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# Foreword

Parents and educators at kindergartens and primary schools are concerned about how to facilitate children's interface between kindergarten and primary education. Some scholars suggest that such interface not only involves changes in "venue" and "role", but the facilitating measures should also focus on the continuity of children's learning experiences.

In the early days of their primary school life, children may feel excited yet anxious about the new environment, role and learning mode that they are not familiar with. It is imperative that schools and parents work together to help children find the joy and confidence in adapting to the new learning mode and environment, and take care of their physical and psychological needs. With such support, children will then become more prepared for challenges, and more capable of building the foundation for all-round development.

In view of the latest developments in kindergarten education curriculum and social trends, the Curriculum Development Institute has updated this booklet to advise stakeholders of the proper ways to help children proceed to another phase of learning through gradual adaptation and integration in light of their growth and development, learning needs, interests and abilities.



Why is it necessary to facilitate the interface between kindergarten and primary education?

Smooth progression from kindergartens to primary schools is not just about the preparedness for knowledge acquisition. What matters more is sustaining children's interests in learning, curiosity for knowledge, and an active attitude and good habits for learning, as well as developing the courage to overcome difficulties. Such qualities in learning facilitate children to cope with challenges that come with primary schooling.



























#### Three Questions about Interface between Kindergarten and Primary Education





# 1. What are the roles of kindergartens and primary schools?

The kindergarten education curriculum places emphasis on children's development of self-confidence, an interest in learning, inquisitiveness, positive values and attitudes, good living habits and healthy lifestyles, which are all contributing factors to a foundation for lifelong learning. Kindergarten teachers should neither advance nor incorporate the contents of the primary school curriculum into their teaching lest children's interests and motivation in learning and self-confidence be damaged.

With the focus on children's developmental needs, primary schools should provide Primary One students with patient guidance to familiarise them with the new environment and learning requirements, and sustain their confidence and interests in learning. Primary school teachers may introduce tasks appropriate to children's learning pace into the primary school curriculum, so as to enable their gradual adaptation to primary schooling



#### Three Questions about Interface between Kindergarten and Primary Education



# 2. How long is the settling-in period?

Every child develops at a varied pace and the duration of settling-in varies from child to child. Both kindergartens and primary schools are expected to, in light of the diversity and varying needs of children, make appropriate measures and support available to ensure smooth interface between kindergarten and primary education.



# 3. Who can be of help?

Close collaboration and quadripartite efforts of kindergartens, primary schools, families and communities are needed to facilitate children's smooth interface between kindergarten and primary education. Parents are advised to keep a closer watch on the needs and emotional changes of their children and give them encouragement and support.



Close communication and collaboration between kindergartens and primary schools are indispensable for enabling children's smooth progression to Primary One. The concept of "school readiness" was first introduced by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in the 1990s, stressing the importance of readiness of parents, schools and children to smooth interface between kindergarten and primary education.

# Learning by doing; Learning through play







- Children are curious and interested in exploration. They learn through their life experiences, sensory stimulation and interesting activities.
- Children's learning should align with their development, so they are not able to acquire knowledge and skills that are way beyond their abilities. They also build on their prior experiences to construct knowledge.
- A safe, comfortable, enjoyable and challenging environment is conducive to children's learning.



# Learning by doing; Learning through play



- · Children love to play.- Learning through play, being a feature of children's learning, enables children to:
- \* engage in active and effective learning on their own initiative in a relaxing and pleasurable settina:
- \* use language, mathematics, senses and prior experiences in play, and develop creativity, problem-solving skills and versatility;
- \* use their gross and fine motor skills and develop eye-hand coordination ability; and
- \* express emotions, build self-confidence, and develop social skills.
- In free play activities, children could select tools, materials, ways to play and playmates according to their preferences, abilities and life experiences. In this way, play can be of more fun, and children can fully express their feelings and explore things around.

# Kindergarten Education Curriculum



The curriculum at the kindergarten level is not subject-based. Instead, an integrated approach is adopted to connect the contents across six learning areas and integrate "learning" with "development", so as to achieve the objectives of promoting children's development and learning.



Through learning and experiences across different areas, children are able to construct knowledge and concepts relevant to everyday life, acquire basic skills, and develop positive values and attitudes, thereby achieving a balanced development in the five domains of ethics, intellect, physique, social skills and aesthetics.

# Kindergarten Education Curriculum **Values and Attitudes** Behavioural tendencies, such as: friendliness compliance with rules courtesy responsibility perseverance honesty empathy respect acceptance Knowledge Specific to Learning Areas **Basic Skills** Understanding of the world around us Children acquire knowledge through memorisation Basic skills for learning and life, such as or comprehension of facts and information. self-management communication • Emphasis is put on children's real-life experiences, sociability creativity interests and comprehension abilities.

# Learning environment

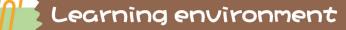
## Kindergarten





# **Suggested measures: induction activities**

- Arrangements could be made for kindergarteners to visit primary schools or partake in induction activities.
- · Kindergartens may introduce students to the campus environment and learning modes of primary schools by using stories, photos, videos, simulation games, etc.



# **Primary School**







Primary One students need to accustom themselves to the new school environment with larger space and a wider range of facilities.

### **Suggested measures: induction activities**

- · A variety of orientation activities, such as games and experiential programmes may be organised so that newly-admitted Primary One students and their parents could learn more about the school environment, teachers, routines, etc., and a student-staff bond could initially be formed.
- Schools may arrange senior students to assist newly-admitted Primary One students.

# Curriculum and pedagogy

#### Kindergarten





Instead of offering lessons by subject, kindergartens design integrated learning activities under chosen themes for children to learn through play.

## Suggested measures: professional exchange among teachers

· Professional exchange activities, such as mutual visits and lesson observation, may be arranged for kindergarten and primary school teachers, so that they could learn more about one another's curriculum and teaching modes.

# Suggested measures: curriculum and pedagogical arrangements

- · Interesting and real-life exploratory activities could be conducted to enhance children's creativity and problem-solving skills, and arouse their curiosity and learning interests.
- · Diversified reading activities could be organised to foster children's reading interest and habit.
- · Kindergartens are advised to prudently use information technology as a teaching aid only, and draw parents' attention to the Department of Health's advice that children aged between two and six should be discouraged from using electronic screen devices for long durations, so as to minimise the potential health risk, such as damage to children's eyesight.



# Curriculum and pedagogy

# **Primary School**

	Les	son Timet	able	
MON (-)	TUE (二)	WED (≡)	THU (四)	FRI (五)
VA	CHI	PE	CHI	Personal Growth
MATH	CHI	ENG	GS	Cross- curricular Activities
MATH	COMPUTER	ENG	GS	





Apart from adopting the subject-based mode, the primary school curriculum also provides cross-curricular learning activities. Compared to kindergartens, it covers learning contents of greater breadth and depth. Primary One students are expected to stay focused in a longer duration and become more able to think systematically, read text with more words and expand their vocabulary.

# Suggested measures: curriculum and pedagogical arrangements

- To cater for the diverse learning needs and abilities of Primary One students, schools may make flexible arrangements in relation to teaching contents and schedules, and conduct cross-curricular. reading or exploratory activities on a modular or thematic basis, with the aim of sustaining students' curiosity about learning.
- Different sorts of learning activities, such as games, role-play, group-based collaboration and hands-on tasks, could be organised to sustain students' interests and motivation in learning.
- Relaxing learning activities could be offered in the afternoon session of whole-day school to develop students' potential.
- Schools may properly adjust the daily homework load, and offer tutorial lessons as far as practicable to assist Primary One students with their homework. Besides, schools should be discouraged from giving Primary One students excessive copying exercises and being too harsh on their handwriting.

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res to Facilitate Smooth Interface be Kindergarten and Primary Education

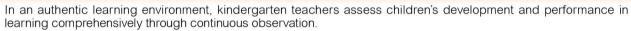
# Learning assessment

# Kindergarten



# **Primary School**





In primary schools, apart from diversified formative assessment that comprises use of questions, observation and homework, there is also summative assessment in the form of written tests, examinations, etc. Primary One students need to familiarise themselves with the assessment requirements and answering modes of each subject.

While parents may have different expectations for children who have proceeded to the primary level, parents should acknowledge children having their needs to adapt to the academic requirements according to their own pace.

# Suggested measures

### Kindergarten

 To facilitate parents to choose a suitable primary school for their children, kindergartens should observe, document and analyse children's learning situation and progress on a continuous basis, and communicate to parents their children's learning characteristics and development status in a timely manner.

## Suggested measures

## **Primary School**

- During the early months of the first school term, the number of written assessments such as dictations, tests and examinations for Primary One students should be kept to the possible minimum, and a wide diversity of assessment modes including verbal presentation, etc. should be adopted to showcase students' learning outcomes. Feedback can be provided to promote assessment for learning.
- Schools may refer to the learning portfolios of kindergarten graduates in order to gain a better understanding of the students' abilities to cater for learner diversity.

# Social skills

# Kindergarten



Kindergarten





Primary One students usually come from different kindergartens. They need to make new friends, meet new teachers, find their place among peers and seek others' acceptance in order to establish a positive self-image.

## **Suggested measures**

 Kindergartens may organise collaborative activities to foster children's social development, and provide opportunities for them to learn the right words for introducing themselves and speaking to teachers and peers, so that children will feel more confident about making friends with new schoolmates.

# Suggested measures

# **Primary School**

- Schools may create a warm and interesting classroom environment and atmosphere, and use games and other means to enable students to get acquainted with their class and subject teachers, etc., and hence develop a greater sense of security and belonging.
- Schools may provide students with more opportunities to interact and collaborate with teachers and peers by organising various activities.

# Emotions



## Kindergarten

## **Suggested measures**

- Kindergartens may express care and support to children.
- Kindergartens may encourage children to brave the new environment and share with children authentic examples, so as to ease children's stress and anxiety about proceeding to Primary One.
- Kindergartens are expected to take heed of parents' views and provide parents and students with appropriate support.

# Primary School

### **Suggested measures**

- Schools should keep in view the emotional status of newly-admitted students and give them a listening ear, so as to heighten their sense of belonging.
- An emotional support network may be set up among peers to encourage newly-admitted students to seek help when necessary.
- While it is advisable to enhance students' sense of accomplishment and self-confidence by acknowledging and commending their efforts, schools need to identify areas for development and offer guidance and support accordingly.

# Home-school collaboration



## Kindergarten

# Suggested measures

- Parents' meetings may be arranged, with experts, primary school teachers, alumni or their parents elucidating the situation in primary schools, as well as the developmental changes and learning needs of children. Such sharing is more useful than simply recommending a particular school.
- Kindergartens may encourage parents to visit primary schools or partake in induction activities with their children
- Kindergartens may explain to parents the importance of holding reasonable expectations for their children, and the key to selecting a suitable primary school according to their children's learning style, interests and abilities.

# Primary School

# **Suggested measures**

- A collaborative group may be set up under Parent-Teacher Association to provide parents with pointers on how to support the learning of Primary One students, maintain regular communication with parents, and engage parents in lesson observations, school activities, voluntary service, etc. These endeavours enable parents to know better how well their children are learning and adapting to school life, and thus reasonably adjust their demands and expectations for their children.
- Professionals may be invited to enlighten parents about children's psychological and physical development and offer suggestions on safeguarding their physical and mental well-being.

# Advice for

# Advice for Teachers and Parents



### For kindergarten teachers:

Kindergarten education aims at helping children develop self-confidence, an interest in learning and inquisitiveness. Teachers should not advance the primary school curriculum to kindergarten education or require students to learn things covered by the primary school curriculum. For example, kindergarteners should not be asked to write complicated Chinese characters with many strokes or do calculation exercises that involve complicated steps. Such excessive boosting only undermines children's interests and motivation in learning.



Teachers have to grasp the baseline and starting point of each student and adhere to the principle of "student-orientedness". They should respect and appreciate the learning diversity among Primary One students and design a curriculum appropriate to students' learning and developmental pace, thereby tailoring learning and teaching strategies to personal needs.



# Advice for Teachers and Parents



### For parents:

In everyday life, parents may let their children take care of themselves and share some of the household chores for the sake of developing their self-care abilities little by little. To choose a suitable school for children, parents need to have a better understanding of their children's learning interests, abilities and attributes. Besides, parents have to maintain close communication with schools so that they could know what challenges their children are facing, how well they are settling in, and what emotional changes they may be experiencing. Parents and schools should joint hands to make concerted efforts in this regard. Parents may visit the website of Smart Parent Net (https://www.parent.edu.hk) for more information.









# Conclusion

# Smooth Transition From Kindergarten To Primary School

To facilitate smooth interface between kindergarten and primary education, stakeholders need to **understand** children's developmental pace, **respect** learner diversity, and implement a broad spectrum of measures that cover learning environment, curriculum and pedagogy, learning assessment, social skills, emotions, home-school collaboration, etc. Kindergarten teachers' positive **encouragement**, primary school teachers' **patient** guidance, and parents' **loving** support are all instrumental in helping children adapt to primary school life happily, confidently and successfully.









# Reference Materials and Useful Websites:



# Reference Materials and Useful Websites:

Kindergarten Education Curriculum Guide (2017)



**Basic Education** Curriculum Guide -To Sustain, Deepen and Focus on Learning to Learn (Primary 1 – 6) (2014)



Curriculum Resources Reference Materials



Seminars and Workshops







Does your 0-5 years old children need electronic screen products? (2019)



Interface between Kindergartens and **Primary Schools:** Message from Primary School Principals







Reference Materials and Useful Websites

# Reference Materials and Useful Websites:

"Joyful and Balanced Development for Young Children Education" Short Film Series: Interface between Kindergarten and Primary One



Knowing More About Children's Learning — Parents' Pamphlet



**Smart Parent Net** 









