan schools; and
- While Tamil Language is offered in most schools, you should nonetheless confirm this with the school of 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 (CCAs)

Schools offer a variety of CCAs that could include sports, the arts, uniformed groups such as Brownies and Scouts, and clubs and societies. Some schools offer new activities such as golf, ice-skating, roller-blading and bowling.

• School-based Programmes or School's Niche Areas

If your child has specific interests such as in sports or dance, you may want to look up schools which 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. You may want to find out more about the school you have identified, and its strengths. This would include learning 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 pupils a deep understanding of the Chinese Language, culture and heritage, and enable them to be effectively bilingual in both English and Chinese.

Special needs

Special provisions have been made to help children with mild learning disabilities on their learning journey. 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 them integrate into the school environment. There are also designated schools with full handicap facilities for pupils with physical disabilities, and designated secondary schools for pupils 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.)

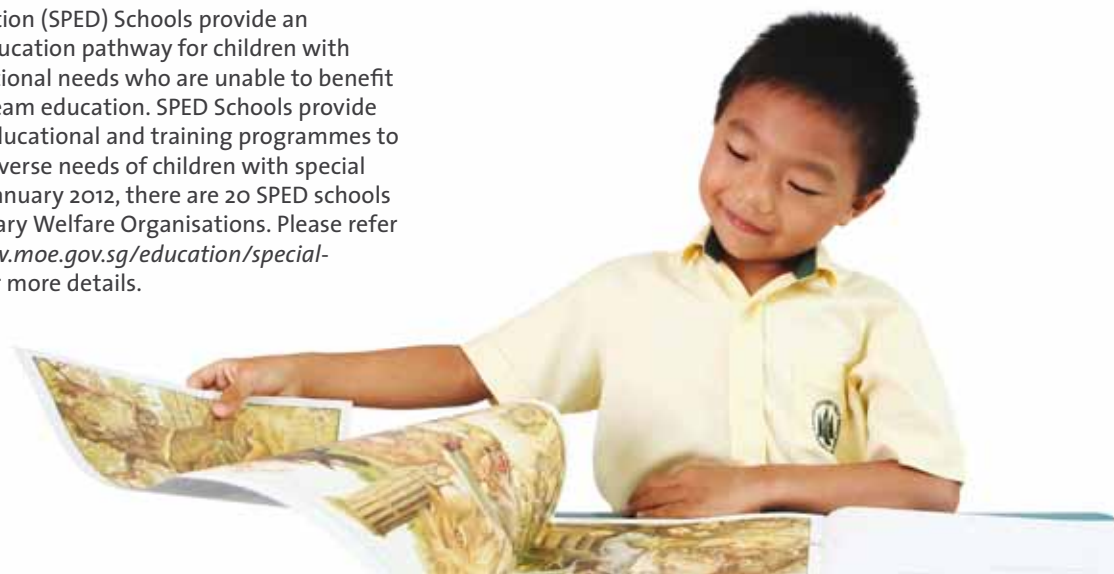
Special Education (SPED) Schools

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. As at January 2012, there are 20 SPED schools run by Voluntary Welfare Organisations. Please refer to <http://www.moe.gov.sg/education/special-education/> for more details.



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 Ministry of Education (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.





Financial assistance schemes and money matters

This section will address questions you may have about financing your child’s primary school education as well as provide information about school fees and the different financial assistance schemes and grants that are available. We have put in place initiatives to ensure that those who have financial difficulties will be catered for.

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 pupils who perform well in school.

School Fees & Miscellaneous Fees

Monthly fees payable in Government and Government-aided primary schools in 2012			
	School Fees	Standard Miscellaneous Fees	Second-tier Miscellaneous Fees
• Singapore Citizen	\$0	\$5.50	The fees are decided by the school but are capped at a maximum of \$5.50. Your child may use his Edusave account to pay for these fees.
• Singapore PR	\$40.00	\$5.50	The fees are decided by the school but are capped at a maximum of \$5.50.

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

Edusave Scheme

The Edusave Scheme maximises educational opportunities for all Singaporean pupils by providing pupils 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.

In 2012, your child will receive an annual contribution of \$200 in his Edusave account if he is a Singaporean and studying full-time in a government or government-aided primary school.

Edusave Pupils Fund	Edusave Grants
<p>Your child may use the funds in his Edusave Account to pay for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrichment programmes organised by his school; • Second-tier miscellaneous fees in government or government-aided primary schools. 	<p>Your child's school will also receive annual grants to purchase teaching tools or organise enrichment activities that will benefit your child.</p>

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):

Edusave Awards	Eligibility	Value (per year)
• Edusave Character Award	Outstanding students from each school who demonstrate exemplary values and civic responsibility through their behaviour and actions (2% of Singaporean pupils from each school).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$200 for P1 to P3 • \$350 for P4 to P6
• Edusave Scholarship	Top 10% of pupils in P5 and P6 in each school based on academic performance.	• \$350
• Edusave Awards for Achievement, Good Leadership and Service (EAGLES)	10% of Singaporean pupils from P4 upwards in each school who display leadership qualities, perform service to community and schools and achieve excellence in non-academic activities.	• \$250
• Edusave Merit Bursary	Top 25% of pupils in each level from each school based on academic performance and with gross household income of less than \$5,000 per month, or per capita income* of below \$1,250.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$200 for P1 to P3 • \$250 for P4 to P6
• Edusave Good Progress Award	Top 10% of pupils from P2 upwards in each level from each school who make significant improvements in their academic performance compared to the previous year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$100 for P2 to P3 • \$150 for P4 to P6

*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 pupils with free textbooks, school attire 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 pupils 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	Textbook	School Attire	Examination Fees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family with gross household income not exceeding \$2,500 per month Per Capita Income* not exceeding \$625 per month 	100% Waived	Free Textbooks	Free School Attire	75% subsidy of national exam fees (100% subsidy for pupils under Ministry of Community Development, Youth & Sports' Public Assistance Scheme)

*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 subsidy to students from lower income families to own personal computers and to participate in developmental programmes. This ensures that they will not be denied learning opportunities due to family circumstances.





Partnering the school to support your child

Preparing and supporting your child is important to ensure that he enjoys his learning experience in primary school. Here are some tips on how you can help your child in his early years of education.

Help your child know his school environment

The earlier your child is familiarised 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 everyday, such as flag-raising and lowering, recess, assembly, school bus drop-off and pick-up points, timetable, and wearing the school uniform.
- Encourage your child to practise schooling skills such as asking for permission, buying food, organising his school bag and passing messages between 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.
- 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.

Know and understand your child

- 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.
- Listen to your child's needs.

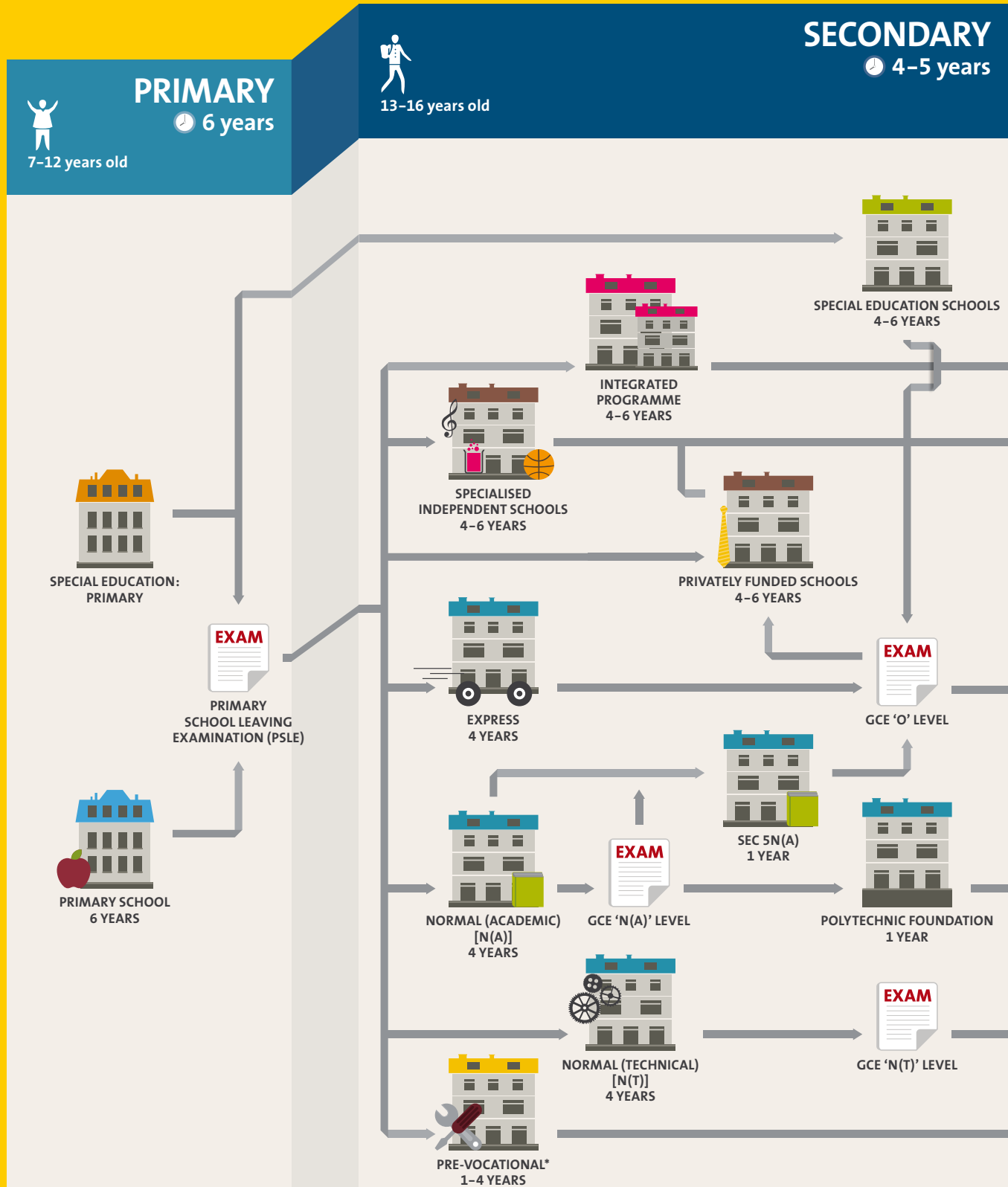
Help and guide your child in his learning

- Help your child to develop a routine for school and homework.
- Create a conducive learning environment that suits your child's learning style/habits.
- Instil self-discipline by teaching your child to monitor his own behaviour.
- Be alert to his needs and fears. Seek help from school personnel such as Head of Department (Pupil Welfare), Pastoral Care Coordinator, Learning Support Coordinator, Teacher Counsellor or other professionals, if necessary.
- Discipline with empathy. Your child's misbehaviour is his best, although incorrect, attempt to meet his needs at that moment. Discipline is correction. Explain why his chosen behaviour was wrong, and what is the right way for him to meet his needs without hurting himself and others.

The Singapore education journey

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.





17-22 years old

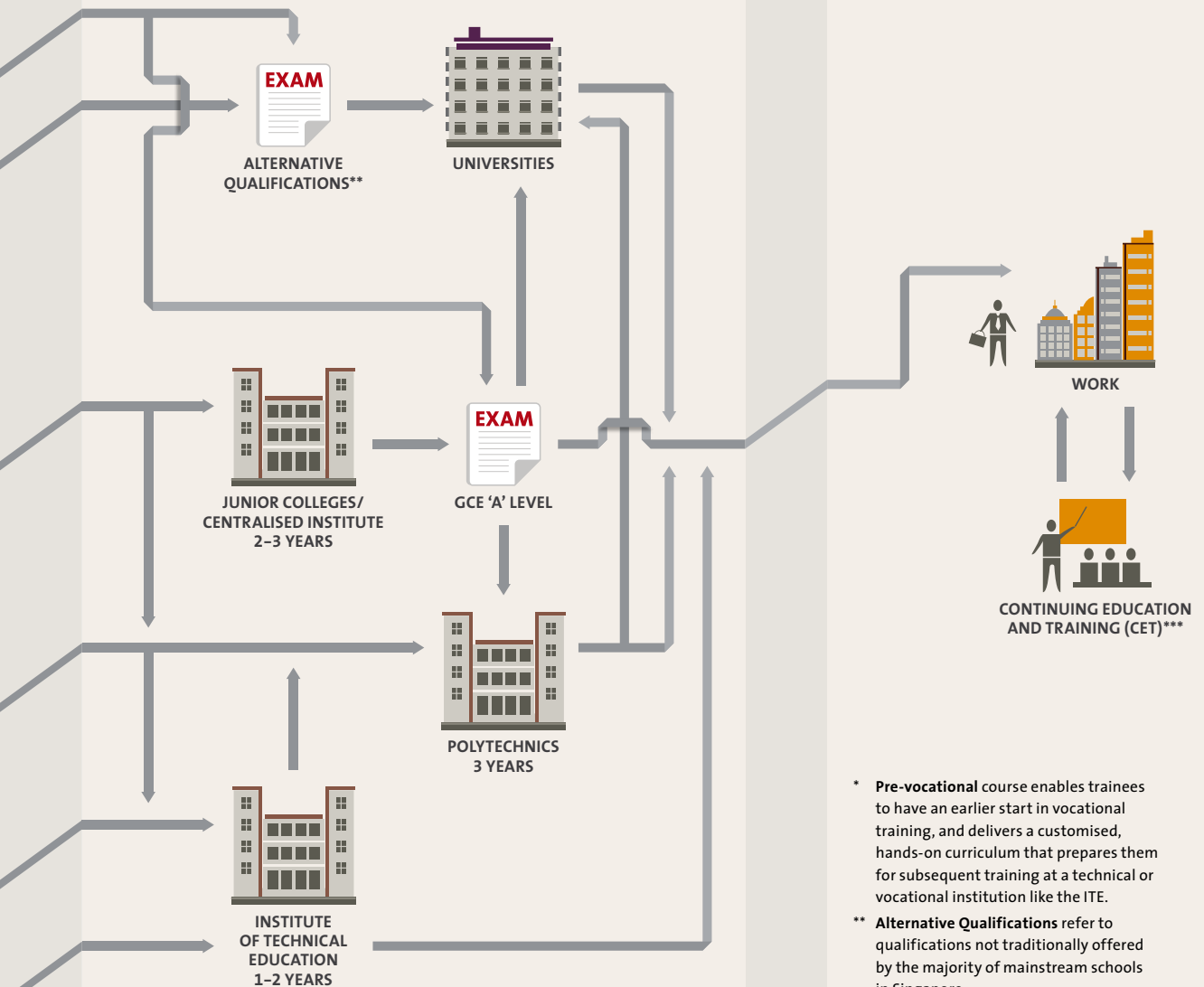
POST-SECONDARY

🕒 1-6 years



WORK

DIFFERENT PATHWAYS TO WORK & LIFE



* **Pre-vocational** course enables trainees to have an earlier start in vocational training, and delivers a customised, hands-on curriculum that prepares them for subsequent training at a technical or vocational institution like the ITE.

** **Alternative Qualifications** refer to qualifications not traditionally 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.



Preparing for the future

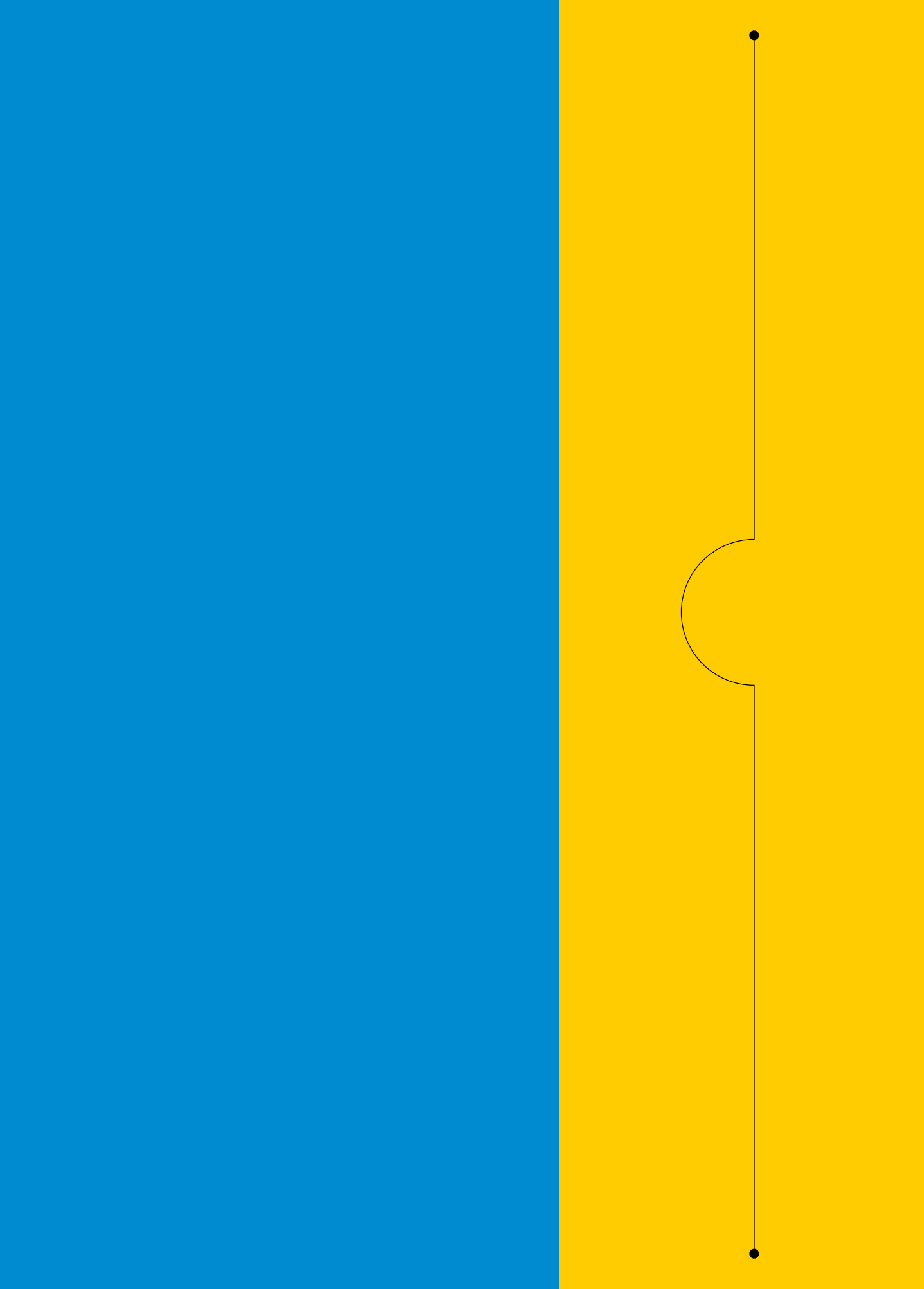
Your child's holistic development is the focus of our schools' efforts. We encourage you to find out more about the various school programmes and be in regular contact with your child's teachers. Your partnership with the school will help you to be constantly informed and involved in your child's progress. 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 Schoolbag, MOE's online newsletter for parents, at www.schoolbag.sg.

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







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The information contained in this
booklet is correct as of April 2012