Dear parents,

It may not be easy for your child to transit to primary 1. However, with much preparation, your child’s anxiety can be greatly reduced.

Transiting to P1 is a process. I hope you will ENJOY the whole process of preparation and seeing your child adapting into the school environment. Take this opportunity to bond with your child.

May the following tips help you in your preparation.
Getting Information

To help prepare your child for primary school, it is worth finding out as much about the school before the first day. For example:

- when the school day starts and finishes
- what the usual daily routine is
- what arrangements the school has to help your child settle before the first day
- what happens to your child if they are ill in school

Information about primary school can be found through internet, school magazine or it may from parents who already have children at the school
Practice

- Packing and unpacking of school bag.
- Wear the uniform to make sure the size fits
- Practice paying and queuing
- How to drink and fill their water bottles from a water fountain
- Putting up a hand to ask a question
- Make sure your child knows how to ask to go to the toilet
- Build child confidence by giving child simple and safe school related task, for example: sharpen his pencils, arrange uniform, shoes and socks for the next day
Parents

- Don't pressurize your child to perform or compare them to other children of their age.
- Do not show your anxiety. It is not easy to prepare your child for P1, but your anxiety can be picked up by your child. Sensing your anxiety, your child may be anxious and lose confidence.
- Normalised going to school. Do not use the school to formulate negativity ideas to child. For example: “If you don’t behave, I will tell your school principal and they will punish you!”
- Tell stories about what you enjoyed at school and the fun things you did.
- Read a story about a child who just started school, or tell about when you started school (as long as it has a happy ending).
- Good titles include “Topsy and Tim Start School” by Jean and Gareth Adamson or “First Experiences”. These books can be found in NLB.
Your emotions

Your feelings will guide your child's emotions. If you approach your child's first day with confidence, that they'll be fine, using positive words about school and with loving attention, their anxieties will be reduced. Show your child that you have confidence that she will manage the new challenges.

Saying goodbye at school may be very emotional for you. But try to send your child off with a smile.

If your child is anxious about leaving you, ask her what would help? Who should drop her off at school? What she wants to do after school?

Remember even distressed children settle very quickly once you're gone, so make your leave short and sweet. If you're particularly worried, ask your child to call you when they go for recess.
The 1st week of school

- Encourage your child when child comes home, for example: a hug, say “welcome home!” or a pat on the shoulder.

- Let child rest for a while after coming back home (please do not go through the books or get child to do homework immediately).

- Ask question like “what was the most interesting thing that happened in school?” or “Tell me more about your teacher?”
The countdown

- If your child is in holiday routine - staying up late and rising late - then one week before term begins change their schedule.
- Gradually bring their bedtime back to a time suitable for school nights and introduce more regular meal time.
- Write a list of all the things you'll need to organise.
- Involve your child in getting ready for their first day. The evening before term starts you and your child can work together to prepare their uniform and bag.
- Set your alarm early for the first day - even the most organised parents and children need extra time to get ready for the big event.
The end of the day

- Do make sure you're a little early to collect your child at the end of the first few days - even a few minutes late can seem an eternity to a waiting child.

- Make listening to your child a priority. They'll probably talk about their day in their own time so avoid pressing your child, but do give them opportunities to talk to you. Listen, but don’t ask too many questions. Children will talk when they are ready. Bedtime is usually a good listening time.

- Keep to routines that allow time for rest and free play. Don’t arrange too many activities after school or have too many things to do on the way home, e.g. shopping.
Some children wet their pants in the early months at school. This can be very embarrassing for them. They need to be reassured that it often happens to children and it is nothing to worry about. Encourage your child to tell the teacher. Pack an extra pair of pants if it happens. If you show you are worried, it will make him feel that there really is something to worry about.

Don’t expect too much. New learning takes a long time and children learn at different rates. You can help best by encouraging, taking an interest, and showing you care.
the end

Enjoy this process helping your child transit to P1