



# More primary schools get spruced up

Another 7 schools will return to upgraded facilities by end of 2014



ST PHOTO: RAJ NADARAJAN

BY AMELIA TENG

AT SENG Kang Primary, pupils used to play in converted corridors because of a lack of space. Now there is a small performance stage at the back of classrooms. The school also has a performing arts studio, an indoor sports hall and outdoor learning

spaces including a butterfly garden for pupils to explore biodiversity.

All these have been added after it moved back to its upgraded premises in March. "Previously we had space constraints and had to convert corridors into play areas," said principal Rabia Shahul. Now,

"learning is no longer limited by the four walls of the classrooms".

Seng Kang Primary is just one of the schools that have benefited from the Ministry of Education's (MOE) primary school upgrading programme, which began in 2009. Each project costs between \$3 million



and \$5 million. By end-2014, seven more schools - Canossa Convent, CHIJ (Toa Payoh), Kuo Chuan Presbyterian, Nanyang, Rosyth, St Anthony's and St Hilda's - will return to new and improved permanent premises.

Mrs Margaret Tan, principal of CHIJ (Toa Payoh), said that with the upgrading, the school - which moves back to 628 Toa Payoh Lorong 1 from its temporary site at 430 Toa Payoh Lorong 1, will provide a "better learning environment". The upgrade includes a "greenhouse" and wall for hydroponics. There will also be walls for pupils to experiment with art.

Rosyth will return to its premises at Serangoon North Avenue 4 in December, from its holding site at Ang Mo Kio. The other five schools will move

back a year later. Another 71 schools are slated for upgrading starting from November.

The ministry aims to equip all 190 primary schools with upgraded facilities by 2016.

The new amenities will allow every school to become single session, as well as support non-academic learning - both key recommendations made by the Primary Education Review and Implementation committee in 2009.

Since then, an average of five schools have moved back to upgraded premises each year, an MOE spokesman said.

Housewife Elisa Ng, 42, who has a Primary 1 son in Kuo Chuan Presbyterian, is hoping that there will be more "natural spaces" in schools. "I'm not sure what facilities my son's school will be getting,

but more than studios and rooms, children at that age need bigger playgrounds and rooftop gardens to run around and play, so that they develop physically."

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**MORE ROOM TO  
LEARN**

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**- Seng Kang**



Primary School  
principal Rabia Shahul

## Upgrading for primary schools

SINCE 2009, primary schools have been undergoing upgrading in phases. The MOE plans to upgrade all 190 schools by 2016.

**Completed and in-progress:** 78 schools  
**Upgrading to start from November:** 71 schools