

P4 SUBJECT-BASED BANDING (SBB)

For Primary Schools

~ Catering to Your Child's Abilities ~

29 May 2026, Friday



OUTLINE

1. P4 Subject-based Banding
2. Achievement Levels (ALs)
3. Frequently Asked Questions



What is Subject-based Banding (Primary)?

- **Subject-based banding (at P5 & P6) was introduced as a refinement to the streaming process to help each child realise his potential, based on his readiness.**
- **It provides greater flexibility for your child by offering him the option of a combination of **standard** and **foundation** subjects, depending on his readiness.**



Why Introduce Subject-based Banding?

- To recognise that every child is unique, and has different abilities, aptitudes, capabilities and talents.
- To provide a balanced education that caters to the different abilities of each child so that we can prepare him for life.
- To allow your child to focus on and stretch his potential in the subjects that he is strong in while building up the fundamentals in the subjects that he needs more support in.



How does Subject-based Banding works?

At end of P4

**School recommends a subject combination based on
P4 end-of-year examination results.
Parents select preferred combination.**



**At P5, student takes subject combination chosen by
parents.**



How does Subject-based Banding works?

At the end of P4	You will be recommended to take
Pass all 4 subjects	4 standard subjects
Pass 1 or more subjects	A combination of standard and foundation subjects
Pass all 4 subjects, and did very well for Mother Tongue Language (MTL)	4 standard subjects + Higher Mother Tongue Language (HMTL)



Subject Combinations offered in SKPS

Your child will be recommended to take

4 Standard subjects (EL, MA, SC, MTL)

3 Standard subjects (EL, SC, MTL) +
1 Foundation subject (FMA)

3 Standard subjects (EL, MA, SC) +
1 Foundation subject (FMTL)

4 Standard subjects (EL, MA, SC, MTL) +
1 Higher MTL



Eligibility for Higher Mother Tongue (HMTL)

Mother Tongue	English, Mathematics, Science
Band 1 (85 marks & above)	At least Band 2 (Above 70 marks)

- School identifies students and advises parents on whether their child is eligible.
- Students are expected to take HMTL for a complete year before they can request to drop the subject.

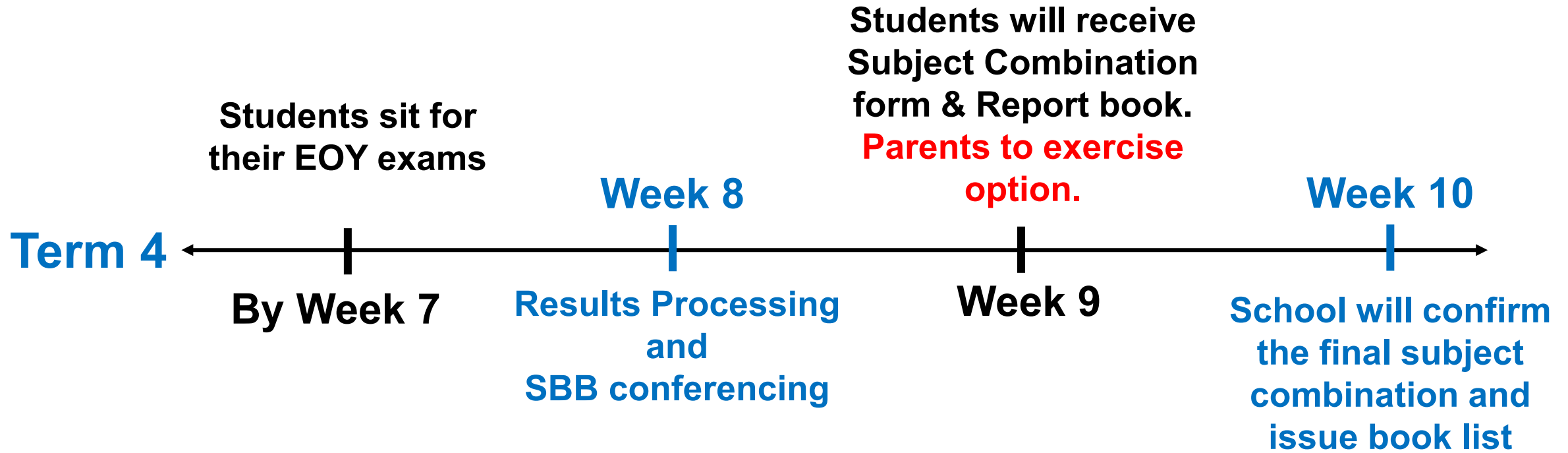


Considerations for taking Higher Mother Tongue Language (HMTL)

	Higher Mother Tongue Languages	
Learning Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 set of Higher CL books	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 set of Standard ML/TL books• 1 set of Higher ML/TL books
Lessons	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1.5 hours• After curriculum hours on Thursdays	
Examination	2 examinations: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 for Standard MTL• 1 for Higher MTL (for P5 and P6)	



Timeline for Subject-based Banding (SBB)



Subject-based Banding At End of P5

At the end of P5

Student takes a subject combination **determined by the school**

↓

Students who have not demonstrated ability to cope with curricular load

↓

Switch some subjects to foundation level

↓

Students who have demonstrated ability to cope with curricular load

↓

Continue with the same subject combination

↓

Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) At End of P6



2. Achievement Levels (ALs) P5 & P6



WHAT ARE ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS (AL)?

- Students with similar scores in each subject are grouped into scoring bands measured in 8 ALs.
- AL bands and mark ranges are set based on the learning objectives of the curriculum and mirror the way we learn.
- Student's AL reflects their own level of achievement.

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



GRADING OF FOUNDATION SUBJECT GRADES

- Foundation subject grades are graded in scoring bands from AL A to C.

FOUNDATION LEVEL AL	FOUNDATION RAW MARK RANGE	EQUIVALENT STANDARD LEVEL AL
A	75 – 100	6
B	30 – 74	7
C	< 30	8



Frequently Asked Questions



Question	Answer
My child does not take Mother Tongue in school. Will this disadvantage the child?	For students who are exempted from MTL, the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) scoring system will assign them a Mother Tongue score to ensure they have a total PSLE score comprising four subjects. This assigned score is derived based on the student's performance in other subjects.



Question	Answer
<p>Are students at a disadvantage if they choose to take a subject at the foundation level?</p>	<p>The MOE's Subject-Based Banding (SBB) approach allows students to take subjects at levels that match their ability and readiness. Foundation level subjects are designed to help students build strong fundamentals and better prepare them for progression to secondary school.</p> <p>However, if a student can take a subject at the Standard level, it will allow the student to access a lower possible Achievement Levels (ALs) which in turn can result in a better overall PSLE score. Lower PSLE scores expand options for students to enter schools that may require lower entry scores.</p>



Question	Answer
Can a child still opt for DSA if he/she takes a foundation subject?	Yes, students taking Foundation level subjects can still apply for Direct School Admission to secondary schools. The DSA-Sec allows Primary 6 students to seek admission based on talents in areas like sports, arts, leadership, and specific academic domains. Admission through DSA is based on the student's aptitude and potential in the chosen area, not solely on academic grades. However, it's important to note that students admitted via DSA must still meet the school's academic requirements for the relevant Posting Group.



Question	Answer
Why is 2S2F with foundation subjects in English and Science not offered?	English Language(EL) is fundamental to learning across all subjects, and Science requires a certain level of language proficiency to grasp complex concepts. Therefore, schools may recommend students to take EL at the Standard level to ensure they can effectively access the curriculum in other subjects, including Science.

