



BUKIT PANJANG PRIMARY SCHOOL
109 Cashew Road, Singapore 679676
Tel: 67691912 Fax: 67637462
<http://www.bukitpanjangpri.moe.edu.sg/>

Future Leaders, Concerned Citizens

From the Principal's Desk...

IN TOUCH 02/2016

Punctuality

Being punctual is a mark of respect and self-discipline. It is of paramount importance that students learn the value of time and take responsibility for their time management. By attending school on time, they will be able to start the day right and set the tone for learning. All students are expected to be punctual for school and school-organised programmes/activities at all times. We hope you can work with us in instilling the importance of punctuality by ensuring that your child reports to school on time. Some of the strategies that you may find useful include:

- Setting a regular bed time routine so that your child/ward receives plenty of rest and does not struggle to get out of bed in the morning.
- Packing school bags and getting the school attire ready the night before
- Making time for breakfast before leaving for school

Maintaining an acceptable weight schoolbag

By the end of the first week, the teachers would have collected most of your child's books to be kept in the classroom. Certain textbooks will remain with him/her for ease of reference and revision.

Now is also a good time to check if your child's schoolbag is of an acceptable weight. Here are some tips to aid you:

1. The weight of the child's bag should not be more than 15% of his/her weight;
2. If the bag is heavy for you, it is too heavy for the child;
3. Check the bag periodically to ensure that your child brings only what is necessary.

You may wish to surf the following links for more information on children's schoolbags:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=66AqpaG9dqw>

<http://www.onsponge.com/articles/education/107-schooling/277-is-your-child-weighed-down.html>

Orientation Package

To help the Primary 1 students adjust to primary school, the school has developed an orientation package that covers topics like sharing about oneself, making friends, and identifying the different parts and people in the school, to name a few. This is one opportunity for our Primary 1 students to bond with the teachers and the school. The students will be returning this package home by the beginning of February 2016.

Total Defence Day 2016

Total Defence (TD) Day is commemorated each year on Monday 15 February 2016. It marks the British surrender of Singapore to the Japanese during World War 2. This annual event reminds us that the task of building and defending a nation is not easy, and that we must continue to work together to preserve our security, stability and prosperity.

This year, the theme for Total Defence Day (TDD) is *Together We Keep Singapore Strong*. TD 2016 aims to strengthen our resilience as a nation by :



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1. reaffirming our shared attitudes, values and instincts as a nation; borne out of our collective will to continue keeping Singapore safe, secure and special,
2. celebrating our common identity as Singaporeans; rooted in a strong sense of self, and committed to building a cohesive society ready to face the future together.

These will strengthen every Singaporean's pride and confidence in Singapore at the start of the next 50 years, and the belief that everyone can play a part in different aspects of our defence.

We are pleased to inform you that we have put forth a number of activities to engage our students in a fun and meaningful way. The programmes are listed below.

Total Defence Day Programme outline on 15 Feb 2016
Classroom teaching on 'What is meant by Total Defence?'
Fire evacuation exercise
Sales of sweet potato porridge** to all students during recess (small portion – 50 cents, big portion – 1dollar)
Total Defence assembly programme
AsknLearn post-assembly Quiz

***Sweet potato porridge will only be served during recess. Our canteen vendor will resume original menu from 11.30am to 2.00pm. If your child is suffering from food allergies, you may want to let him pack food to school.*

We would like to bring your attention to two of our activities:

Sale of sweet potato porridge: The sale of sweet potato porridge during recess will give our students some experience and insight of how lives were back then during the World War 2 era. The improvised staple diet is a far cry from what we have now. We hope that through this activity, our students can better appreciate the peace that we now enjoy.

Fire safety evacuation exercise: We will be conducting a fire evacuation exercise in Semester 1. It is an annual event to maintain our students' preparedness and readiness level at all times.

Tuition Programme conducted by Self Help groups

Currently, the following self-help groups conduct their tuition programme at our school premise. We would like to encourage students who meet the eligibility criteria to enrol into these programmes.

(A)Mendaki- Collaborative Tuition Programme (CTP)

The CTP was launched in 2002 to allow students to participate in tuition programmes offered by other self-help groups, optimising the use of community resources and providing more convenience to students who require tuition for subjects that they are weak in. Details are as follows:



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Eligibility Criteria

1. Singaporean and Singapore Permanent Residents (All races);
 2. One who obtained between 35 and 65 marks for each tuition subject for SA2 2015;
 3. One who is studying in a full-time local government or government-aided schools and *madrasahs*
- A. For Chinese students, gross monthly total household income must be of \$3300 and below, or gross monthly household's per capita income of \$900 and below.
- B. For Eurasian students, gross monthly total household income must be less than \$3000, or gross monthly household's per capita income less than \$800.

Packages

- P1 to P3 students can choose to take one or two subjects.
(1) Mathematics (2) English
- P4 to P6 students can choose to take one, two or three subjects:
(1) Mathematics (2) English (3) Science

Fees

- Registration fee \$10 (non refundable)
- Book fee \$15
- P1 to P3 \$8 per subject per month (9 months)
- P4 to P6 \$12 per subject per month (9 months)

Class information

- Lessons will be conducted on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 7pm to 9pm. It will be held at our school premises.

Registration Procedure

- Registration can be done either via online or through hardcopy submission. Please approach the General Office if you require assistance in registering your child for this programme.

(B) Sinda-Project Teach Programme

Project Teach is a school-based tutorial programme that aims to improve the academic performance of Indian students through intensive small group tuition. Project Teach is targeted at Singaporean/Permanent Resident students who are currently scoring a B grade or below.

Key features include:

- Programme Structure customised to school's needs
 - Jan to Oct English/Math/Science programme
 - Jan to Oct Math or Science programme
 - 12 weeks exam preparatory Math or Science Programme
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Fee Structure for SC / PR Indian students

*Updated as of Dec 2015

Level	Subject Offered	Monthly Fees (Cash / GIRO)	Resource Material Fees (Cash)
Pri 1 – Pri 2	English Mathematics	\$10 (per subject per month)	\$5 (one-time payment per subject)
Pri 3 – Pri 6 (Including Foundation Students)	English Mathematics Science		

***Note**

1. Fees will be collected for Feb to Oct 2016 except for Jan and June 2016.
2. Fees will be collected on a semestral basis (Cash/Giro) i.e. February to May and July to October.
3. Students who opt for GIRO will pay the first semester in cash and second semester through GIRO.
4. If student is an Indian foreigner but either parent is SC/PR, the student qualifies for the above fee structure.

Registration Procedure

For parents who are interested to enrol their child into this programme, please approach the general office for assistance.

Observing traffic safety by motorists

For the safety of our staff and students, we seek your cooperation to to be cognisant of the traffic light when you are making a left turn from our school gate. Please note that failure to conform to traffic light signals is an offence under the Road Traffic Rules. There have been a number of near misses with cars beating the red light in their rush to exit the school.

Gate C – Opening hours

The opening hours for Gate C are:

- 7 am to 7.30 am
- 1.15 pm to 1.45 pm

Due to security reasons, manpower constraints and not many students leaving the school premises from Gate C, we will keep the gate locked outside the opening hours. Students who are going out from Gate C may approach the general office staff to open the gate for them in the event that it rains.

To inform the General Office when your child is absent from school

The school is tracking absentees daily to ensure that students do not miss out on their learning. In order for the school to monitor the absenteeism rate, we seek your cooperation to inform the general office the reason for your child's absence at the soonest possible time. Please do so via email to bpps@moe.edu.sg or call the office at tel. no. 67691912. The office staff will relate your message to the form teachers on your behalf. Please follow up with a letter or a medical certificate depending on the reason for your child's absence to the Form Teacher upon your child's return.



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Partners in Education

The education of a child is the joint responsibility of both parents and teachers. To allow you to have a better understanding of the school curriculum, and to meet up with your child's form, co-form and subject teachers, we organised the following in January;

- P1 Curriculum Sharing for Parents
- P3 PERI HA Sharing for Parents
- P4 PERI HA Sharing for Parents
- P6 Principal's talk on PSLE matters

The sessions were well-received and we would like to thank you for your attendance and feedback. We have uploaded the presentation slides on our school website under partners' corner, parents as partners (<http://www.bukitpanjangpri.moe.edu.sg/cos/o.x?c=/wbn/pagetree&func=view&rid=1096346>).

You may also access the school website to complete the online feedback form for the sharing which you have attended. Your feedback will help us improve on future sharing.

Sharing

Backbone and Bounce: Building Resilience by Patty Wipfler

What can parents do to help their children bounce back under adversity, with a basic sense of confidence in themselves in spite of difficult circumstances? And when a parent has a child who collapses when things are difficult, what can be done to build his resilience?

In a sense, these are perhaps the key questions of parenting. During any ten-year period, I would venture to guess that in the lives of most families, at least one genuine crisis will develop, or smaller ongoing difficulties will gather and create real trouble. And though we work hard to prevent it, our children will be hurt by these crises. They will need a reservoir of confidence in themselves to come through well.

So how do we build resilience? Studies have shown that if just one person in a child's life is consistently supportive, a child is much more likely to overcome difficult circumstances. Just one person who is enthusiastic about the child. Just one person who lights up when the child walks into the room.

Feeling close to one dependable adult is at the heart of resilience for children

We parents love our children deeply, but sometimes our communication with them gets muddled. Disapproval, impatience, or indifference clouds our interactions with our children when we're overworked. We have to play many roles with them: sleep monitor, cleanliness checker, homework prodder, educational guide, the list goes on! And as we juggle those roles, our ability to feel our hearts lift when they walk in the room can wilt.

Dedicate time and enthusiasm

Special Time is a simple way to remind our children that we love them. It works especially well when there are persistent irritants in our relationship with them, because it disciplines us, the parents, to be pleased with them for a specific period of time. I call Special Time a "listening tool" because it's a reliable tool for putting us parents in the listening, accepting, and enthusiastic role, so that our children can tell that we're behind them.



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To do Special Time, you set aside a period of time, short or long, whatever you can carve from your day or week. You say, "Hey, tomorrow I'm going to have a half hour after dinner, and we can do whatever you want to do! Think about it, and we'll make it a date!" (If you have older children, you need to set conditions around whether or not you have transportation to go somewhere, whether or not you will spend money, and how much.) Then, enthusiastically go with whatever activity your child chooses.

Jumping on beds, building a fort in the living room, making pancakes, going outside and playing catch, lighting a whole box of matches one by one in the back yard. Whatever they've chosen, you love them, make lots of eye contact, touch them affectionately, and energetically throw yourself into the play. Set a timer, and don't let anything short of an earthquake interrupt your focus on your child. When the timer goes off, let your child know you loved being with him, and let him know when the next Special Time will be. What your child chooses will help you see what he loves and what he wants. This is very important communication for you to receive. When your child can show you what he loves, and you pay warm attention, he feels closer to you. That closeness is the heart of resilience. When a child's parents aren't able to play a good role, any other caring adult willing to be "crazy about" the child, and to give Special Time in some form, can build resilience in that child.

Listen to the feelings that emerge

Often, Special Time encourages a child to try to express feelings that they need to offload. And this brings us to the second factor I think is crucial in building resilience in children. When children have someone willing to listen to their feelings all the way through, they can bounce back from disappointment. They don't have to carry festering upsets year after year. They express them, cry or tantrum their way through them, and see their world as shinier and more hopeful afterward. I like to call this Stay listening, because the parent has to make a conscious decision to stay with a child who is clearing away his upset feelings.

Here's one parent's story of how Special Time and Stay listening can work:

I could tell my seven-year-old daughter was going to "blow" anytime. She was upset at every little thing, elbowing her sister, accidentally tripping her, things like that. So I told her, "Tomorrow we're going to do Special Time, and you can play whatever you want to with me." She woke up at six a.m. and came in ready to do Special Time! So I got up, and we played this game over and over that she kept winning. She was delighted to win, and I made sure I lost. That was part of the deal.

At one point, my younger daughter came in and wanted my attention. I told her, "This is Zetta's time, and I'm playing with her. You can go with your Daddy." She didn't want to go, so getting her situated with her Dad took some time. When I came back, I saw Zetta huddled behind the sofa, furiously writing. I asked her, "What are you writing?" She showed me. It said "I hate my sister. She's ugly. I hate curly hair. I don't want her around." I said, "Good, I'm glad you're writing all this down. Do you hate her?" (Trying to give her permission to have these feelings.)

She told me, "I don't want a sister! I want to give her away. I wish we had never had her!" She went on for a while about how much she didn't like her sister. Then she said, "Would you sit and watch a video with me all the way through?" I never sit with them while they're watching their videos. So I said I would.

She then went into the other room, put the video on, and went and got her sister. She put her sister on the bed, curled up with her, and put her arms around her. Then she said, "Mom, come and sit here. I think you should be right between us, so Annie gets to sit next to you, too." She moved Annie over, and made a place for me. We sat and cuddled and watched the video together, and she was lovely with her sister the rest of the day.



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Children build resilience when someone cares enough to listen to their upsets all the way through, without arguing, trying to be logical, or condemning them for how they feel. The feelings are like a storm passing through—if the lightning can strike and the thunder can roll, the energy of the storm dissipates. If no one listens, the bleak thoughts and bad feelings are stored up, but they become hard to manage and are ready to pop at every little excuse. With regular chances to be heard, respected, and loved through an emotional storm, children come to depend on themselves and their ability to get through tough times, unfair times, frustrating times, and lonely times.

Stay listening gives a child a sense that although you don't have the same feelings as they do, you can love them just the same, and stay with them until the feelings change for the better. With listening, the feelings do lift. With listening, problem solving will follow a good, cleansing emotional storm. And your child, if not resilient already, will become so as you stay listen through necessary upsets that help him clear the feelings he trips over every day as he tries to learn, love, and bounce back from adversity.

We parents need to build support

Of course, to make these kinds of generous initiatives toward your child, you need to build your resilience as a parent! Parenting is an emotional ultramarathon—there's so much to learn and so little help with the work. Setting up a Listening Partnership, so you can take turns being listened to and returning the favour for another parent who's trying hard, is an excellent way to build your own resilience. You need some goodhearted person, who'll keep their advice and judgments on a short leash, while you talk about how parenting is going for you. Special Time and Stay listening are much easier to do when you've had permission to tell someone your hopes and disappointments. These Listening Partnerships make a surprising difference in the feel of life as a parent! And they give us a fighting chance to have fun with our children, an important part of building their bounce and their backbone.

Thank you.

Bucktha Seelan
Principal

Put your heart, mind, and soul into even your smallest acts. This is the secret of success. ~Swami Sivananda