



# UNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

21 Choa Chu Kang Crescent  
Singapore 688268  
Tel: 67676750 Fax: 67676751  
Email: [unity\\_ps@moe.edu.sg](mailto:unity_ps@moe.edu.sg)  
Website: [www.unitypri.moe.edu.sg](http://www.unitypri.moe.edu.sg)

---

30 October 2023

Dear Parents

## **Annual Survey Findings & Feedback 2023**

Thank you for participating in our Annual Survey 2023. Your feedback are important to us for school improvement.

About 66% of parents have responded and given favourable feedback. We are especially proud and heartened by your complimentary comments about the school and staff. We append **some verbatim across 6 levels** for your perusal.

### Lower Primary

- Satisfied how the teachers, the school and the system always provide open and easy communication with the students and the parents.
- Great school, as being P1 parent, it's new journey for us. Compared to other neighbouring schools, UPS is great place to have kids in this school. Lot of engagement with kids, parents and teachers. I'll surely recommend UPS to friends and relatives. Please keep it up! Thanks.
- Overall, all the staff is good, helpful and dedicated. My child is growing to be more independent and happier.
- Really great efforts by UPS teachers, they are proactive and very keen in children learning, behavioural skills improvement and many more things. Would strongly recommend UPS to my friends and relatives.
- I am very happy to see the "good transformation" in my daughter. Thanks to all teachers and staff of Unity primary school!

### Middle Primary

- The newly conceived Super Star Award seeks to affirm students who have demonstrated exemplary behaviours and can be an inspiration for others to emulate. In my opinion, this approach which is underpinned by a "positive reinforcement" rationale helps to promote a more positive and strengths-based learning environment. This is indeed commendable!
- I am heartened to observe more student-centric initiatives being implemented by UPS this year. The weekly recess play not only offers students with the opportunities to play and have fun in school but also a platform to socialize with peers from other classes, promoting mutual understanding and appreciation among peers, which is critical in our diverse society.
- I have also observed an increase in the number of event photos being posted on the website this year. I hope this can continue as it strengthens engagement with parents who otherwise have little insight of what really happens in school.
- Would like to suggest for the leadership framework (as espoused by Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner) and training programmes designed by teachers to be featured on the website. This will inspire confidence in current and prospective parents that UPS is committed to identify and groom student leaders. A feature on the Prefect EXCO, sharing personal anecdotes of these young leaders, can serve as powerful human stories for other students to emulate as well.
- The teachers and even AEDs in UPS are 4-stars based on my interactions with them. Responsive, helpful, supportive beyond what is expected.

### Upper Primary

- Very supportive with the phone call for teacher-parent meeting as sometime I can't apply leave to go to school. Pls keep this method for an option for working parents.
- I am thankful to the school, teachers, management and staff for providing all the support required for my children's educational needs.
- Keep up the good work and maintain your standards UPS!
- It is a good school with good and caring teachers.
- Teachers are very kind, polite and supportive.
- Thank you, UPS family, for all the good work!

The school appreciates your recognition, understanding and encouragement of our efforts to support the students and staff in attaining the desired educational goals. We also hear your concerns and suggestions and assure you that we review and continually improve where feasible.

School planning and operations take into consideration:

- National imperatives and policies
- National curriculum and desired student outcomes
- School direction and focus
- Distinctiveness of student and staff profile
- Benefits to and well-being of whole student population
- Resources like funds, manpower, physical facilities which impact feasibility, scalability and sustainability

The following serve to provide clarity on certain matters and address some issues raised:

#### **1. School-Home Communication**

- a. *Can parents have a platform to communicate directly with the teachers, e.g. through WhatsApp or phone chatgroups?*

School has various channels of communications, e.g. school generic email, teachers' email, school website, Letters to Parents, Parents Gateway (PG), Student Handbook and Parent-Teacher Meetings. Parents are encouraged to use any of these channels.

Communication applications like WhatsApp and iMessage are private and non-MOE platforms. MOE staff are to use authorised means for official communication.

The school respects the teachers' privacy particularly after-school hours and in view of staff well-being, it cannot impose on them to release their private contact number to stakeholders. For urgent matters, parents can call the General Office and leave a message for the teachers.

Teachers have many students under their charge, daily marking, lesson preparation, after-school lessons/activities, duties, meetings, training and so on to juggle. As teaching is demanding and schedules are dynamic during curriculum time, teachers will respond to messages after their classes or when it is convenient to. To ensure the well-being and work-life harmony of our teachers, **please contact them only during weekdays between 7.30 am and 6 pm.**

We seek your understanding to exercise consideration and patience to give the school or staff reasonable time for replies to emails or calls.

- b. School should use only one online app for all communication and homework related information. It becomes easier for parents to have all activities in one app.*

Developed by the Ministry of Education & GovTech, Parents Gateway (PG) is a one-stop portal that strengthens school-home partnership to support children in their education journey. Parents can get access to all school announcements and consent forms from this single app.

- c. Can the school provide us with the details about school activities and share pictures?*

Prior to the commencement of any level/school activities and in a timely manner, details and consent forms are sent out to the respective parents via PG. Parents can check PG for such notifications and consent forms. All letters sent out are uploaded on the school website so that they can be retrieved for easy reference anytime. Parents are advised to read these notification/letters carefully so as not to miss out pertinent or urgent information.

Parents can also access the website to get updates of completed departmental/school programmes/activities. These write-ups are accompanied with relevant photos of students in action.

- d. We appreciate more Parent-Teacher Meetings (PTM) and feedback about our children.*

As many parents are working and/or have busy schedules, the school has strategically structured Parent-Teacher Conference (PTC) thrice a year for purposeful School/Teacher and Parent engagement. Beyond these sessions, teachers and parents may connect with one another via the other official platforms such as phone, email, student handbook, etc. As good practice, teachers have been providing updates to parents at appropriate junctures. We encourage parents to do likewise and contact the teachers should you need to discuss or require assistance/information about your child.

- e. Would like to have PTM face to face.*

For the convenience of both working and non-working parents, the school conducts PTC via a hybrid model. Based on feedback, majority of the parents prefer online meetings and hence, by default, PTC will be online. Parents who prefer to meet the teachers face-to-face can contact the teachers to arrange for one. Likewise, should our teachers wish to meet some parents face-to-face, they will inform the parents accordingly.

## **2. Assessments**

- a. Inform Parents about the dates for Assessments including Formative Assessments.*

With the removal of Mid-Year Examination (MYE), ongoing non-weighted Formative Assessments (FA) serve to provide appropriate feedback on student learning. Being an integral part of the teaching and learning process, FA across all levels are carried out, taking into consideration the progress of students, pace of the class and at timely junctures such as immediately after a lesson or upon completion of a topic and not fixed.

Dates for Weighted Assessments (WA) and P6 Preliminary Examination are communicated in Letters to Parents. Parents can also refer to the **School Calendar** on school website and download a copy on their own electronic devices such as smartphone

and laptops. Essential information such as the scope and components of assessments are in the **Information Booklet for Parents** obtainable on the school website as well.

- b. *Cut down on out of classroom activities so that the students can focus on learning subjects and do well in examination.*

With the evolving and rapid advancements in the world, it is important that citizens are prepared to constantly upgrade themselves throughout their lifetimes to keep pace and stay relevant. That is why MOE has made bold shift in our education system – to move away from the over-emphasis on grades and examination results and to nurture a generation of students who enjoy learning and are not bogged down by chasing every last mark. While academic excellence stands us well and is necessary, broader set of foundational skills and core competencies are needed for our children to thrive in today's fast-changing world.

*MOE FY2021 Committee of Supply Debate Response by Minister for Education Lawrence Wong - "The competencies that matter for success in the real world go well beyond academic abilities. They include skills like effective communication and teamwork, creativity and innovation, curiosity, resilience and grit."*

Students can acquire these crucial life skills from the varied schooling experiences the school provides both in and out of the classrooms. Most significantly, students appreciate these valuable opportunities as they are meaningful, engaging and build interpersonal relationships.

### **3. School Events and Activities**

- a. *School needs to communicate the calendar early for school events and activities.*

The Calendar of Events is on the school website for parents' retrieval and access. Please log on and refer to it. You can also download a copy on your smartphone or other electronic devices.

We observe a 2-week lead-time to send out consent forms prior to the commencement of all after-school activities. Necessary information such as logistical and administrative details once firmed up are communicated as early as possible. We urge parents to respond accordingly so that the school receives parental consent promptly for your children to take part in the relevant activities.

All remedial/supplementary lessons and CCA are conducted on designated days. The information is in the school schedule and communicated in the Letter to Parents end of Term 4 to facilitate your planning for the following year and again at the start of every school year. Do read all Letters to Parents carefully. Also teach your child to exercise their role as responsible students and remember when to turn up for lessons and CCA too.

- b. *Can we have a better understanding on the requirements for HBL?*

The school will conduct the 1st HBL in Term 1 Week 10 to prepare and familiarize our students with the process for self-directed learning in the event of school closure. Other HBL are designated on days when the school is closed for occasions such as PTC and National Exams. Details of the HBL will be shared with parents via PG and the students will be briefed by their respective teachers prior.

#### **4. Student Behaviour and Well-Being**

*a. Why do I receive SMS alert that my child is absent when he is already in school?*

The attendance system is programmed to send out an automated SMS alert of non-attendance at 8.30 am. Form teachers (FT) must mark attendance of the students by 7.30 am before they commence lessons. Hence, if the students report for school late and not yet in the classroom after attendance-taking, it will trigger the alert for non-attendance. Parents are urged to contact the school or your child's FT by 7.20 am if your child is unable to report to school on any given school day to ensure that his/her attendance can be captured promptly and accurately.

*b. There is insufficient homework to occupy my child after school.*

Homework can be any meaningful tasks assigned to students by teachers to reinforce learning and carried out during non-school hours. It should help to develop good study habits and foster independent learning. As the learning is progressive and cumulative, teachers calibrate it against student readiness and task requirements to ensure meaningfulness. Focus on the actual learning and quality vis-à-vis quantity.

Parents can do your part at home to provide a conducive study environment as well as inculcate the responsibility and discipline for self-directed and reinforcement of learning.

*c. Can the school impose punishment for students who misbehave and enforce stricter discipline?*

School stands guided by MOE Discipline Philosophy and Approach. Discipline is an educative process. There are structured lessons during Form Teacher Guidance Period (FTGP) to teach our students values, social-emotional competencies and desired behaviours. Student expectations are spelt out in the Student Handbook and reinforced during lessons, teachable moments and at appropriate platforms.

Cultivating the strength of character, appropriate behavioural traits and independence in children is crucial and takes time. As families exerts very powerful influence on your children, we strongly encourage parents to enforce good discipline from young, not to over-protect your children and deprive them of the opportunities to develop and learn valuable life skills such as taking responsibilities and being accountable for their action, standing up for themselves, and so on.

Should students encounter any difficulties, they must be taught the skills to problem-solve so that they apply and hone their self-management skills. Nonetheless, those who are found to be misbehaving or flouting any rules will face the consequences in accordance with the school discipline guidelines. Giving them the space to learn from their mistakes and build resilience is equally important.

*d. How does the school decide if my child should take Standard or Foundation Subjects?*

A strong foundation in literacy and numeracy is important at the primary level. The school carefully considers the subject combinations so that our students do not take the soft option and can transit to higher levels of learning and post-secondary to fulfil their potential. The decision for subject combination is not based on single point data but a trend record of student performance over the years and teachers' professional input.

*e. My child's school bag is very heavy. Is there something the school can do about this?*

Students are to pack their bags according to their daily timetable and avoid bringing all their books, materials and non-essential items to school every day. They can also keep books they do not require in the lockers assigned to them. We seek support from family to ensure your children exercise responsibility and packs their bags daily. You can also alleviate the burden by getting lightweight schoolbag and stationery items for your children.

*f. The white school shoes get dirty very easily. Can the school shoes be changed to black?*

Students are advised to maintain personal hygiene and ensure a neat and smart appearance. School shoes are part of the school attire. The outfit ensemble is a crucial part of school identity and legacy. Changing the outfit ensemble has to take into consideration many factors such as views from key stakeholders, e.g. School Advisory Committee and Alumni. To help your children maintain a presentable student image, please clean their shoes regularly or purchase those that are easier to upkeep.

*g. The school toilets are dirty most times and poorly maintained.*

The toilets are washed numerous times daily and whenever they are unusually filthy and unsightly. Cleaners are required to meet the standard of cleanliness and audit checks on the toilets are done weekly to maintain sanitation compliance. In school, students are reminded to exercise consideration in view of the high-volume usage. Likewise, we seek your help to guide your children to exercise care and responsible use of all school facilities, especially the toilets.

## **5. School Safety and Security**

*a. Allow parents to enter the school with our children as they are very young especially during arrival and on rainy days.*

As the school compound is not big, the school faces space and manpower constraints with heavy flow of human traffic in and out of school.

Students are briefed on the safety procedures as well as movements around the school at the start of every school year. The P1 students specifically will be taught self-management skills and dismissal procedures as soon as they join the school. To foster essential independent skills in your child, we encourage parents to partner us to reinforce the skills at home so that you can start your child on the journey of self-independence from the onset.

On rainy days, more teachers must be activated to augment the necessary security measures and manage the arrival and dismissal of students. We remain cognizant not to unduly tax or deploy our precious manpower unproductively. From the entrances of the main, side and back gate, the school is fully sheltered. Parents walking their children to school can drop them off at the main or back gate and move off quickly to avoid bottlenecks. With your full co-operation, the school is secure and students can safely walk in by themselves.

Dismissals are staggered by levels to avoid congestion and disorder. On rainy days during dismissals to minimise inconvenience of entering and re-entering the school, you should pick up all your children at one go at the later timing if you have more than one child in the

school. We appeal to you for your kind understanding and co-operation so that together, we can continue to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our students, staff and caregivers.

- b. Can the school install a shelter outside the school gate so that we can get some cover from the sun and rain?*

The installation of a shelter outside our school is under the purview of Town Council and Land Transport Authority. The school has put up numerous appeals to the relevant authorities since 2020 and the response thus far has been unfavourable due to the underground drainage structure. The authorities have responded that they will need to explore other feasible and less costly methods.

- c. Can side gate 3 be opened for student arrival?*

It will be opened in the morning for ad hoc student arrival when the turnstile is ready for operation sometime in Term 1, 2024. Students using this exit during dismissals have been taught and reminded not to dash across the road or block the pathway. We urge parents to remind your children to be safe and considerate pedestrians.

## **6. Canteen Food**

- a. The school canteen food is not appetizing, lacks varieties and insufficient canteen operators resulting in long queue during recesses.*

Based on Health Promotion Board (HPB) Healthy Meal School Programme (HMSP), vendors can only sell regulated food like brown rice, wholemeal bread, fruits, meat, vegetables, snacks and drinks with healthier choice symbol to ensure that students eat healthily and have a balanced diet. Please note that the vendors need to maintain a good balance between healthy diet and varieties vis-à-vis costs.

The school will continue to stagger the recesses to cut down on the long waiting time and ensure students have sufficient time to buy their food and eat during recesses/lunch breaks.

The school is also facing a shortage of canteen operators and 3 of the stalls are currently vacant. We are looking for operators to fill up the vacant stalls and if you know of suitable operators, please encourage them to approach our OM.

## **7. Co-Curricular Activities (CCA)**

- a. Can the school provide more CCA?*

The school provides varied CCA to cater to the different segments, needs and interest of the student population. There are Sports & Games, Visual & Performing Arts, Clubs & Unformed Groups CCA. School reviews the offerings annually to ensure that CCA are relevant and appealing to the general population of students as well as critical mass to yield meaningful learning and economy of scale.

- b. All CCA should be made competitive so that more children will get the opportunity of good training. Can the school allow the students to change their CCA within the year?*

While school encourages and supports student participation in competitions, it ensures that the participants are set up for success, which means they are ready and can take part at competitive level. The school will not unduly stress the students to perform beyond their capacity and have them unduly disappointed and worse off, withdraw from the CCA altogether.

One of the CCA goals is to build resilience, skills and leadership qualities in the students. It can only be done progressively and over a long period. Hence, it will not be helpful if the students change their CCA within a year.

## **8. Character Development**

- a. Provide more opportunities to develop the other domains apart from the academics.*

The school has a 6-year Character Development Plan and Co-Curricular Programme that promote holistic education as well as inculcate important values, social-emotional skills and 21st century competencies. All students go through these planned experiences, e.g. Values-in-Action, Learning Journeys, Camps, Cyber Wellness Programme, Learning for Life Programme, Applied Learning Programme, National Education, Enrichment Lessons, Visual and Performing Arts Experiences and so on. There are many such student-centric programmes that the school reviews regularly to ensure relevance, meaningfulness and age-appropriateness to keep abreast of the educational changes and student needs.

## **9. Student Care Centre (SCC)**

- a. There is difficulty enrolling in the student care. Can the school management increase the capacity of student care within the school premises, especially for below P3 students?*

Funded by MSF, school-based Student Care Centre (SCC), has a stipulated capacity, staff strength and room provision. Priority for admission is given to needy students/ families especially those under Financial Assistance Scheme. There are sufficient vacancies to meet the demand in general.

Kindly ensure that you submit your interest and necessary documents to ensure that your child meets the criteria and secures the place on time. Parents can also enrol your children in other nearby SCC if the vacancies are filled.