

# The STEPHENIAN



ISSUE 3

JANUARY - MARCH 2004

## Chinese New Year Celebrations

Stephenians ushered in the Year of the Monkey on the morning of 21 January 2004 with a presentation by the Chinese Department. The programme comprised a Lion Dance from our Malay and Indian teachers, a power-point presentation on the origin and practices of Chinese New Year, and a skit on the taboos and superstitious practices related to Chinese New Year.

Mdm Tan, our principal, and Mdm Jodhi, our vice principal presented "hongbaos" to the lucky boys and teachers in the lucky-draw item.

Our teachers and pupils then took to the stage for the Chinese-New-Year costume parade. A song-presentation and a karaoke session for the pupils brought the celebration to a joyful close, befitting the festive spirit of the new Lunar Year.



## Inaugural Service and Prefects' Investiture

The Inaugural Service is a practice for all the Lasallian Schools in the first month of the year to welcome all new staff who have joined the Lasallian Family.

St Stephen's School conducted the inaugural service on 12 January this year to formally welcome 15 new staff to our Stephenian Family.

The Prefects' Investiture ceremony was held in conjunction with the inaugural service. Our new prefects received the school's prefect-tie from the Principal and took their pledge of allegiance to the school. Mr Danny Koh was introduced as the new Prefect Master. He will oversee the training of prefects.

Brother Jeffrey Chan, representing the De La Salle Christian Brothers, welcomed all the new staff and called on the boys to consider the vocation of teaching so as to keep alive the tradition of having Old Boys serve as staff of Lasallian Schools. St Stephen's is fortunate to have, among the present staff, several teachers who were taught in the La Salle Schools in Singapore.



*To Believe, To Serve*

## Refinements to Mother Tongue Language Policy

1. The Ministry of Education (MOE) has decided to introduce greater flexibility and choice in the study of students' Mother Tongue Language (MTL).
2. A customised approach to mother tongue learning, including HMTL and MTL 'B', is adopted so as to cater to students across the language ability spectrum. This recognises the practical reality of students having different home language backgrounds as well as different natural abilities in languages.
3. The following refinements are being introduced to the MTL policy in **primary schools**:

### a. Higher Mother Tongue Language (HMTL)

More students will be allowed to offer Higher MTL (HMTL) at the Primary 5 and Primary 6 levels, where they have demonstrated strength in MTL. Schools will also have the flexibility to allow students to take HMTL even if they do not meet the formal eligibility criteria, if they are assessed to have exceptional ability in MTL and to be able to take HMTL without affecting their broader academic development.

### b. Mother Tongue Language instead of Basic MT for EM3

MOE will also allow EM3 students in primary schools to offer MTL (instead of Basic Mother Tongue), if they obtain Band 2 or better in the subject in their P4 streaming examination.

4. Students with Grade C and below in MTL at PSLE will be allowed to take MTL 'B' in secondary schools. However, the PSLE MTL grade will not be the only factor taken in to account. Secondary schools will have the flexibility to consider any application to offer MTL B, on its educational merits.
5. **Exemption from MTL Requirements**

MOE recognises that a small minority of students may not be able to handle MTL at all, viz.

- a. Students who have a clearly diagnosed disability that may result in a significant underperformance. These students may be considered for MTL 'B' or an exemption from MTL. MOE will assess the severity of the learning disability and determine if exemption is appropriate. Examples of disabilities include dyslexia, ADHD, autism and hearing impairment. Parents/Guardians of the student seeking exemption from MTL should apply to the school with medical evidence of the disability.
- b. Singaporeans who re-enter the education system after living overseas for a significant period of time. These students can apply for an exemption from MTL, or to offer MTL 'B'. MOE will consider each application flexibly, on a case-by-case basis. More details are available on the MOE website ([www.moe.gov.sg/esp/eduinfo/mt.htm](http://www.moe.gov.sg/esp/eduinfo/mt.htm)).

## Changes to the Eligibility Criteria for HMTL

6. MOE has also revised the eligibility criteria for HMTL to allow more students to offer HMTL if they have the ability and interest to do so. This will develop a larger pool of Singaporeans with a deeper understanding of their mother tongue language and culture.
7. The revised eligibility criteria are shown in the table below.

Level	Current Criteria	Revised Criteria
Primary	<p>At the end of P4, all students may opt to do HMTL (by opting for the EM1 stream).</p> <p>At the end of P5, those who obtained at least Band 2 in their MTL and English Language (EL), and Band 3 in Maths and Science and pass HMTL can continue to do HMTL at P6.</p>	<p>At the end of P4, all students may opt to do HMTL (no change).</p> <p>At the end of P5, students with Band 2 or better for MTL can continue to do HMTL at P6 if they wish to do so.</p>

Secondary	Top 10% of PSLE cohort; or Top 11-30% with <u>A* in MTL</u> at PSLE or Distinction in HMTL and <u>at least an A in EL.</u>	Top 10% of PSLE cohort; or  Top 11-30% of PSLE cohort with <u>A* in MTL</u> at PSLE or Merit in HMTL.  Schools will also have the <u>flexibility to allow students who do not meet the above criteria to offer HMTL</u> , if they are assessed to have exceptional ability in MTL and are able to do HMTL without affecting their performance in other subjects.
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8. These refinements reflect MOE's policy objective to encourage every Singaporean student to study his MTL for as long as possible and to as high a level as he is capable. The policy refinements take immediate effect.

## School Operating Procedure (SOP) for Cases of Illness & Injury

### 1. What happens if a pupil is sick or injured?

- If Teacher is not aware, the pupil must quickly tell Teacher or get a classmate/schoolmate to tell Teacher.

### 2. What will Teacher do?

- Teacher will assess the seriousness of illness or injury, and follow up with the necessary.



#### 2.1. For slight injury or non-serious illness

- If the child's injury is slight (e.g. a small cut or graze on the skin), Teacher will apply first-aid to the injured part and pupil will continue with lessons in class.
- If child's illness is not serious or momentary (nose-bleeding that is common to the child), pupil will be accompanied to the sick bay to rest until he is able to join his class again.
- If pupil needs to go home, Teacher will inform pupil's parent / guardian immediately.



#### 2.2. For more serious injury or illness

- Teacher will accompany pupil to the sick bay, inform his parent / guardian immediately, and furnish the office staff with all the necessary information.
- If child needs quick medical attention, Teacher or another Staff will accompany child to the nearest clinic or hospital.

### 3. What does Parent / Guardian do?

- If child is in school, Parent will report to the General Office upon his / her arrival in school. (Office staff will ascertain the required before allowing the child to be taken home by the parent / guardian and inform Teacher accordingly)
- If child is in a clinic or hospital, the parent / guardian will go to there to take child home. (Teacher or School staff will remain with pupil until he is safely handed over to his parent / guardian.)



### 4. School's follow-up action

- If child is taken home or is warded, Teacher / Office staff telephones parent / guardian later in the day, or on the next school-day if pupil is absent, to enquire on child's condition.

## Buddy System

The Buddy System involves partnering every Pr1 pupil with a Pr 4 pupil. The Senior Stephenian helps to induct the Junior Stephenian into the life of school. During the recess period for two weeks, the P4 "elder brother" spends time eating and playing with his P1 "younger brother" and showing him around the school. The aim is for our P1 boys to have an older brother in the school to relate to, and for our senior Stephenians to develop a sense of caring towards the junior Stephenians.

The school's buddy system is one example of how the school's mission and vision of enabling our boys to be men for others are translated into school life.



## CONFIRMED SCHOOL SCHEDULE

### 2004 Term 1, Weeks 5 - 10

<b>2004</b>	<b>February</b>	<b>Activities &amp; Events</b>
Sun	01.02.04.	<b>HARI RAYA HAJI</b>
Mon	02.02.03.	<b>Holiday for Hari Raya Haji</b>
Thu	05.02.04.	MOE Corporate-Values Workshop for Staff, 2 - 5 pm
Sat	07.02.04.	EPMS Training Workshop for Key Personnel, 8 am - 1 pm
Fri	13.02.04.	"Total Defence Day" activities
Sat	14.02.04.	E3 Cluster Support Group Meeting for Key Personnel
Sun	15.02.04.	<b>Total Defence Day</b>
Fri	20.02.04.	World Scout-Day (Scouts to be in scout-uniform)
Sat	21.02.04.	Community Involvement Activities
Sat	28.02.04.	Thinking-Map Training Workshop for Teachers, 8.00 am - 3.30 pm
<b>2004</b>	<b>March</b>	<b>Activities &amp; Events</b>
Mon	01.03.04.	CA 1: English Language (P1 - P6)
Tue	02.03.04.	CA 1: Mathematics (P1 - P6)
Wed	03.03.04.	CA 1: Mother Tongue Language (P1 - P6)
Thu	04.03.04.	CA 1: Science (P3 - P6)
Fri	05.03.04.	CA 1: Higher Mother Tongue (P5 & P6 /EM1)
Sat	06.03.04.	Lasallian Staff Induction Seminar at SAP for new staff
Wed	10.03.04.	Teacher-Parent Meet (by appointment), 2.00 pm - 5.00 pm
Thu	11.03.04.	Staff Workshop on Comprehension Strategies, 2.00 pm - 5.00 pm
Fri	12.03.04.	Teacher-Parent Meet (by appointment), 2.00 pm - 5.00 pm
Sat	13.03.04.	Thinking-Maps Training Workshop for Teachers, 8.00 am - 3.30 pm
Sun	14.03.04.	<b>Term 1 Vacation, 14 -21 March</b>
Thu	18.03.04.	Science Workshop for Teachers, 9.00 am - 4.30 am
<b>Mon</b>	<b>22.03.04.</b>	<b>School reopens for Term 2</b>