



PRESS RELEASE

Ministry of Education
SINGAPORE

31 August 2010

EMBARGOED UNTIL 1 SEP 2010, 6PM

ENHANCING SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT HOLISTIC EDUCATION

1. To support holistic education and the use of engaging teaching methods in schools, MOE will provide all primary schools with additional facilities. MOE will also accelerate the roll-out of the Indoor Sports Halls (ISH) and scale up the implementation of the synthetic turf programme in schools. Minister for Education and Second Minister for Defence, Dr Ng Eng Hen, who announced these today, explained that these facilities are critical in enabling schools to deliver quality programmes to their students.

New Design Norms for Primary Schools

2. **MOE will provide all primary schools with additional facilities that facilitate engaged learning in academic and non-academic areas.** For academic programmes which support co-operative, independent and differentiated learning, facilities such as the Redesigned Classroom, Subject Based Banding Room and Learning Support Rooms will be provided.

3. The classroom lies at the heart of the formal curriculum in schools. It is the key space where collaborative learning and independent learning takes place. Classrooms will be redesigned and equipped with a rich array of learning resources and different learning centres to support a range of learning approaches.

4. Additional rooms will be provided to cater to more customised teaching for students with different needs. These include a Subject Based Banding (SBB) Room, to meet the needs of groups of students offering different subject combinations under SBB, and Learning Support Rooms, to help build pupils' foundational literacy and numeracy skills. New outdoor learning spaces will also allow for hands-on experiences which are crucial in enabling the younger primary students to better understand concepts through self-discovery and physical activity.

5. For non-academic programmes which develop life skills, promote socio-emotional development and nurture confidence, facilities such as the Band Room, Dance Studio, Performing Arts Studio, outdoor running track and the Student Care

Centre will be provided. These new facilities will encourage greater interaction and self-discovery, and facilitate experiential and hands-on learning. They will also support the implementation of the Programme for Active Learning (PAL)¹, where schools will conduct modules in Sports and Outdoor Education, and Performing and Visual Arts. Please see **Annex A** for further details on the facilities.

6. Presently, there are six schools which are piloting the use of redesigned classrooms and performing arts facilities. MOE will refine the designs based on their feedback before extending the facilities to the other primary schools.

7. The implementation of the enhanced facilities will be phased in as far as possible with the existing infrastructural programmes such as the provision of ISH to schools in order to minimise disruptions to the schools. MOE targets to complete the rollout to all primary schools by 2016.

Accelerated Roll-out of Indoor Sports Halls

8. The ISH is an all-weather sports hall that can accommodate a basketball court superimposed with four badminton courts, a volleyball court and a netball court. Currently, 97 schools have already been provided with the ISH and another 13 ISHs are expected to be completed by the end of this year. **MOE will accelerate the roll-out of ISHs and target to complete the roll-out to the remaining schools over the next 6 to 7 years.**

9. The ISH provides schools with greater flexibility to schedule Physical Education (PE) lessons. With an ISH, schools can conduct PE or co-curricular programmes throughout the day regardless of the weather. Students will benefit from more opportunities to take part in mass sports activities, and/or train in various competitive sports.

10. The community living near the schools will also benefit from the ISHs, which will be open for use by the public and the community, under a scheme operated in collaboration with the Singapore Sports Council.

Scaling Up Synthetic Turf Programme

11. In 2006, MOE announced the implementation of synthetic turf fields for schools with high field usage. To date, 37 schools have already been provided with synthetic turf fields. These schools have given positive feedback that synthetic turf fields are superior to natural turf fields in terms of performance, availability and maintainability. For example, the synthetic turf fields dry faster than natural turf fields after rain. Students have more opportunities to make use of the field for sports and

¹ PAL, announced in April 2009, is one of the recommendations of the Primary Education Review and Implementation (PERI) Committee to enhance the quality of primary education. PAL aims to develop character and useful life-skills by providing Primary 1 and 2 pupils with early exposure to modular activities in Sports and Outdoor Education, and Performing and Visual Arts.

games, which are integral to the holistic and well-rounded education that our schools provide. The life-cycle cost of synthetic turf is also now more competitive than natural turf.

12. Given the positive feedback from the pilot schools and the cost effectiveness of synthetic turf fields, **MOE plans to offer synthetic turf fields to all schools that need it. The roll-out will be in phases with the installation of synthetic turf fields scheduled to start in another 30 schools later this year.**

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Collaborative and Independent Learning

Redesigned Classroom

- Classrooms will be redesigned as a 'home base' and equipped with a rich array of learning resources and different learning centres to support a range of learning approaches. Examples of learning centres include a reading centre where books are stored to encourage reading and a listening post where PCs, CD players and headsets are stored for students to practise their listening skills. Examples of learning resources include reference materials and learning tools for the different subjects.

Differentiated Teaching Approaches

Subject Based Banding Room, Learning Support Programme Room, Learning and Behavioural Support Intervention Room

- These facilities will enable schools to divide classes into smaller groups to ensure a more targeted teaching approach for each group. Additionally, the Learning and Behavioural Support Intervention Room provides a dedicated space for students with special educational needs (for example, Autism and Dyslexia) who are enrolled in mainstream schools as they require a familiar environment in which to work.

Programme for Active Learning for Life Skills and Character Development

Band Room, Dance Studio, Performing Arts Studio in Media Resource Library, Indoor Sports Hall, PAL Room, Outdoor Running Track

- MOE will resource primary schools with a range of performing arts and sports facilities to facilitate the delivery of PAL. In the case of the Media Resource Library, flexible furniture and equipment will be utilised such that these can be moved aside when it needs to function as a Performing Arts Studio.

Outdoor Experiential Learning

Outdoor Lab, Eco-pond, Herb garden, etc

- The provision of outdoor learning spaces will give students more authentic, in-depth and meaningful learning experiences. For example, the setting up of different outdoor stations such as a pulley for transporting sand to teach subjects such as Maths and Physics can infuse an element of play while encouraging students to become self-directed learners.

'Home in a School' Experience for Socio-Emotional Development

Student Care Centre, Outdoor Fitness Playground

- Students' socio-emotional development is important, and the provision of facilities will provide a 'home-like' environment through Student Care Centres. These will help foster quality relationships through informal interactions among students and also provide them with greater support. The Outdoor Playground will be designed as a fitness themed playground where students can interact freely and develop interpersonal skills while exercising a range of different muscle groups.