

# BRIEFING FOR PARENTS OF PRIMARY 4 STUDENTS

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31 March 2023, Friday



*Future-Ready Learners with the Heart for Others*



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PRIMARY SCHOOL

# OUTLINE OF SHARING



Subject-Based Banding (SBB) Primary:  
Offering Different Subject Combinations



The Revised PSLE Scoring System 2021 &  
Secondary 1 Posting Exercise



Full Subject-Based Banding (SBB) in  
Secondary Schools



Frequently Asked Questions  
(FAQs)



# EVOLUTION OF SINGAPORE'S EDUCATION SYSTEM

Industrialisation



Skills/Capital Intensive



Knowledge Based



Innovation Driven



Survival Driven  
(1959 – 1978)



Efficiency Driven  
(1979 – 1996)



Ability Based, Aspiration Driven  
(1997 – 2011)



Student-centric, Values Driven  
(2012 Onwards)

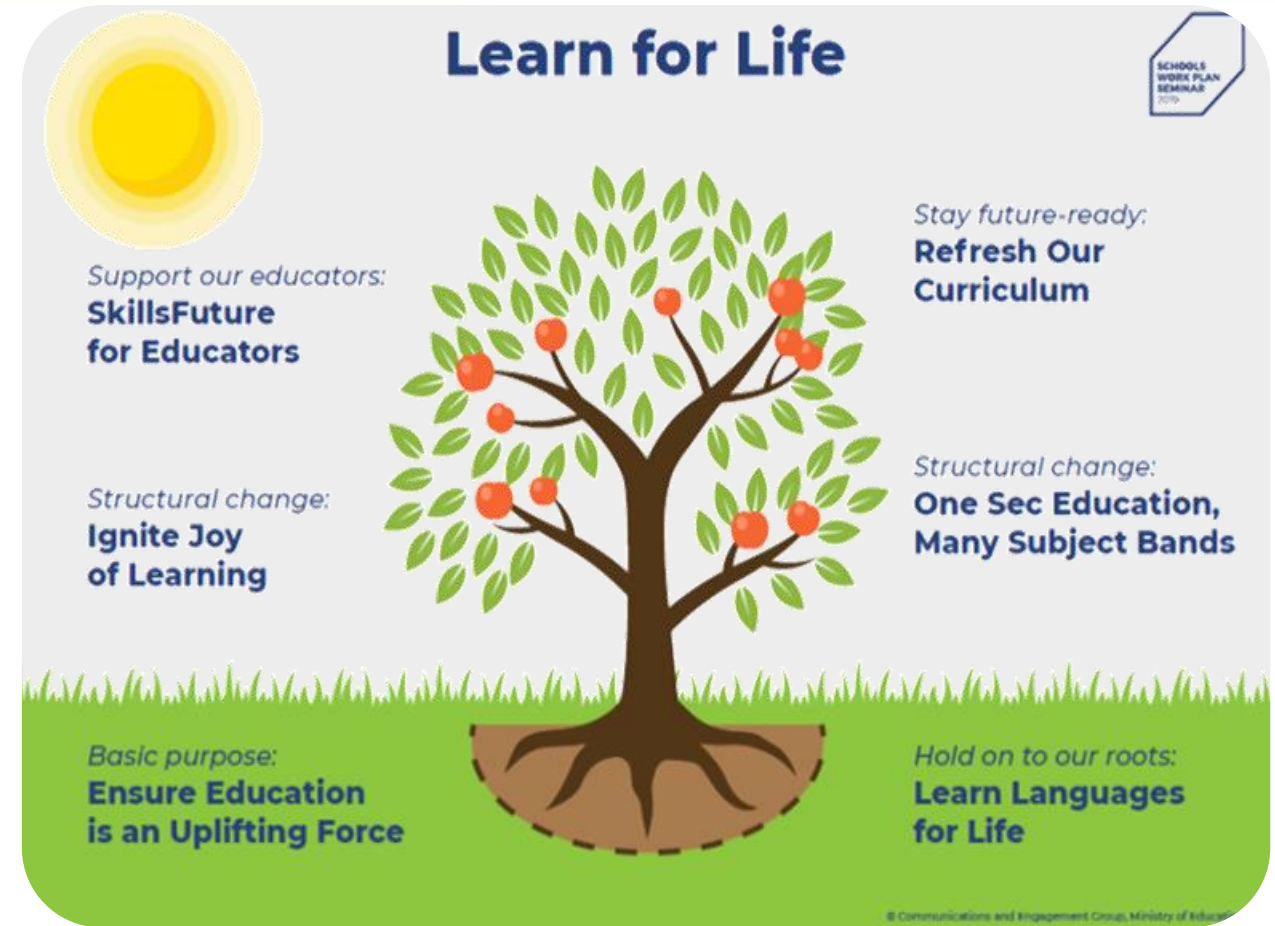


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# LEARN FOR LIFE

The new 'Learn for Life' phase of our education system aims to:

1. Develop diverse strengths and interests of our students,
2. Nurture an intrinsic motivation to learn
3. Ensure every child has a good start in life, and can access opportunities at every stage of their lives



# NURTURING THE JOY OF LEARNING

## 1. Reduction of School-Based Assessment Load

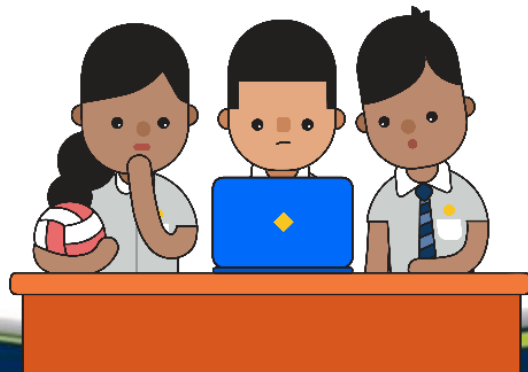
- Holistic assessments in primary schools
- Removal of mid-year exams for P3 to P6

## 2. Changes to PSLE Scoring

- Reduce overly-fine differentiation between students & unnecessary competition

## 3. Broadened Definition of Merit in Admissions

- Expansion of Direct School Admission (DSA) & refinement to DSA policy
- Aptitude-based admissions in IHLs



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*“We are evolving towards a more flexible system to cater to students with uneven strengths and abilities. Few students are exceptional in every area, and few students are weak in every subject. Most have some strengths and some weaknesses in their learning, and some areas of study that excite them more than others. We therefore need an approach that encourages every child to find his strengths, regardless of where he stands overall, and which provides him the opportunity to take his interests seriously.”*



Mr Tharman Shanmugaratnam  
Minister for Education, 2006  
MOE Work Plan Seminar



# **SUBJECT-BASED BANDING (SBB) PRIMARY:** **OFFERING DIFFERENT SUBJECT COMBINATIONS**



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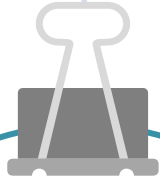
# SUBJECT-BASED BANDING (SBB) PRIMARY

- MOE Subject-based Banding (SBB) in primary schools was introduced in 2008 to:
  - ❑ Give students the opportunity to take a combination of subjects at standard and foundation levels based on their strengths and aptitudes in each subject
  - ❑ Enable students to stretch their potential in the subjects that they are strong in while building up fundamentals in the subjects that they need more support in
- The revised PSLE scoring system 2021 has not changed the considerations for deciding on a student's subject combination.



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# WHAT SBB MEANS FOR YOUR CHILD



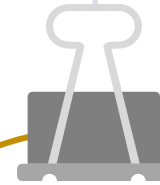
## STANDARD

1. English Language
2. Mathematics
3. Mother Tongue
4. Science



## FOUNDATION

1. English Language
2. Mathematics
3. Mother Tongue
4. Science



## HIGHER MT

1. Chinese
2. Malay
3. Tamil

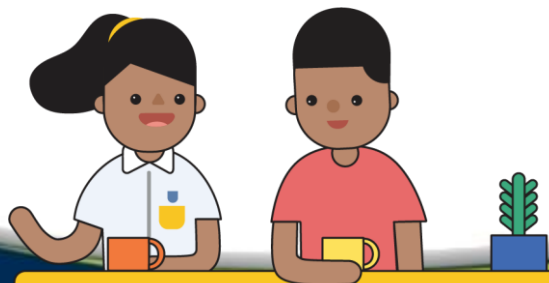


Depending on your child's strengths, your child has the choice to take a combination of subjects offered by the school.



# WHAT SBB MEANS FOR YOUR CHILD

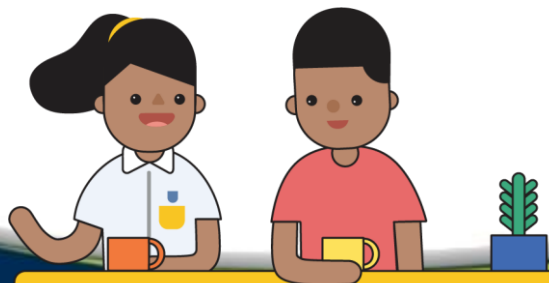
- Schools will continue to provide recommendations based on the following:
  - ❑ Student's aptitude, motivation and performance in each subject;
  - ❑ Student's ability to cope with a particular subject combination;
  - ❑ Whether the subject combination focuses sufficiently on literacy and numeracy, and facilitates the student's articulation to secondary school and beyond.



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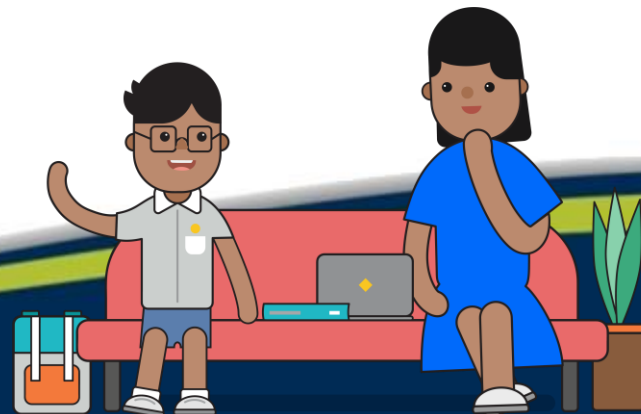
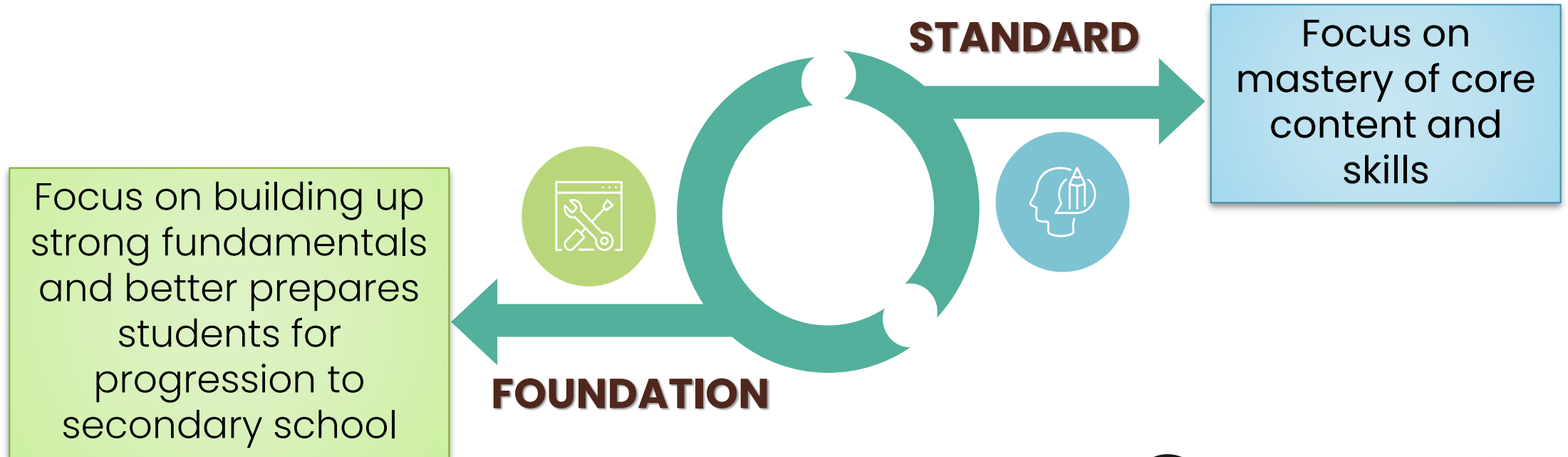
# WHAT SBB MEANS FOR YOUR CHILD

- Offering subjects at Foundation level is not a disadvantage to the students. It enables them to focus on building up strong fundamentals in these subjects and better prepares them for progression to secondary school.



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# DIFFERENCE BETWEEN STANDARD AND FOUNDATION SUBJECTS



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# **SUBJECT-BASED BANDING (SBB) AT END OF PRIMARY 4**

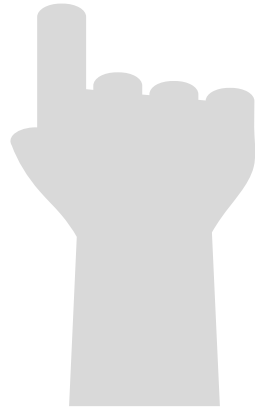


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# SBB RECOMMENDATION AT END OF PRIMARY 4

**01**

P4 PERFORMANCE  
ASSESSMENT



**02**

P1-3 PERFORMANCE  
ASSESSMENT



**03**

RECOMMENDATIONS  
BY TEACHERS



**STUDENT-CENTRIC & HOLISTIC APPROACH**



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# SBB SUBJECT COMBINATION OPTIONS

If your child (for P4 Exam)	Your child may be recommended to take
Passes all 4 subjects and performs very well in MTL Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 4 standard subjects + Higher Mother Tongue</li></ul>
Passes all 4 subjects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 4 standard subjects</li></ul>
Passes 3 subjects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 4 standard subjects;</li><li>• 3 standard subjects + 1 other foundation subject</li></ul>
Passes 2 subjects or less	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 4 standard subjects;</li><li>• 3 standard subjects + 1 other foundation subject;</li><li>• 2 standard subjects+ 2 other foundation subjects;</li><li>• 1 standard subject + 3 other foundation subjects; or</li><li>• 4 foundation subjects</li></ul>



# **SUBJECT-BASED BANDING (SBB) AT END OF PRIMARY 5**

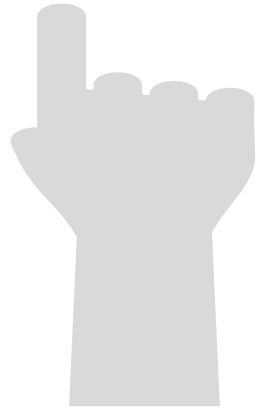


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# SBB RECOMMENDATION AT END OF PRIMARY 5

**01**

P5 PERFORMANCE  
ASSESSMENT



**02**

P1-4 PERFORMANCE  
ASSESSMENT



**03**

RECOMMENDATIONS  
BY TEACHERS



**STUDENT-CENTRIC & HOLISTIC APPROACH**



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## SBB AT END OF PRIMARY 5

Based on the student's academic performance at of Primary 5, and teachers' assessment of child's ability to cope with the subjects, the school can make adjustments to the subject levels/combination.

For example:

At the end of Primary 4 (Parents' Option)	At the end of Primary 5 (School's Decision)
4 Standard	→ 3 Standard Subjects + Foundation Mother Tongue Language



# SBB AT END OF PRIMARY 5

The following are the guidelines for movements after primary 5:

<b>At the end of Primary 5, if your child</b>	<b>At Primary 6 (School's Decision)</b>
Scores AL6 for at least 3 subjects	→ Keep to same subject combination
Scores AL7 & below for all subjects	→ Switch to 4 Foundation subjects



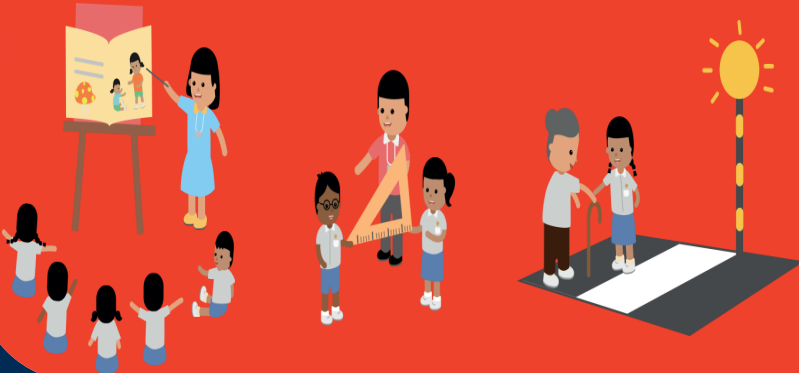
# SBB PRIMARY IN A NUTSHELL

## @ PRIMARY 4

**Student sits for school-based examinations**

School recommends a subject combination based on the student's results.

Parents fill up an option form indicating the preferred combination.



## @ PRIMARY 5

**Student takes subject combination chosen by parents**

English Language, Mathematics, Science and Mother Tongue Language are available at standard and foundation levels.

Higher Mother Tongue Language is also available.

School assesses student's ability to cope with the current subject combination at the end of the year. Adjustments to the number of standard and foundation subjects can be made, if necessary.

## @ PRIMARY 6

**Student takes subject combination decided by his school and sits for the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) at the end of Primary 6.**

# SOME IMPORTANT IMPLICATIONS FOR STUDENTS OFFERING HIGHER MOTHER TONGUE LANGUAGE

- Attend 1-hour extended curriculum after school
- \*Need to manage:
  - ☐ Additional homework load
  - ☐ Sit for an additional paper (HMT) at P5, P6 and PSLE
- No remedial programme for HMT as students are expected to meet minimum standard
- Students who do not take HMT at P5 will not be offered HMT at P6.

**\*NOTE:** Students **should not** take HMT if he/she is unable to cope with learning of MT or any of the other subjects.



# THE REVISED PSLE SCORING SYSTEM 2021 & SECONDARY 1 POSTING EXERCISE



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# THE PSLE REMAINS A USEFUL CHECKPOINT

- The PSLE remains a useful checkpoint for us to:
  - ☐ Understand where our children are at in their learning after six years of primary school
  - ☐ Gauge our children's learning needs so that they can progress to a secondary school and take subjects at a suitable level
- The Revised PSLE Scoring System 2021 aims to:
  - ☐ Reduce fine differentiation at a young age
  - ☐ Recognise students' level of achievement, regardless of how their peers have done



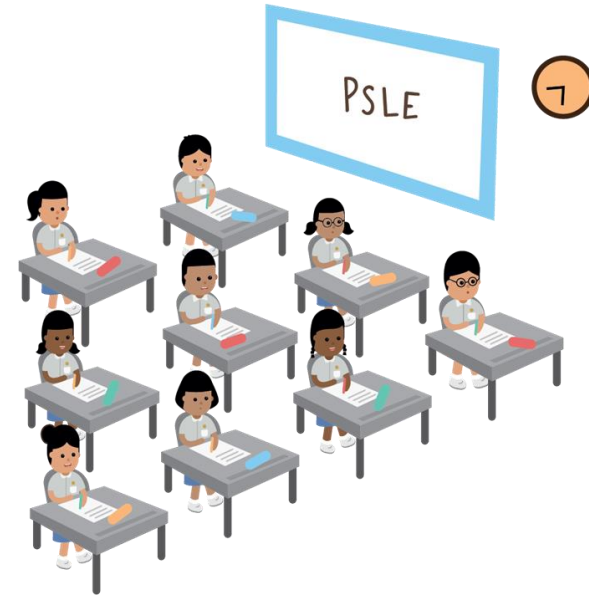
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# FROM T-SCORE TO WIDER SCORING BANDS, HOW THE PSLE SCORING WORKS

AL	RAW MARK RANGE
1	$\geq 90$
2	85 – 89
3	80 – 84
4	75 – 79
5	65 – 74
6	45 – 64
7	20 – 44
8	$< 20$

Reflects a student's individual level of achievement

Unlike the T-score, students' AL for each subject will reflect their level of achievement, rather than how they have performed relative to their peers.



# FROM T-SCORE TO WIDER SCORING BANDS, HOW THE PSLE SCORING WORKS

- The PSLE Score is obtained by adding the Achievement Levels (ALs) of four subjects and ranges from 4 to 32, with 4 being the best.
- From 2024, students will take subjects at three subject levels: G1, G2, G3 (G stands for General), based on their aptitude for and interest in the subjects.
- Students will continue to be posted into secondary schools through three scoring bands.



ENGLISH	AL3
MOTHER TONGUE	AL2
MATHEMATICS	AL1
SCIENCE	AL2

**PSLE SCORE: 8**



# SCORING FOR FOUNDATION LEVEL SUBJECTS

Foundation Level AL Reflected on Result Slip	Foundation Raw Mark Range
<b>A</b>	<b>75 – 100</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>30 – 74</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>&lt; 30</b>

- Under the new AL system, to reduce fine differentiation among students, Foundation subject grades will be graded in 3 scoring bands from AL A to C.
- Like Standard subject ALs, the Foundation subject ALs will reflect a student's level of achievement, rather than how they have performed relative to their peers.



# FOUNDATION LEVEL SUBJECTS GRADES

Foundation Level AL Reflected on Result Slip	Foundation Raw Mark Range	Equivalent Standard Subject AL	Standard Raw Mark Range
<b>A</b>	<b>75 – 100</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>45-64</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>30 – 74</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>20-44</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>&lt; 30</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>&lt;20</b>

- For Sec 1 posting, Foundation level AL A to AL C will be mapped to AL 6 to AL 8 of Standard level subjects respectively, to derive a student's overall PSLE Score.
- This mapping is based on the learning and assessment load of the subjects, and informs students of their readiness to access the curriculum at the secondary level.



# ELIGIBILITY FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL HIGHER MOTHER TONGUE LANGUAGE (HMTL)

- The eligibility criteria for taking HMTL is intended to ensure that students can cope with the higher academic load, and takes reference from the criteria under the previous PSLE scoring system.
- For students who do not meet the criteria, secondary schools will continue to have the flexibility to offer HMTL to students, if they are assessed to have high ability and interest in MTL and are able to take HMTL without affecting their performance in other subjects.

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL HMTL

- (i) PSLE Score of 8 or better  
OR
- (ii) PSLE Score of 9 to 14 inclusive; and attain
  - AL1 / AL2 in MTL or
  - Distinction / Merit in HMTL



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# USE OF HIGHER CHINESE LANGUAGE (HCL) FOR ADMISSION INTO SAP SCHOOLS


## Example

### Using HCL for Admission into SAP Schools

Students who take HCL will receive a posting advantage when applying to SAP schools

Students will be considered for admission to SAP schools in the following order:

1st		7	NO HCL	Students with better PSLE Scores will be posted first, even if they did not take HCL
2nd		8	DISTINCTION	
3rd		8	MERIT	Amongst students with the same PSLE Score, those with better HCL grades will be posted first
4th		8	PASS	
5th		8	NO HCL	
6th		9	DISTINCTION	





Under the Revised PSLE Scoring System 2021, there will continue to be HCL posting advantage for entry to SAP schools

- Students will be ranked taking into account their performance in HCL.
- This posting advantage applies before the tie-breakers for S1 posting.



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# SCORING FOR MTL-EXEMPT AND STUDENTS STUDYING AN ASIAN LANGUAGE/ FOREIGN LANGUAGE (ASL/FL) IN LIEU OF AN MTL

- For students who are exempted from MTL or take an AsL/FL in lieu of an official MTL, their PSLE result slip will only reflect the three subjects they have taken.
- However, for the purpose of Secondary 1 posting exercise, these students will need an assigned MTL score so that they have a PSLE score comprising four subjects:
  - ❑ To determine the assigned MTL score, reference is made to MTL scores of other students who have achieved similar scores in English, Mathematics, and Science.
  - ❑ Maintaining parity of treatment with students who take Foundation MTL (who will score between AL 6 to 8), students will receive an assigned MTL score between AL 6 to 8 in PSLE.



# **FULL SUBJECT-BASED BANDING (SBB) IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS**



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# **ONE EDUCATION, MULTIPLE PATHWAYS: FULL SUBJECT-BASED BANDING (FSBB) IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

FSBB in secondary schools aims to further nurture the joy of learning and develop multiple pathways to cater to different student profiles, so that students:

- have greater ownership of their education, and learn each subject at the level that best caters to their overall strengths, interests and learning needs.
- have more opportunities to interact with friends of different strengths and interests.
- are not be held back by negative self-concepts and labelling.
- have increased access to post-secondary pathways, while having strong fundamentals in their subjects so that they are able to thrive in the pathway they choose.



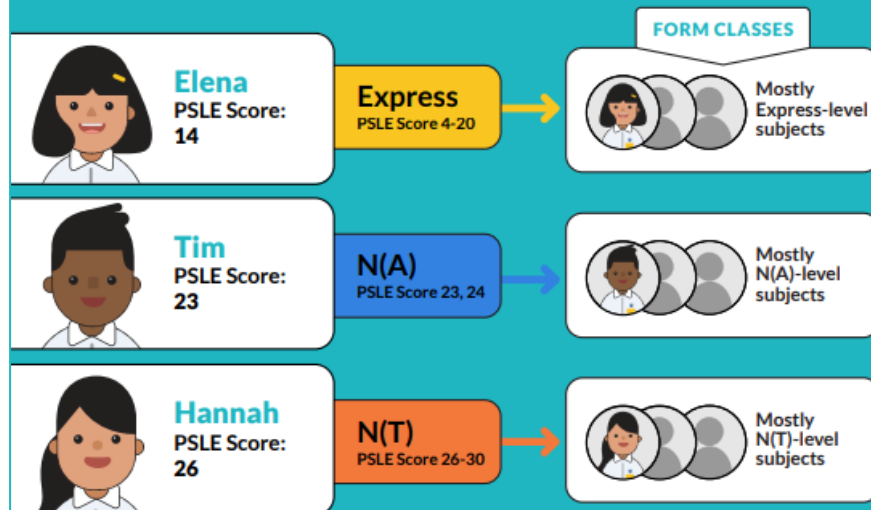
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# ONE EDUCATION, MULTIPLE PATHWAYS: FULL SUBJECT-BASED BANDING (FSBB) IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

CURRENT



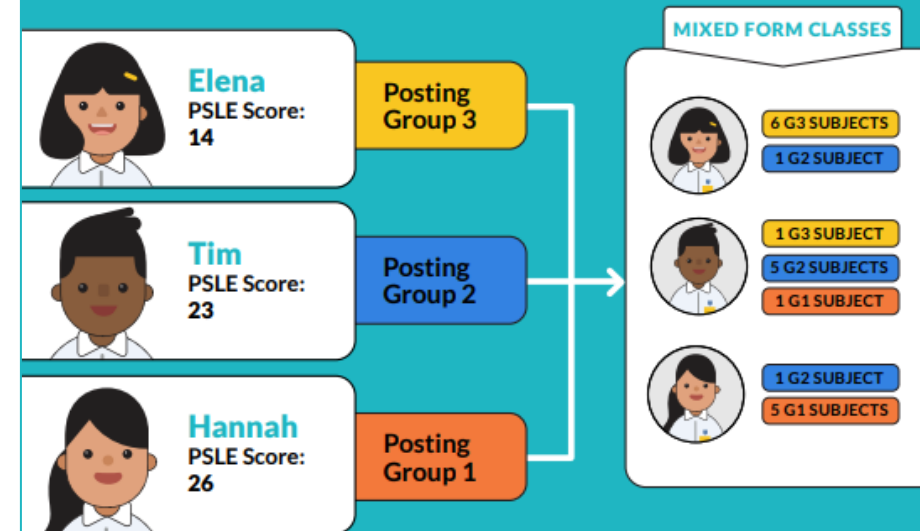
Based on their PSLE scores, Elena, Tim and Hannah are allocated to the **Express**, **N(A)** and **N(T)** streams respectively. These academic streams largely determine students' access to subjects and programmes in secondary school, and post-secondary pathways.



## Entering Sec 1 from 2024

**Posting Groups** will be used to facilitate the admission of students to secondary schools. Elena, Tim and Hannah are posted to their school of choice through Posting Groups 1, 2 and 3.

They become classmates in the **same form class**.

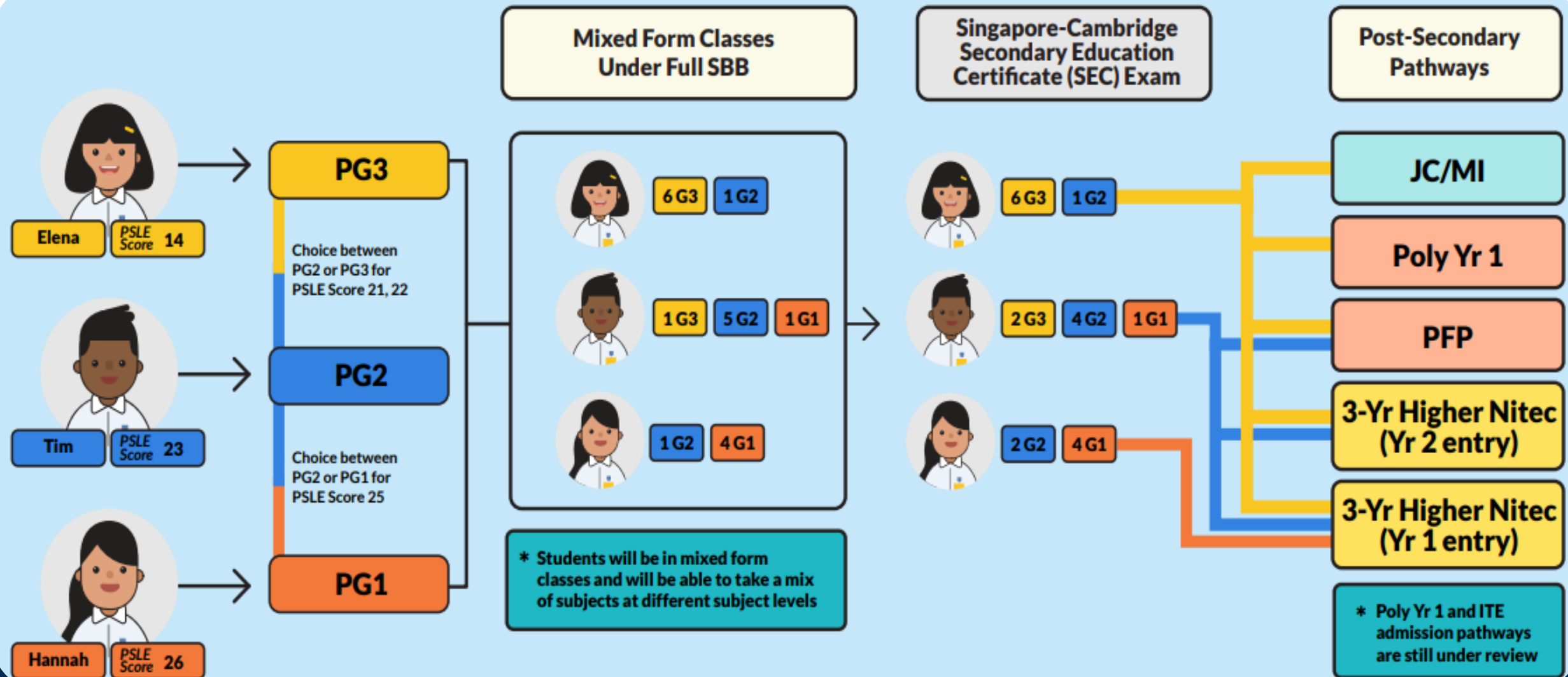


NEW  
FROM  
2024



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# ONE EDUCATION, MULTIPLE PATHWAYS: FULL SUBJECT-BASED BANDING (FSBB) IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS



# FSBB IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IMPLEMENTATION TIME-LINE



**2020**

- Full SBB pilot first implemented in 28 secondary schools. Feedback from pilot schools has been positive.

**31  
schools**

**2022**

- Full SBB continues to be rolled out to more schools in phases.

**Next  
phase of  
schools**

**2023**

**Final  
phase of  
schools**

**2024**

- There will no longer be Express, N(A) and N(T) courses.
- Students will be able to study subjects at different levels that suit their interests, strengths and learning needs.

**Common  
National  
Exam**

**2027**

- Students will sit for the common national examination & receive a new national certification with subjects at different levels.



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# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)





## **Does a student need to take HCL in primary school to enter a Special Assistance Plan (SAP) secondary school?**

*While students who pass HCL in primary school will receive a posting advantage when applying to SAP schools, it is not compulsory for students to have taken HCL in primary school to enter SAP school.*

*Given two students (one with HCL and the other without) who qualify for SAP secondary school and opted for the same SAP school as their first choice, student with a better PSLE Score (regardless whether he/she has HCL) would be admitted first.*





## **Can students still be eligible to take the same subject/s at a higher level in Sec 1 if they take one or more Foundation level subjects in primary school?**

*Foundation level subjects support the learning needs of students to focus on building up strong fundamentals in these subjects and better prepare them for progression to secondary school.*

*With effect from 2024, students will be posted to secondary schools where subjects are offered at three levels: G1, G2 and G3. Students who score between AL26 and AL30 in their PSLE will be offered the G1 suite of subjects, and those who score between AL4 and AL20 will be offered the highest G3 suite. Those who score AL25 can choose either G1 or G2 subjects, and those who score AL21 or AL22 can choose between G2 and G3.*





## How will Higher Mother Tongue be graded according to the new AL scoring system?

*Under the previous PSLE scoring system, students who took Higher Mother Tongue at PSLE level were graded with distinction, merit or pass. For students in the top 30 per cent of the cohort who took Higher Chinese, these grades translated into additional points for admission into SAP schools. They received three points for a distinction, two for a merit and one for a pass.*

*Under the current revised PSLE scoring system, students are given either a 'D' for Distinction or 'M' for merit. The relevant letter will appear beside a student's PSLE AL score. (For example: AL8D)*





## What is the new passing mark, since AL6 spans across 45–64?

AL	RAW MARK RANGE
1	$\geq 90$
2	85 – 89
3	80 – 84
4	75 – 79
5	65 – 74
6	45 – 64
7	20 – 44
8	$< 20$

*The PSLE is a useful checkpoint to gauge a child's understanding of key concepts and academic strengths. It is also a placement exam to determine the most appropriate course and subject level for a student, based on the student's educational needs at the point of entry to secondary school.*

*A student who obtains a PSLE Score of 26 to 30, and scores an AL 7 or better in both English Language and Mathematics or an AL B at the Foundation level for these subjects can progress to secondary school.*





**With the wide mark ranges for AL 6 and AL 7, will it be difficult for students to reach the next band?**

*The PSLE is a checkpoint for a student's learning. The AL bands reflect the way the curriculum and examinations are designed, where levels of understanding are not linear. The ALs reflect this reality of learning, where each band reflects a level of understanding of a subject. The ALs also provide an indication of the students' readiness level for the next course of study.*



# FIND OUT MORE ON THE PSLE-FSBB MICROSITE!

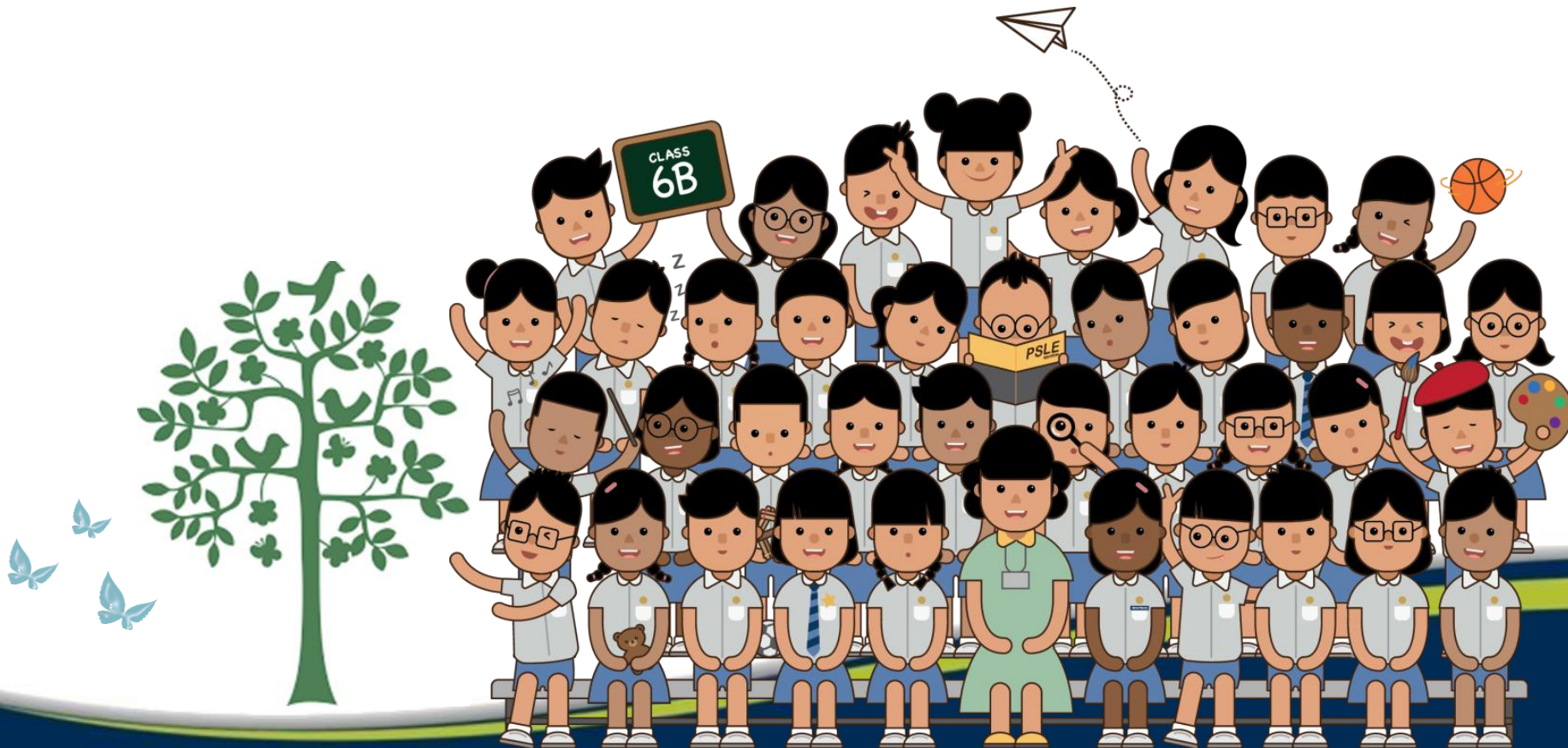


<https://go.gov.sg/pslefsbb>



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**THANK YOU &  
HAVE A LOVELY WEEKEND AHEAD!**



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