Nurturing the Child Holistically from Pre-school to Primary School

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Overview of Pre-school Education in Singapore

- Provided by kindergartens and childcare centres
- Allows for diversity and caters to the different needs of children
Importance of Pre-school Years

- Nurturing the whole child
- Developing positive attitudes towards learning
- Laying the foundation for lifelong learning
Overview of Education Outcomes

Pre-school Education

Learning Goals in the following learning areas:
- Aesthetics and Creative Expression
- Discovery of the World
- Language and Literacy
- Motor Skills Development
- Numeracy
- Social and Emotional Development

Learning Dispositions:
- Perseverance
- Reflectiveness
- Appreciation
- Inventiveness
- Sense of Wonder and Curiosity
- Engagement

Key Stage Outcomes of Pre-school Education:
- Know what is right and what is wrong
- Be willing to share and take turns with others
- Be able to relate to others
- Be curious and able to explore
- Be able to listen and speak with understanding
- Be comfortable and happy with themselves
- Have developed physical co-ordination, healthy habits, participate in and enjoy a variety of arts experiences
- Love their families, friends, teachers and school

Towards Primary/Secondary Education

Key Stage Outcomes of Education:
- Primary education
- Secondary education
- Post-secondary education

Desired Outcomes of Education:
- Confident Person
- Self-directed Learner
- Active Contributor
- Concerned Citizen
Nurturing Early Learners

NEL Curriculum
A comprehensive tool kit of kindergarten curriculum resources to support early childhood educators

NEL Framework

NEL Educators’ Guide
NEL Teaching and Learning Resources
NEL Framework for Mother Tongue Languages (MTLs)

NEL Educators’ Guide for MTLs
NEL Teaching and Learning Resources for MTLs
Nurturing Early Learners (NEL) Framework

- Holistic development of children
- Teaching and learning principles and practices
- Belief: Children are curious, active and competent learners
- Learning goals
NEL Educators’ Guide

• Seeks to help teachers translate the NEL Framework into quality learning experiences for children
• Consist of seven volumes – an overview and 6 learning areas.
Holistic Development of a Child:

Learning Areas:
Aesthetics and Creative Expression | Discovery of the World
Language and Literacy | Motor Skills Development | Numeracy
Social and Emotional Development

Learning Dispositions (PRAISE):
Perseverance | Reflectiveness | Appreciation | Inventiveness
Sense of Wonder and Curiosity | Engagement
Learning Goals

• Widely-held expectations of children at the end of K2
• Lays foundation for future learning
• Facilitates smooth adjustment to P1
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aesthetics and Creative Expression</th>
<th>Motor Skills Development</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Enjoy art and music and movement activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Express ideas and feelings through art and music and movement</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Create art and music and movement using experimentation and imagination</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Share ideas and feelings about art and music and movement</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Enjoy through participation in a variety of physical activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Demonstrate control, coordination and balance in gross motor tasks</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Demonstrate control and coordination in fine motor tasks</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Develop healthy habits and safety awareness at home, in school and at public places</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discovery of the World</th>
<th>Numeracy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Show an interest in the world they live in</td>
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<td>• Find out why things happen &amp; how things work through simple investigations</td>
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<td>• Develop a positive attitude towards the world around them</td>
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<td>• Recognise and use simple relationships and patterns</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Use numbers in daily experiences</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Recognise and use basic shapes &amp; simple spatial concepts in daily experiences</td>
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<th>Language and Literacy</th>
<th>Social and Emotional Development</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Listen for information and enjoyment</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Speak to convey meaning and communicate with others</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Read with understanding &amp; for enjoyment</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Use drawing, mark making, symbols and writing with invented and conventional spelling to communicate ideas &amp; information</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Develop an awareness of personal identity</td>
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<td>• Manage their own emotions &amp; behaviours</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Show respect for diversity</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Communicate, interact and build relationships with others</td>
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<td>• Take responsibility for their actions</td>
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Aesthetics and Creative Expression

• Provide different materials for your child to create art and music
• Encourage your child to notice and talk about art and music in the environment
Discovery of the World

- Model sense of wonder and curiosity
- Encourage questions and search for answers together
- Get your child to draw or talk about their findings
Language and Literacy

- Read to or with your child
- Get your child to notice print in the environment
- Encourage your child to make use of knowledge of letters to read and write words
Motor Skills Development

- Bring your child outdoors
- Play games with your child
- Talk about and promote personal safety
- Model healthy behaviours
Numeracy

• Draw attention to shapes, patterns and numbers in the environment
• Encourage your child to count in daily experiences
• Get your child to solve problems and talk about the solutions
Social and Emotional Development

- Establish predictable routines at home
- Set simple tasks to build confidence
- Talk with your child about feelings and how to manage them
- Be a role model
What Families Can Do

- Collaborate with your child’s pre-school centres
  - Communicate and share information
  - Connect learning at home and in school
  - Contribute and participate
What Parents/Families Can Do

• Recognise your child’s needs, interests, strengths and personal qualities
• Engage in **quality interactions** with your child
For More Information

★ NEL Framework - A Guide For Parents:

★ NEL Framework (for educators):
http://www.moe.gov.sg/education/preschool/

★ NEL Educators’ Guide (for educators):
http://www.moe.gov.sg/education/preschool/
Preparing Your Child for Primary Education
Where is My Child at This Stage?

- Formative years
- Early stages of learning
- Discovering interests & talents
Aims of Primary Education

- Nurture the whole child (holistic education)
- Lay a strong foundation in the early years of formal education
- Prepare the child for the future
Preparing our Young for the Future

21st Century Competencies – Balancing Knowledge with Skills and Values
Student-Centric, Values-Driven Education

More Engaging Teaching Methods

- active and creative
- learning strategies
- investigative tasks, experiments
- role-play, drama
- outdoor activities etc.

Creative teaching methods mean a more enjoyable learning experience
Programme for Active Learning (PAL)

- More opportunities to participate in non-academic activities during curriculum time
- Discover new interests, develop a range of skills and build character
- Progressively rolled out

Student-Centric, Values-Driven Education
Student-Centric, Values-Driven Education

Character and Citizenship Education

- **Character Building**
  - Know thyself
  - Know others
  - Do the right thing
  - Demonstrate resilience

- **Citizenship Education**
  - Loyal citizen
  - Show care and concern for others
  - Be socio-culturally sensitive
  - Be able to reflect on and respond to community, national and global issues
Holistic Assessment to Support Learning and Development

- Focus is on building child’s confidence and desire to learn
- Assessment should focus on information on learning progress
- Richer feedback on your child’s development and a more complete picture of his achievement and progress.
All primary schools will transit to single session over the next few years to create more space & time for learning in both academic & non-academic areas.

School hours may be extended by 1-2 hours on certain days for non-academic activities.

NOT full-day schools.
Learning Support Programmes

Learning Support Programme (LSP-EL)
Aim: provides additional learning support to pupils in the English Language at the time they enter P1

Learning Support for Mathematics (LSM)
Aim: provides additional learning support to pupils in Mathematics at the time they enter P1
Through Primary Education…

We want to see children who are:

- Confident
- Self-Directed Learners
- Active Contributors
- Concerned Citizens
Easing into Primary One
Well-Adjusted Child

Happy Child 😊

Maximise Learning
Shy boy takes on the Big School

Jason is less than four months away from attending Primary 1, but he has lots more preparation to do, at least in my book.

I'm not talking about signing him up for enrichment or prep classes - we haven't done any of that. Neither am I referring to reading and writing - he can read simple books and spell simple words. I'm talking about all the soft skills a seven-year-old needs to be equipped with, to thrive in the Big School, as the old folks call it.

Most basic is the ability to speak up confidently. This is important both in a class of 30, to ask the teacher what he does not understand, as well as outside of class, to buy food at the canteen, for instance.

Jason has no problems articulating his thoughts at home or telling his younger sister exactly what he thinks of her, but once outside, he is a different boy.

He is shy by nature. At five, when he was watching his favourite Power Rangers performance at a shopping centre, all he had to do was to go on stage to answer a simple question and he would get a figurine. I had refused to buy him. He wouldn't even raise his hand.

To encourage him to speak up, we have been getting him to order his own food or to ask for extra cutlery at a fast food restaurant.

To say he is reluctant is to put it mildly. He would often forgo his favourite ice-cold Milo than stand at the counter to place his order.

On the rare occasions when he musters up enough courage to do so, we cheer him on like he has won a race.

Another skill that is particularly important in primary school is the ability to look after one's possessions. Unfortunately, it is another area Jason is sorely lacking in.

I'm not sure if it is because we had a domestic helper pick up after him for two years until earlier this year, or if it is because he is by nature a forgetful boy.

If he is not reminded, he always forgets to take his water bottle when we go out on weekends and leaves it behind wherever we go. I can foresee him losing his pencil box, water bottle or even wallet in primary school.

A friend of mine with grown-up kids recounted how she packed her son off to primary school with a new pencil box, only to have him lose it soon after.

Primary School Preparation

- Encouraging him to speak up - order his own food
- How to look after his possessions
- How to pay attention in class
- How to pack his bag
- Develop People skills - greeting teachers, working as a team
Excite Your Child on New Experiences

- **Say Positive Things**
  - Meet many new friends
  - Learn to do many interesting things
  - Bigger space for movement

- **Show pictures of school**
  - Look at school newsletter or website

- **Attend the school’s orientation programme with child**
Don’t talk about how worried you will be.
Your child has enough to worry without having to listen to your anxieties.
Involve Your Child in Preparing for School

Let your child choose the things he/she needs for school, such as school bags and stationery items.
Cultivate the Love for Learning

- Visit libraries and places where reading materials are found regularly
- Create a library corner in your house or in your child’s room
- Read to or with your child daily
Support a Healthy Lifestyle

Ensure your child has...
- Sufficient sleep
- A balanced diet
- Unstructured play
- Outdoor activities in the day (vs use of computers)

...good habits start young 😊
Introduce Seatwork

- Sit with your child initially
- Get him to work on his own
- Increase time gradually

Note:
- Do not make your child sit for hours
- Create a conducive learning environment at home
Talk about New Routines

Examples

- Going to school from Monday to Friday
- Waking up early to go to school
- Buying own food
- Following instructions
Explain clearly to your child how he/she is going to school and returning home from school. 

*It helps to reduce anxiety.*
Mentally Prepare Your Child for Separation

Make him understand that you will be separated from him while he is in school.

Parents – you need to prepare yourself too!
Start Going to Bed Earlier

- 1 or 2 weeks before school begins, help your child practise getting up earlier in the morning
- Begin slowly, waking your child up 15 minutes earlier every day and going to bed 15 minutes earlier each night until he gets used to waking up early in the morning.
Get Up Early On the First Day of School

This means

- Your child can have a relaxed breakfast
- You are left with enough time to deal with upsets — and still get to school on time
Motivating Your Child
Provide Ample Decision-Making Opportunities

- Allow them to choose the books they want to read through independent reading.
- Give your child some autonomy to decide how he/she wants to have a piece of work done (completing his homework, drawing up his own home schedule).
- Establish a mutually agreed outcome on the standard of work done.
Build Mastery

- Set reasonable goals with him/her
- Focus on developing your child’s strengths
- Emphasise the learning process instead of results
- Avoid comparing your child’s performance with that of others
- Give constructive feedback
- Affirm good work / Give praise
- Offer encouragement and not threats to enhance learning - limit to achievement if pushed
Provide Purpose

Children want to know why they are doing certain things.

- Give reasons for desired actions
- Ask them for rationale of their actions
Motivating Our Children

- Be role models ourselves
- Not an easy task
- Be patient
- Won’t happen overnight
- So let’s get started!
Online Resources

1. MOE Website
   www.moe.gov.sg

2. Parents in Education

3. Schoolbag – online newsletter for parents
   www.schoolbag.sg

4. MOE on Facebook
   www.facebook.com/moesingapore
Download the enhanced Parents in Education (PiE) mobile application
www.facebook.com/moesingapore