



26 May 2023

Principal's Letter to Parents

Thanksgiving for Term 2, 2023

Dear Parents/Guardians

I have so much to be thankful for. Thank you parents for your tremendous support this Term, starting from the very first week of school. Homecoming 2023 (for not one, but four past cohorts of 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022) and Methodist Walk 2023 – we are grateful that our PL-Lites could experience these purposeful events again. Through these experiences, our girls nurture a greater sense of belonging and place in the larger Methodist and PL family, and then society.

Post-pandemic, PL returned to 'almost normal' life. Again, we thank God for the return of the National School Games in full-fledge as well as the Singapore Youth Festival 2023 Arts Presentation for our CCA groups. Why 'almost normal'? Our girls, teachers, staff, coaches and instructors are not the same as pre-pandemic times. But yet again, we thank God for our triumph over fear and concerns. I also thank you for your support for the school and your daughters during this period. And thank you for joining me at the Symphony of Praise on 28 April where we affirmed all stakeholders – students, staff, instructors and parents – for their efforts at the SYF. Most importantly, we thank God. To God be the Glory!

In this letter, I will share some updates and reflections of Semester 1 as well as key information to prepare us for Semester 2.

1. 2023 Key Shifts in Learning @ PL

Removal of Mid-Year Examinations. The removal of mid-year examinations is another step towards inculcating joy of learning in our students as well as part of ongoing efforts to move away from an overemphasis in academic grades. We spaced out our weighted assessments for our Secondary 1 to 3 PL-Lites while the Secondary 4/5s experienced timed practices to expose them to the rigour of their upcoming national examinations. Despite the good intention, there are trade-offs. But with a thankful heart, the girls had more time for themselves and each other through our Start-Right Programme (at start-2023) and the Mid-Year Pit-Stop Programme (at mid-2023) to recharge, reflect and refocus. We will continue to adapt to meet the needs of our girls. My ideal is when we can all embrace assessment as part of learning and growth, and not only focus on the outcome and fear the consequences.

Student learning in Semester 1. Schooling is learning; learning is schooling. It is beyond Performance and Progression so that they can secure a specific Profession in the future. It is about nurturing the Person, learning to learn with other People and Passion or developing other interests in life. The lower secondary girls have done very well adjusting to secondary school life. The Secondary 3 girls have also done well adjusting to new classes, new subjects and new roles as seniors of the school. The Secondary 4/5s are

now in their final phase of preparations for their post-secondary education. Besides adjustments in assessment, we are also advocating better use of technology for more engaging and effective teaching and learning in the classrooms and beyond. We also want to emphasise more on cognitive and social well-being, beyond grades and achievements.

Parent learning in Semester 1. Our Teacher-Meet-Parents Session on 25 May (Thur) also differed slightly. The girls did not bring home their HDP Result Slip. I trust the teachers shared more about your daughter/ward's holistic development as we were deliberate in collating data and information beyond academic attainment. Nonetheless you will receive the HDP Result Slip in Term 3 Week 2. This is in view of the shifts in assessment schedule to manage students' learning and teachers' workload. I believe this is learning for you too. Thank you for partnering us to enjoy the intended benefits of all recent developments.

Mid-Year Holiday Homework and Time-Table for Semester 2. The school has emailed the girls a consolidated list of holiday homework assigned. They will also receive their Semester 2 Time-Table one week before Term 3 starts. You may wish to find out a bit more from your daughters, and be involved in their student life.

2. Sec 4/5 GCE O-Level MTL Examinations and the road ahead

Our Sec 4/5 PL-Lites just completed their Prep Examinations and are now preparing for their first national examination. The entire PL family has been praying for our Sec 4/5 PL-Lites who will be taking their GCE O-Level MTL Examination on 29/30 May. This will be followed by an Intensive Academic Programme for our graduating students over 30 May to 1 June, 19 to 22 June, where teachers will use this additional time to bridge learning gaps and better prepare our PL-Lites for Semester 2 and their final lap.

To support our graduating cohort, our Night Study Programme (NSP) will commence in Term 3. Some of our graduating PL-Lites have requested for a more conducive study environment in school. Night Study will be from 7 July to 11 August, from 6pm to 8pm daily, unless less than 15 girls sign up for that day. Information on NSP and how to sign up will be emailed to the students during the last week of the June holidays.

3. Start of the DSA-JC, EAE-Polytechnic, EAE-ITE

Sec 4 and 5 PL-Lites will have to delve deeper into post-secondary options and admissions exercises and programmes from May 2023. Direct School Admission (DSA) to Junior Colleges (JCs) for admission in 2024 have commenced in May. Applications for early admission to the Institute of Technical Education (ITE) and polytechnics based on course-specific aptitude and interests will start in May and June 2023 respectively.

Please refer to the following websites for more information.

DSA-JC (for 4E/5N): <https://www.moe.gov.sg/post-secondary/admissions/dsa>

Poly-EAE (for 4E/5N): <https://www.moe.gov.sg/post-secondary/admissions/poly-eae>

ITE-EAE (for 4N): <https://www.moe.gov.sg/post-secondary/admissions/ite-eae>

4. Student Services during June Holidays

The operating hours of the General Office during the holidays:

- Non-protected period (29 May – 1 June, 19 – 23 June): 7.30am – 6.00pm (except 29 and 30 May due to GCE O-Level MTL Examinations where we will operate from 7.00am)

- Protected period (5 – 16 June): 7.30am – 5.30pm

The drinks stall in our Canteen will operate on 29 May from 7.00am to 11.30am. Students who are returning to school for the national examinations, CCA practices and lessons may purchase drinks and fruits from the stall during their breaks. The snack-vending machine will also be re-stocked daily. Students can bring and consume their own snacks during their breaks.

The school bookshop will be closed during the June school holidays.

The library will remain open as usual to allow girls to revise and address their learning gaps. Opening hours for school library:

- Monday – Thursday: 8.00am to 5.00pm (except 5 and 15 June)
- Friday: 8.00am – 4.30pm (except 16 June)

5. Travel Declaration & Monitoring of Health after June Holidays

To ensure that schools continue to be a healthy and safe environment for all, we require parents/guardians to make a travel declaration for your child/ward if she will be travelling for the holidays. To make a travel declaration for your child/ward via Parents' Gateway (PG), go to [SERVICE > DECLARE TRAVELS].

When planning your travel, please refer to <https://www.ica.gov.sg/enter-transit-depart> for more information and updates. If there is a change in travel plan(s) after declaration, please submit a new travel declaration via PG if there is a change in travel destination or inform the school if the travel plan(s) are cancelled.

Please exercise personal and social responsibility during the holidays and your overseas travel. If your daughter/ward is unwell or have flu-like symptoms

6. Mental Health – Stress, Expectations, Relationships – Worth?? Confidence??

As reported by CNA in Oct 2022 (please refer to [Growing pains: Supporting teenagers through the top 4 emotional stressors \(channelnewsasia.com\)](https://www.channelnewsasia.com) for the full article), the top four stressors faced by teenagers today include academic stress, peer pressure, personal relationships, and self or parental expectations. These stressors may lead to more serious mental health issues if left unattended to. This is consistent with our internal mid-year student survey.

As part of our support for students' overall well-being, various activities were organised to allow students to discover and explore ways to manage stress during the Mental Health Awareness week in Term 2 Week 7 and 8. Based on the theme, "I am a whole person", students were encouraged to take care of their emotional, physical and mental well-being, and had the opportunity to explore ways that they can adopt to support their mental health. For example, some classes recorded videos of themselves taking a walk in the school's eco garden or singing as a class to relieve stress. Students also expressed themselves by creating colourful art sculptures on what mental wellness means to them.



Please see <https://www.moe.gov.sg/-/media/files/programmes/trifold-brochure.ashx> for additional resources for parents on 'providing social emotional support for your child'.

7. Highlights of Key School Events in Term 3

The following are highlights of our school's key programmes in Term 3, 2023.

Monthly Themes	Dates	Key Events
Being a Servant Leader	26 Jun (Mon)	2023 Term 3 commences Principal's Welcome Assembly Vice-Principal (Admin)'s Term 3 Safety Briefing
	26 – 28 Jun (Mon – Wed)	Applied Learning Modules for Sec 2 students on the NA and NT courses
	29 Jun (Thu)	Hari Raya Haji Holiday
	30 Jun (Fri)	<i>PL Heartbeat</i> – Youth Day Celebration
Living Zealously in our Youth	3 Jul (Mon)	Youth Day School Holiday
	4 Jul (Tue)	O-Level Mother Tongue Languages (MTL) and BMTL Listening Comprehension <i>Early dismissal at 12.50pm.</i>
	6 – 17 Jul (Thur – Mon)	O-Level MTL Oral Examinations
	7 Jul (Fri)	Night Study for graduating cohort commences.
	11 – 17 Jul (Tue – Mon)	N-Level English Language (EL) Oral Examinations
	12 Jul (Wed)	Home-Based Learning (Sec 1 – 4/5)
	19 Jul (Wed)	Home-Based Learning (Sec 1 – 4/5)
	21 Jul (Fri)	Racial Harmony Day
	21 Jul – 11 Aug (Fri – Fri)	N-Level Preliminary Examinations
	25 Jul – 3 Aug (Tue – Thur)	O-Level EL Oral Examinations
	25 – 27 Jul (Tue – Thur)	N-Level MTL Oral Examinations
	27 Jul (Thur)	Home-Based Learning (Sec 1 – 3)
	28 Jul – 3 Aug (Thur – Thur)	O-Level HMTL Oral Examinations
	15, 22, 29 Jul (3 Saturdays)	Triple P Seminars for parents; details will be shared later.
Going Forth to Light the World	3 Aug (Thur)	Home-Based Learning (Sec 1 – 3)
	8 Aug (Tue)	National Day Celebrations & Prize-Giving Ceremony
	9 – 10 Aug (Wed – Thur)	National Day Holidays

	14 – 16 Aug (Mon – Wed)	O-Level Preliminary Science Practical Examinations
	17 – 30 Aug (Thur – Wed)	O-Level Preliminary Examinations
	28 – 30 Aug (Mon – Wed)	Sec 1 OALC Camp
	28 – 29 Aug (Mon – Tue)	Home-Based Learning (Sec 2 – 3)
	30 Aug (Wed)	Student Leaders-Principal Dialogue
	31 Aug (Thur)	Principal's Term 3 End-of-Term Assembly Teachers' Day Celebrations
Fixing our Eyes on our Purpose	1 Sep (Fri)	Teachers' Day School Holiday
	4 – 8 Sep (Mon – Fri)	1-Week School Holiday
	4 – 5 Sep (Mon – Tue)	N-Level Intensive Revision

Every Mon morning, 7.30am at SFE Room or 8am via Zoom (starts 9 Jan 2023)	<i>PrayingParents@PL</i> meets every Monday morning either in school (SFE Room) or via Zoom, for a time of prayer and fellowship. If you are interested to join in, please email Ms Irene Angullia at irene_angullia@moe.edu.sg
Once a term (likely a Wednesday)	<i>Fathers@School</i> holds its termly bonding session for fathers and their daughters, when possible. Parents will be informed via Parents Gateway (PG) closer to the date of the event. Please sign up for the sessions via PG then.

Please check the school website (<https://www.plmgss.moe.edu.sg>) for regular updates on the school programmes and other administrative matters. Do also follow us on our Facebook page for the happenings in and around the school (<https://www.facebook.com/PAYALEBARMGS>).

I wish you all a wonderful time of rest and bonding with your loved ones this mid-year break. May God's protection and blessing be with you and your family this holiday. Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Ms Amy Ng
Principal