

# Supporting Smooth Transitions: EIPIC/Preschool to Primary School

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## Today's Objectives

### Children born in 2019 / K1

For children who will be applying for schools next year:

- How to choose a suitable school for my child
- Timeline and Application Process

### Children born in 2018 / K2

For children going to mainstream Primary schools:

- How Parents can support
- Supports & Resources available

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## For Children born in 2019 / K1 *Choosing a Suitable School*

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## Compulsory Education Act

Your child must attend a national primary school regularly if they are:

- Of compulsory school age (above 6 years and under 15 years)
- A Singapore citizen
- Born after 1 January 1996
- Living in Singapore

With effect from 2019, the CE Act includes children born after 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012 with moderate-to-severe special educational needs who will have to attend **government-funded SPED schools**

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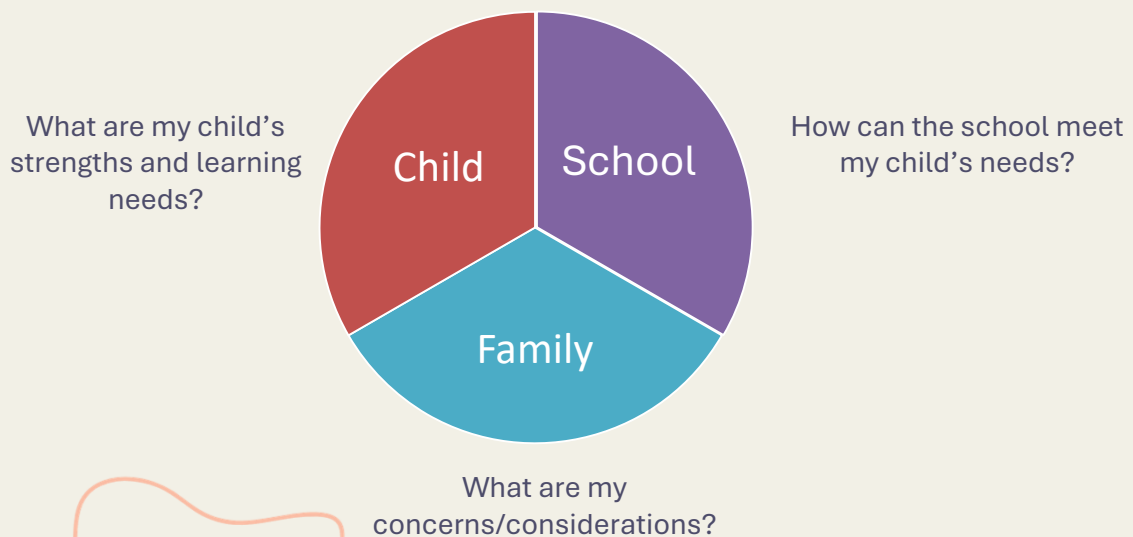
## Importance of a “Good Fit”

- Different children have different strengths, interests, and areas of needs. Some children may need additional help and support to adapt socially or learn.
- Children with special educational needs can realize their full potential and lead meaningful and purposeful lives if they are given educational support that is well-matched to their needs.



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## Choosing a Suitable School



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# Choosing a Suitable School

*What are my child's strengths and learning needs?*



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Parent Handout Info

## Child Factor #1: Diagnosis



- Has your child undergone a professionally-conducted assessment and been given a formal diagnosis?
- Benefits of a diagnosis:
  - ❖ Allows you to better understand your child's needs and difficulties
  - ❖ Conveys information about your child between professionals
  - ❖ Allows child to receive specialized support/accommodations
  - ❖ To apply and gain entry to SPED schools that are diagnosis-specific



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Parent Handout Info

## Child Factor #2: Cognitive Abilities

- Cognitive abilities refer to the ability to think, concentrate, formulate ideas, reason, and remember
- Typically summarized by an IQ score
- Provides a good indication about whether a child will be able to cope with the demands of the national curriculum (i.e. PSLE)



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Parent Handout Info

## Child Factor #3: Adaptive Abilities

- Adaptive abilities refer to the ability to handle daily demands in life independently
  - ❖ Includes communication, self-care, and social skills
- Provides a good indication about whether a child will be able to learn in large group settings
  - ❖ Can he follow complex instructions given verbally?
  - ❖ Can he manage his own belongings? Can he buy himself food?
  - ❖ Can he participate in group activities with his peers?



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## Child Factor #4: Literacy & Numeracy

- Foundational literacy:
  - ❖ Does he know all the sounds of the alphabet?
  - ❖ Can he blend sounds to read words?
  - ❖ Can he write all letters of the alphabet (upper & lower case)?
- Foundational numeracy:
  - ❖ Count objects with 1-1 correspondence
  - ❖ Read numerals up to 100
  - ❖ Write numerals up to 20



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## Child Factor #5: Social/ Emotional/ Behavioural Functioning

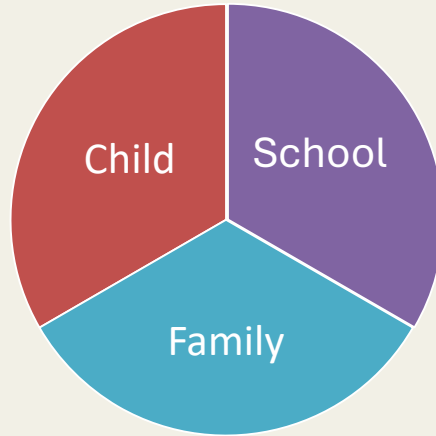
- Social-Emotional Functioning
  - ❖ How does your child interact with his peers?
  - ❖ Does he understand social rules / follow social expectations?
  - ❖ Does your child have adequate coping skills to regulate his emotions when he is upset?
- Behavioural Functioning
  - ❖ Does your child have any behavioural challenges that may disrupt group learning or pose significant safety concerns for himself/others?
  - ❖ Is he able to remain on-seat and pay attention independently?



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# Choosing a Suitable School

What are my child's strengths and learning needs?

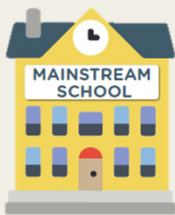


How can the school meet my child's needs?

What are my concerns/considerations?

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# At a Glance: School Factors



Academic curriculum

Class size

Specialized personnel

Other support



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## At a Glance: Other School Factors



Distance from home to school



Provision of transport



School fees and subsidies available



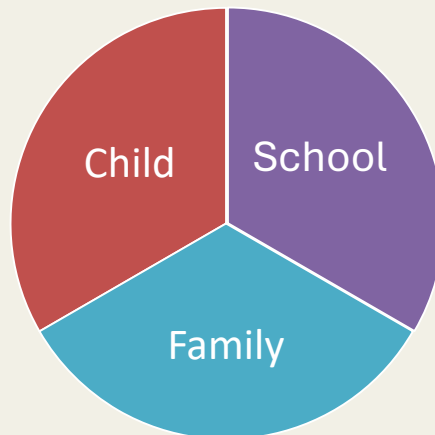
Schooling hours and after-school student care



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## Choosing a Suitable School

What are my child's strengths and learning needs?



How can the school meet my child's needs?

What are my concerns/considerations?

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## Choosing a School – Family Factors

How are you and your family able to support your child?

- ❖ Time to help your child with his/her learning at home

Parents' choice:

- ❖ How do you feel about the school?
- ❖ How do you feel about your child attending that school?
- ❖ What are your expectations of your child?



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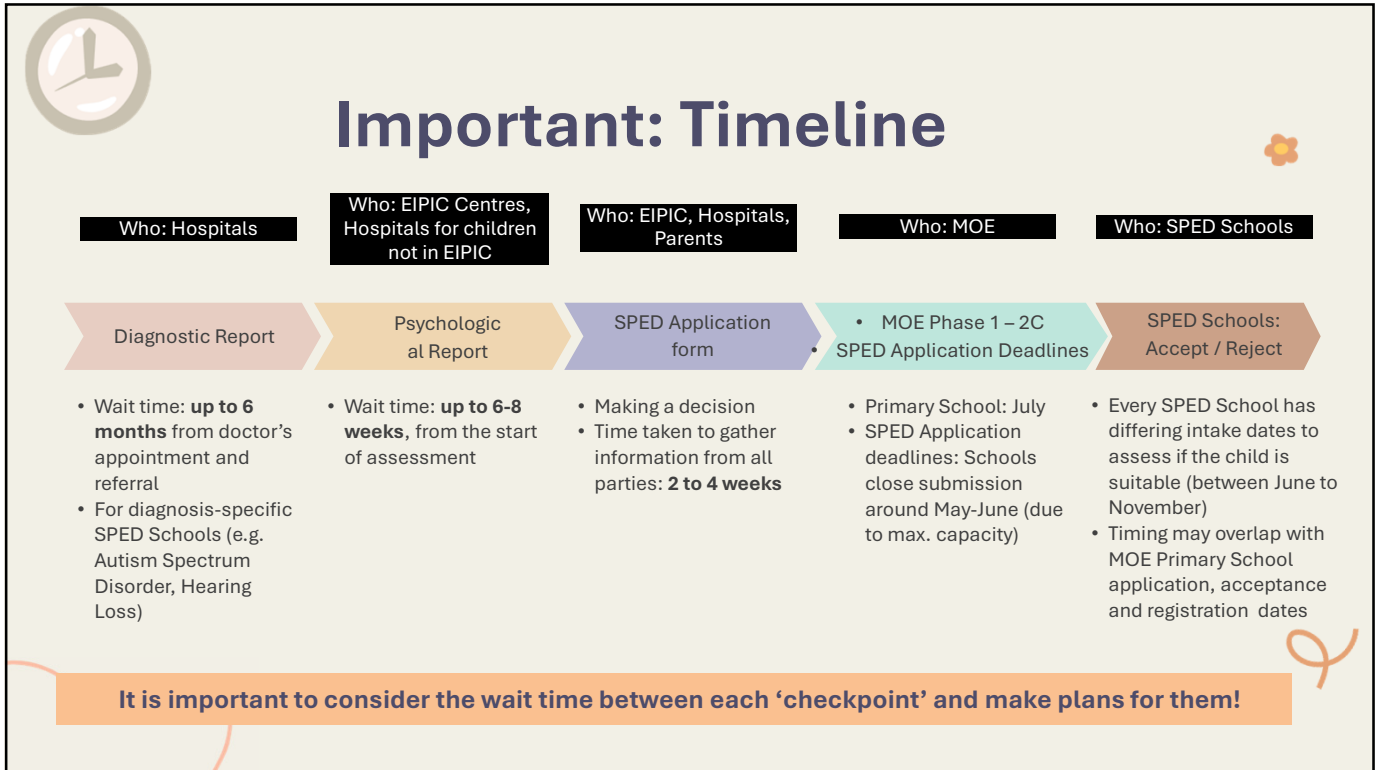
How can medical or early intervention professionals help with assessing some of these factors?

A psychological report conducted by a qualified psychologist can help you better understand your child's profile of strengths and weaknesses to decide appropriate school placement.

It is usually conducted when your child is **at least 5 years old**

For more information: Refer to EIPIC Centres, Doctors and / or nurses

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## For Children born in 2018 / K2 *Transition to Primary School*

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## How different is Primary School from Preschool?

- Bigger school and classroom setting
- More classmates – class size of about 30 students at P1 & P2
- More subjects
- Longer school hours
- Longer periods of sitting down and attending
- Having to buy own food
- Having to move to different places for certain lessons (e.g. Music, PE)

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## Skills Required at Primary 1

Literacy &  
Numeracy

Social, emotional, and  
behavioural  
functioning

Cognitive abilities

Adaptive abilities



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## Literacy and Numeracy Skills

- Understand **basic concepts** – colors, shapes, numbers
- **Literacy skills:** recognize and be able to write A-Z, read simple words and sentences
- **Numeracy skills:** know numbers 1-20, rote count 1-20, 1-1 correspondence, matching
- **Writing skills:** be able to hold a pencil correctly, form letters and numbers correctly, copying short sentences (need not be perfect upon entering P1)

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## Literacy and Numeracy Skills

Parents can help by:

- Providing opportunities for learning and practicing basic concepts and skills in everyday activities
- Reading with child regularly, providing access to books and other reading materials, and helping child to sound out words and sentences
- Providing age-appropriate writing tools and materials and encouraging child to practice writing on a regular basis
- Use child's interest to encourage learning!

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## Social, Emotional and Behavioral Functioning

- **Listening skills:** be able to listen attentively and follow directions
- **Attentional skills:** be able to focus and concentrate on tasks and activities for a set amount of time
- **Communication skills:** be able to ask and answer simple questions, express their ideas
- **Social skills:** be able to interact with others in a positive and respectful way (e.g. share, take turns, follow rules)
- **Emotional-regulation skills:** be able to express emotions appropriately and respond appropriately
- **Behavior-regulation skills:** be able to stay seated for a set amount of time, comply with instructions to complete tasks

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## Social, Emotional and Behavioral Functioning

### Parents can help by:

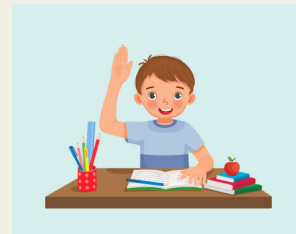
- Modelling good listening skills and providing opportunities for child to practice listening and following directions
- Cutting down on screen time, creating a conducive learning environment and providing opportunities for child to practice concentration and focus
- Providing opportunities for their child to practice speaking to others and in front of others
- Explicitly teaching social skills (e.g. turn-taking, sharing, how to join in activities) and providing opportunities for their child to interact with others in a variety of settings
- Modelling appropriate ways to express and manage negative emotions (e.g. using STOP-THINK-DO), teaching feelings vocabulary, and providing opportunities to practice
- Providing opportunities to practice staying seated for longer periods of time to complete tasks and providing praises/positive reinforcement for effort

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## Adaptive Skills

- Able to use toilet independently
- Able to buy own food
- Able to problem-solve simple problems
- Able to ask for help



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## Adaptive Skills

Parents can help by:

- Providing opportunities to practice ordering food, seeking help and problem-solving
- Support child's independence in toileting so that he can complete the routine on his own without your assistance and reminders
- Provide opportunities to practice buying/ordering food outside
- Provide opportunities to practice problem-solving using problem scenarios (e.g. "What would you do if...?")
- Model how to seek help in common primary school scenarios (e.g. finding classroom; "Can you help me ...?")

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## What else can I do to prepare child for Primary School?

### Support your child in starting a new routine and time-table

- Support them in forming new habits (e.g. sleeping and waking up earlier, packing their school bag, travelling to school)
- Provide them with age-appropriate storage solutions and teach them how to organise their things (e.g. prepare a checklist together)
- Create a daily schedule that includes blocks of time for different activities such as play, homework and sleep
- Talk to them about getting ready for school and setting aside time for homework after school
- Talk to them about what to expect in their new school, e.g. what they would be doing during assembly, how many students there will be in class, and what they should do during recess

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## Provisions & Support in Mainstream Primary Schools

### Programmes

- Learning Support Programme (LSP) - P1 & P2
- Learning Support for Math (LSM) - P1 to P4
- School Dyslexia Remediation (SDR) - P3 & P4
- TRANSition Support for Integration (TRANSIT) - P1
- Circle of Friends (CoF)

### School Personnel

- Special Education Needs Officer (SEN Officer)
- Teachers Trained in Special Needs

### Other Forms of Support

- Working with MOE Educational Psychologist
- Engaging Social Service Agencies (for hearing loss, visual or physical impairment)
- Tapping on MOE-funded assistive technology

<https://www.moe.gov.sg/special-educational-needs/school-support/primary-schools>

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## TRANSIT Programme

- Takes place during P1 to help students with social and behavioural needs develop independence through learning foundational self-management skills.
- Schools proactively identify these students for support based on information gathered from parents and teachers, and through systematic observations conducted by trained school personnel.
- The teachers and SEN Officers work together to support students in small groups as well as in their form classes in their P1 year. They also work closely with parents to ensure that self-management skills learnt in school are practised at home.
- TRANSIT is currently offered in 179 out of 182 primary schools and will be in all schools by 2026. Every school will be able to support up to 10 P1 students in TRANSIT.

<https://www.moe.gov.sg/special-educational-needs/school-support/primary-schools>

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## Circle of Friends (CoF)

- The CoF is a school-based structured peer support intervention for students with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.
- CoF is conducted over five to eight sessions with the support of six to eight friends who have volunteered to be in the Circle.
- Students with SEN under CoF meet weekly with their Form Teacher or SEN Officer and CoF peers, to identify their specific difficulties and devise strategies to address them.
- Through these CoF sessions, peers acquire deeper understanding of the challenges that their friend faces and how best to support him/her.
- CoF has been offered to schools over the past few years on a request basis, with an MOE psychologist providing on-the-job coaching for the SEN Officer or the Form Teacher facilitating the Circle.

<https://www.moe.gov.sg/special-educational-needs/school-support/primary-schools>

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## What if my child needs additional support?

### Share your child's strengths, interests and needs with the school

1. Interests that engage your child
2. Any triggers (e.g., loud noises) and how to soothe your child
3. Medical and early intervention history
4. Tips for your child's day-to-day self-care
5. What to do in an emergency

<https://www.moe.gov.sg/-/media/files/parent-kit/parent-kit---starting-your-primary-1-journey.pdf>

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## Work with the school to help your child adapt

- Check with the Principal on who to contact about your child's needs.
- Connect school personnel with your child's pre-school educators and medical/early intervention professionals.
- Visit the school with your child to become familiar with the environment.
- Give teachers time to get to know and support your child.

<https://www.moe.gov.sg/-/media/files/parent-kit/parent-kit---starting-your-primary-1-journey.pdf>

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# School Factors

*How can the school meet my child's needs?*

- How can I find out more about the different schools?



Visit the schools' websites



Arrange school visits



Attend open-houses



Speak to school personnel

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Parent Handout Info

## Other Resources

- Which School for My Child?: A Guide for Parents of Children with Special Educational Needs  
– <https://www.moe.gov.sg/-/media/files/special-education/parents-guide-children-special-educational-needs.pdf>
- Preparing Your Child For A New School: A Resource Kit for Parents of Children with Additional Needs  
– <https://www.moe.gov.sg/-/media/files/special-education/preparing-your-child-for-a-new-school---a-resource-kit-for-parents-of-children-with-additional-needs.pdf>
- Parent Kit: Starting Your Primary 1 Journey  
– <https://www.moe.gov.sg/-/media/files/parent-kit/parent-kit---starting-your-primary-1-journey.pdf>

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## Q&A

- Should I enquire about the support available with the primary school before registering my child?
  - Yes, but schools may vary in how they respond/offer their time to engage with parents
- When to contact primary school?
  - For children with high needs, as soon as possible.
  - Email SEN Officer or through generic school email to request to speak with Key Personnel for SEN
- What happens next?
  - Depending on school and level of child’s needs, school may arrange for a transition support meeting.

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# Thank you!

“It’s not a Race, It’s a Journey”



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