

First Toa Payoh Primary School E-Open House

Question and Answer Segment

Q: What level of literacy does the child need to have for a smooth transition to P1? What ways can we prepare our child for this transition?

A: We understand that parents are naturally concern with their children's transition from kindergarten to Primary 1. In preparing your child for primary school, we encourage parents to not just focus on academics, but also on their social skills, organisational skills and emotional regulation.

With parents spending more time with your children at home due to the COVID situation, you can play simple board games with your child which allow him/her to practise different skills such as turn-taking, waiting patiently, asking politely, as well as losing and winning gracefully.

You can also have a structured but simple work system for your child at home, such as having a timetable and designated time and place for specific tasks. Parents can also hone your children's organisational skills such as having them tidied and packed their own things, routines that would be needed in Primary school. It will also help them adapt well to classroom habits as well as the do's and don'ts at primary school level.

Having observed the transition programme that my teachers at MK@First ToaPayoh conduct for our MK children, I would like to assure parents that your child's pre-school education teachers would have likewise prepared the children well for a smooth transition to primary school in terms of literacy and numeracy competencies.

So don't worry too much as you may inadvertently transfer your anxiety to your child. Continue to give your children plenty of time and space to observe things around them, ask questions, give their views freely, and play happily. All these will ignite their instinctive curiosity and drive to learn and most importantly, enjoy learning.

Another resource, parents can tap on is [Schoolbag.sg](https://www.schoolbag.sg) which is an online publication by the Ministry of Education for parents, educators and the general public with education news, school features and tips. You may access the website for resources on how to better support your child for a smooth transition to Primary 1.

Q: What is the biggest challenge that children face or fear when they transit into primary school?

A: I think this question is best answered from the children's perspectives. What parents perceived may not be what the children actually felt.

I had interacted with my MK K2 children as part of their transition programme, to find out their concerns or worries with regard to going to primary school. I would like share with you some of their thoughts and I am sure your children's too.

They are concerned with matters such as friendship (would I have friends); would I be lost, because the primary school is so big; Where are the toilets?; Will there be someone to help me buy food during recess?; What if I do not know how to pay for my food?; Are my teachers fierce?; Will there be a lot of homework? How do I ask for help?

In a nutshell, their fears and concerns centre around school routines and these are not unexpected. Parents can help assure your children that there will be many levels of help available right from the point they step into the school. Each P1 class in every school will have 30 students, 10 more than their usual K2 class. Hence there will be more friends.

At recess, they will be well supported. In FTTPS, the P1 students will have earlier and longer recess during the first week of school with their teachers and other school staff supporting them. It would be helpful if parents can give your children pocket money in coins in a zipped wallet : \$1, 50 cents, 20 cents and 10 cents. Set meals such as rice and noodles are usually sold in portions of \$1, \$1.50 and \$2. For P1 children, \$1 portion would be adequate for most of them. Snacks are sold in more varied pricing There will be teachers and student leaders to guide them around the school. Yes, there will be homework but it will be age-appropriate and the frequency calibrated for each level.

Q: Will there be any physical orientation for the child and parents during the first day of school?

A: It would depend on the prevailing COVID situation and the national posture. Nearer the school re-opening date on 3 Jan 2023, do look out for notifications from the school that your child has enrolled in.

Q: What should parents look out for in a 'good' school?

A: In Singapore, every school is a good school. Choosing a school for your child depends on a balance between his/her needs and your preferences. Parents are encouraged to choose a school suitable for and align to their child's learning needs and interests.

Consider your child's learning style, strengths and interests when making school choices in order to find a school that would help the child learn and thrive best.

Other considerations include:

Values: What is the school's culture and ethos? Visit the school's E-Open House and school website to get a sense of the school's culture and learning environment. You can also talk to the teachers and School Leaders to learn more about the school.

Learning environment: Is the school's learning environment right for the child? Not all children may thrive or cope well in a very competitive or fast pace learning environment. We always believe that education is a life journey, not a sprint.

Distinctive programmes and CCAs: Each school has its own distinctive programmes and co-curricular activities. You should consider your child's interests in sports, arts or music and pick a suitable school that will develop their strengths

Location: Selecting a school near your home saves you time and travel costs. A shorter commute lets your child rest better and have more time and energy to focus on other interests.

Q: How does your school help the P1 students to settle into the school environment during the first week of school and be ready for learning?

A: Our school has planned a 3-day Start-It-Right (SIR) Programme that is conducted during the first week of school. The objectives of the SIR programme are:

- To foster positive teacher-student and peer relationships
- To set expectations; and
- To provide a smooth transition to the new school and class the child is in.

To foster bonding and a sense of belonging, students will work together on projects such as creating bunting which will be hung up in their classroom. There will also be class interaction time for teachers and students to get to know one another and to bond. Class Rules are discussed and clearly displayed in the classroom so that students take ownership and are clear of the expectations.

Teachers will also establish a common language and understanding with students on the school's values and expectations. Social Skills such as Using An Appropriate Voice Level, Listening, Being Prepared for Class, Asking for Help and Offering Help will be taught and communicated through stories and role play.

We are confident that with the Start-It-Right programme, our P1 students are able to establish positive interactions and rapport with their peers and teachers. When there is mutual respect for each other, joyful learning will take place in a caring and safe environment. Through the class activities, teachers are also able to cultivate positive teacher-student and peer relationships to create a conducive and supportive environment for quality teaching and learning to take place, going forward.

Q: Is there a teacher in-charge who takes care of students' psychological and mental well-being?

A: All teachers have received enhanced professional development on mental health literacy as a base-line to further strengthen teacher's ability to identify and support students in need. More teacher-counsellors

will also be deployed. Currently, our school has identified two teacher-counsellors. There are also two trained school counsellors.

In addition, the school have trained Peer Support Leaders who are able to provide additional support to their peers and other students in the lower primary levels.

Q: Is there CCA for Primary-One students?

A: There is no CCA for Primary-One students. However, all Primary one and two students will go through PAL (Programme for Active Learning). During PAL, students are exposed to varied and fun learning experiences that facilitate their holistic development in the physical, cognitive, social, aesthetics and moral domains. Students also learn socio-emotional competencies such as respecting others and responsible decision-making.

Q: Is there an after-school care centre at your school?

A: FTPPS has a school-based Student Care Centre that provides parents with an alternative care arrangement for your child. Your child can go from their classrooms to the SCC without leaving the school. Parents who are interested in SCC may indicate their interest during P1 Orientation on 18 November 2022. Priority will be given to SC/PR for lower primary students.

Q: Would the school consider a similar Open House in December 2022?

A: The school will conduct a P1 Orientation for registered students on 18 November 2022. Our School Leaders and Year Head (P1 & P2) will be going through P1 curriculum matters in detail to get your child ready for school.

Q: When is the P1 registration exercise open?

A: P1 registration is conducted over several phases. Phase 1 to Phase 2C Supplementary apply to children who are Singapore Citizen and Singapore Permanent Residents.

The P1 registration will start from 29 June 2022 to 12 August 2022. You may register your child online in a phase as long as you fulfil at least one of the requirements for that phase. Please refer to MOE website <https://www.moe.gov.sg/primary/p1-registration/registration-phases-key-dates> on the P1 registration dates.

Q: Is my daughter who is residing at my parents' place eligible to apply for the school?

A: You can make a declaration of alternative child-care arrangement for your child's P1 Registration if you want to use the address of a caregiver living within 2km of your preferred school.

You can make a declaration if you meet both of these conditions:

- You and your spouse are both working full-time at the time the declaration is made.
- Your child is under the care of a grandparent or a parent's sibling.

The declaration can be made online. Please refer to <https://www.moe.gov.sg/primary/p1-registration/home-address> for more information.

Q: Can my child who is a foreigner holding a student pass and/or dependent pass apply for the school?

A: International Students (IS) can only register for P1 during Phase 3 of the P1 Registration Exercise, after all Singapore Citizens and Permanent Residents have been allocated a place under the earlier phases.

IS must go through a 2-step process:

1. Submit an online indication of interest form, available on MOE website in early June, otherwise you will not be able to register in Phase 3 of the P1 Registration Exercise.
2. MOE will notify you via email in October:
 - Whether your child can be offered a P1 place.
 - How to register in Phase 3 with the designated school if they are offered a place.

Q: Do all students get an opportunity for the activities (sports tinkerlution or learning journeys) shown or only nominated students are selected for certain activities.

A: All students will get the opportunity to take part in the activities.

Q: My son is not very good in buttoning and unbutton his shirt. So I am concern what will happened if he is stuck at unbutton and buttoning the uniform before and after PE?

A: On days that there are PE lessons, students will be wearing their PE T-Shirts and PE shorts for the whole day. There will not be a need for them to change out of their PE attire.

Q: My son is very shy in asking for permission to go to toilet, how do teachers facilitate this? Usually when he ask to go to the toilet, it is urgent and might leak.

A: All P1 teachers are very experienced in guiding the new students. Students will be led to the toilet at regular intervals. Teachers will check with students if they need to go to the toilet, especially during recess.

Q: How does the school look into disciplinary? How do you handle bullying amongst the children?

A: As a school, we have a zero tolerance policy on bullying and we will take every incident seriously. As such, we will do the necessary investigation, counsel the parties involved, mete out the necessary consequences if needed. We will also restore the relationship between the students involved so as to ensure peer relationships are not affected.

Q: Can you please explain the school bus service if any thanks

A: There is school bus service to charter students to and from home. You will be able to register your interest in school bus service during P1 orientation.

Q: Do other schools have CCA for P1 or is it the same for all MOE schools?

A: At Primary 1, we would like students to focus on transiting into primary school life. As such, we would give them the time to adjust accordingly through various in-curriculum programmes such as Programme for Active Learning (PAL).

Q: Any plans to have a school tour?

A: Parents may visit the school website for a virtual tour of our school premises.

Q: Do you plan to offer Hindi as MTL ?

A: We offer Chinese, Malay and Tamil in our school. Students taking Hindi will take the language in MOE language centres.