

Subject-based Banding

Catering to your child's abilities



Every child is unique, with different aptitudes, capabilities and talents. Our schools believe in providing a balanced education that caters to children's differing abilities and prepares them for life. In line with this philosophy, Subject-based Banding has been introduced to ensure that your child's interests and strengths are taken into consideration. Introduced as a refinement to the streaming process, Subject-based Banding aims to help every child realise his potential.



What is Subject-based Banding?

From 2008, Subject-based Banding has replaced the EM3 stream in Primary 5 and 6.

Subject-based Banding means greater flexibility for your child by giving him the choice to take a mix of standard or foundation subjects, depending on his strengths. For example, if he is strong in English and Mother Tongue but very weak in Mathematics and Science, he may choose to take the first two subjects at the standard level and the others at the foundation level. This will help him focus and improve on the subjects he is strong in while building up the fundamentals in the subjects that he is very weak in.

Subject-based Banding encourages your child to stretch his potential in the areas he naturally excels in. It also means that your child will be able to remain with his classmates during standard subject lessons, and enjoy the camaraderie and class spirit that he has established with them.

Why introduce Subject-based Banding?

- To recognise the different abilities of pupils and give them greater flexibility to concentrate on the subjects they are good in.
- To encourage greater interaction among pupils with different strengths.



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What are some choices available?

If your child (for P4 exam)	Your child will be recommended to take
Passes all 4 subjects and performs very well in Mother Tongue Language	4 standard subjects + Higher Mother Tongue Language
Passes all 4 subjects	4 standard subjects
Passes 3 subjects	4 standard subjects
Passes 2 subjects or less	4 standard subjects; or
	3 standard subjects + 1 other foundation subject; or
	2 standard subjects + 2 other foundation subjects; or
	1 standard subject + 3 other foundation subjects; or
	4 foundation subjects

How does Subject-based Banding work?

At P4

Pupil sits for school-based examinations

Based on pupil's results, school recommends a subject combination. Parents fill up option form indicating preferred combination.



At P5

Pupil takes subject combination chosen by parents

English, Math, Science and Mother Tongue are available at standard and foundation levels. Mother Tongue is also available at the higher level.



End of P5

Pupil who takes 1 or more foundation subject(s) and does very well in the subjects

School may allow him to upgrade some subjects to standard level if school believes he can cope; or continue the same subject combination in P6

Pupil who takes 4 standard subjects and has difficulty coping

School may allow him to take 1 or more subjects at foundation level at P6

All other pupils

School will allow them to continue the same subject combination in P6



End of P6

Pupil sits for Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE)



At P6

Pupil takes subject combination decided by school



Subject-based Banding and Secondary School admission. How are they related?

Progression to secondary level depends on your child's PSLE score. The different expectations of standard and foundation subjects will be taken into account when your child's PSLE score is calculated. Previously, pupils from EM3 stream would mostly enter the Normal (Technical) course at secondary level. With Subject-based Banding, these pupils, if they have strengths in some areas, are able to offer at least one subject at the standard level. If they excel in these subjects, they will have the opportunity to pursue higher-level options at secondary school.

Offering weaker subjects at the foundation level is not a disadvantage to your child. It enables him to focus on building up strong fundamentals in these subjects and better prepares him for progression to secondary school.

We are always here to help

Schools will make recommendations on subject combinations, based on your child's needs and abilities. If you have any questions on Subject-based Banding, you should approach your child's school for help.

