



# PRESS RELEASE

Ministry of Education  
SINGAPORE

---

**EMBARGOED TILL 12 MAY 2011, 6.00PM**

## **178 SCHOOLS OFFERING NICHES OF EXCELLENCE TO ENRICH STUDENTS' EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE**

1. Fourteen primary schools and six secondary schools have been awarded the Programme for School-Based Excellence and Niche Programme status respectively this year. Out of these 20 schools, five primary schools and two secondary schools are recognised for their second niche area of excellence. This brings the total number of schools with niches of excellence to 178<sup>1</sup>, achieving MOE's target for half of our schools to develop areas of excellence by 2012.

2. The niche programmes, introduced in 2005, help schools to develop their strengths and unique areas. The greater diversity of school offerings provide students with more opportunities to grow in different areas of excellence. Schools also leverage on their niche programmes to imbue their students with important values and soft skills such as teamwork, resilience, creativity, respect, responsibility and a sense of purpose.

3. Said Mr Wong Siew Hoong, Director of Schools, "Developing niches of excellence in our education landscape is an important aspect of our strategy to ensure that every talent can be identified, nurtured and developed. Our students have different abilities, aptitudes and interests. A more diverse landscape with many different schools, each having their own strengths and special niches, will enrich the educational experience of our children."

4. Taking into account this year's award recipients, there are now 76 primary Programme for School-Based Excellence schools, and 44 secondary schools that are Niche Programme schools. These schools receive additional funding support to further raise the quality and reach of their school-based programmes in different niche areas. An initial developmental grant of up to \$150,000 over 3 years will be provided for the schools to build up one to two niches. A recurrent grant of up to \$50,000 per niche per year will also be given for schools to sustain and maintain their niches after the first 3 years.

---

<sup>1</sup> The 178 schools include Specialised Independent Schools, Specialised Schools, Independent Schools, Autonomous Schools and Junior Colleges (58 schools in total).

## PROGRAMME FOR SCHOOL-BASED EXCELLENCE FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS 2011

5. The Programme for School-Based Excellence scheme helps to develop strong primary schools with distinctive characters. This creates more opportunities for our students to develop different areas of excellence.

6. Students will have a wider range of options when choosing primary schools because schools will be distinguished according to specific areas of excellence. Students with particular strengths or interests will therefore be able to make more informed choices about their own education together with their parents. The school will also benefit from developing a strong identity and school culture so that students can build a sense of camaraderie and affinity with the school.

7. Applications for the award were evaluated based on the strength of the niche, sustainability, the educational value of the programme, the reach of the programme in the school, and the involvement of stakeholders in the programme.

8. The 14 primary schools that have been awarded the Programme for School-Based Excellence status in 2011 are:

S/N	SCHOOL	NICHE
1.	Ahmad Ibrahim Primary School	Character & Citizenship Education
2.	Kong Hwa School	Table Tennis
3.	Methodist Girls' School (Primary)	Language & Communication
4.	Nan Chiau Primary School*	Basketball
5.	Nanyang Primary School*	Chinese & International Dance
6.	Qifa Primary School	Volleyball
7.	Radin Mas Primary School	Information & Communication Technology
8.	St. Margaret's Primary School*	Dance
9.	Telok Kurau Primary School*	Basketball
10.	Temasek Primary School	Track & Field
11.	Wellington Primary School	Dance
12.	Woodlands Primary School	Choir
13.	Yu Neng Primary School*	Information & Communication Technology
14.	Yuhua Primary School	Brass Band

\* This is the school's second niche area of excellence.

## NICHE PROGRAMME SCHOOLS FOR 2011

9. The Niche Programme supports mainstream secondary schools with good talent development programmes and proven track records of achievements in their declared niches. These schools can admit up to 5% of their Secondary One intake on a discretionary basis through the Direct School Admissions exercise. This enables a more diverse range of student achievement and talents to be recognised.

10. Applications for the award were evaluated based on the strength of the niche, sustainability, the educational value and the reach of the programme.

11. The six secondary schools that have been awarded the Niche Programme status in 2011 are:

S/N	SCHOOL	NICHE
1.	Fuhua Secondary School*	Uniformed Groups
2.	Hai Sing Catholic School	Robotics
3.	Orchid Park Secondary School	Visual Arts
4.	Outram Secondary School*	Business Enterprise
5.	Ping Yi Secondary School	Design Education
6.	Serangoon Garden Secondary School	Uniformed Group

\* This is the school's second niche area of excellence.

---

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**

National Archives of Singapore