



BEYOND
social services



Evaluation report on research findings from parental survey (2017-2018)

Written by: P. Keerthana, Primary Researcher

With inputs from

Samuel Tang, Researcher with Beyond Social Services

Swathi Swaminathan, Community Worker with Healthy Start Child Development Centre

Executive Summary

This report aims to provide an in-depth analysis of the findings from the parental feedback surveys conducted with the parents and/or caregivers of children at the Healthy Start Child Development Centre ('the Centre' or 'HSCDC'). This is also part of a larger, long-term research study through which we aim to achieve the following objectives:

- 1) Assess the effectiveness of the current resources and teaching methodology in helping our children
- 2) Assess the effectiveness of parental engagement and what can be done better
- 3) Recommendations to better address challenges faced and to identify innovative ways of addressing not just children's needs, but also that of our staff and parents.

By hearing the views of parents, we were able to understand what the Centre has done well and what can be done better moving forward. This also forms the basis for some of the recommendations that we have suggested in the later part of the report and also looks at some of the initiatives the Centre plans to roll out.

Our report adopts the methodology of practice research¹. We have been conducting the parental survey annually. Periodically, we review our survey methodology, types of questions in the questionnaires and see if we could adopt different methods to elicit better quality responses. For our 2019 survey, we will also conduct interviews and have conversations with teachers. This is to better understand their perspectives of the curriculum and their efforts in developing the growth and potential of the children and get a balanced perspective that we can use to make further improvements to our services and programmes. These findings would be made available in the 2019 evaluation report which will be published by end 2020.

Table 1 (see next page) summarises the improvements and the specific measures adopted by the Centre to address these suggestions moving forward.

¹ The basic foundation of practice research is building theory from practice and not only from academic research. The approach is based on a combination of research methodology, field research and practical experience. Development in Denmark for instance has shown that although some municipalities need build up small research departments, they also need "outsiders" to measure and evaluate public support. These outside research partners must be open minded towards allowing practice to join the research process – from producing research questions, through data collection and analysis, to the information and transformation of findings to new methods in social work.

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Table 1: Improvements and measures taken for 2017 and 2018

Improvements suggested in 2017	Improvements suggested in 2018	Measures by/responses of the Centre
<p>Increased emphasis on literacy and numeracy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More practice in reading, sentence formation and writing • More practice in basic addition/ subtraction/ calculation • Provision of take-home exercises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide more take home exercises • Improve addition and subtraction. 	<p>The Centre has already been providing take home exercises. We will be interviewing teachers for the next annual survey to get a more detailed understanding of the take home exercises/homework which is being provided to students.</p> <p>The Centre has been engaging regular individual, group and corporate volunteers for literacy, language and maths support. For this, we have long term collaborations with corporates (e.g. Bloomberg) and with educational institutions (e.g. UWCSEA). In addition, some of our children have also been included under the weekly Educational Learning Programme of EDIS Cares.</p> <p>The Centre also identifies children who need additional language support and works with MOE trained teachers (under the FLiR programme) as well as teachers under the Development Support Programme of the MSF. These teachers conduct one-on-one sessions with the children every week.</p>
<p>More art/music activities since children enjoy these.</p>	<p>Improving children’s hand grip with art tools, e.g. pencils</p>	<p>The Centre has engaged a ukulele teacher to teach the ukulele to our K1 and K2 children through weekly lessons. Our children have given ukulele performances at public venues in support of Beyond’s fundraising initiatives.</p>

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		<p>Teachers also plan lessons that are aligned with children’s interests, abilities and explore creative ways to integrate art/music as part of the curriculum. These activities are meant to improve children’s creativity and both fine and gross motor skills.</p> <p>For music, the younger children are always greeted in the morning with good morning songs and the song they are learning for the week is dependent on the topics planned. Nursery songs are taught together with self-made or commercial instruments. Songs and rhymes are also used in transitions in class where the children will sing songs.</p> <p>For N2 students, the teacher introduces different art activities such as collage, colouring, painting, stamping, dough play and more.</p> <p>The K2 teacher invites her children to create patterns on drawing paper and paint them with water colour paints after a few numeracy lessons on patterns. After children are done with their painting, they will be asked to share about their artwork, elaborate on what they drew, choice of colours etc. The teacher highlighted that this incorporates various elements of art, creative expression, communication skills, motor and numeracy skills.</p>
<p>More regular, one-on-one feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - parent-teacher meetings, - conversations 	<p>More parent-teacher meetings</p>	<p>The Centre reviewed the frequency of PTMs (conducted twice every year) and has decided that this is most practical and sustainable.</p>

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<p>- communication handbook to facilitate two-way, daily communication</p>		<p>The school WhatsApp number is used by teachers and parents for prompt, daily updates regarding the children and has been working well.</p> <p>Recently, teachers have been arranging for more informal chats with parents instead (e.g. when parents come to pick up their children at the Centre) in addition to the bi-annual meetings. This allows teachers to build a better rapport with parents and facilitates ease of check-in about the child’s progress any time, not just limited to the 2 meetings. For the next annual survey, we will interview teachers to better understand how they have been contacting parents to arrange for meetings and their experience with this.</p>
<p>More activities/events involving parents/caregivers and for parents/caregivers (e.g. workshops with relevant topics such as parent child bonding, improving parent child communication).</p>		<p>Parents/caregivers are invited to participate in annual celebrations at the centre for Hari Raya, National Day, Racial Harmony Day etc. They are also encouraged to participate in the monthly <i>tabung</i> counting and volunteer in classroom activities.</p> <p>We had a parent workshop covering managing child behaviours. Going forward, we are reaching out to the extended community for workshops for both staff and parents/caregivers on topics that are relevant for them based on their inputs.</p>

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Note to parents/caregivers of children at HSDSC

Dear parents/caregivers,

As a volunteer writing this report, I am grateful for the opportunity to lead this research study and would like to thank Swathi and Samuel for the guidance and maintaining a constant, critical overview of this research study. I have been helping out the Centre with annual parental surveys since 2018 and this has provided me with much exposure and experience- be it speaking to parents and finding out their pain points, needs, concerns or be it speaking to our educators to understand the challenges they experience on the ground. It has been heartwarming to hear different perspectives.

I would like to thank each and every one of you for your time and help with our annual parental feedback survey. For each one of you who has taken the time and effort to speak to me and/or Swathi and the other Centre staff, we would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to you for being part of this research study. Your participation is key to our continuous pursuit to find out more from parents/caregivers about what has worked and what we can strengthen to better help meet your child's and your needs. We will continue to conduct this annual parental survey and provide recommendations that will benefit our children based on your feedback.

The information and details presented in this report are purely based on your own feedback. We have also ensured that all of your responses are kept confidential and there will be no names taken in the subsequent sharing of this research. Please feel free to contact any of the Centre management staff if you would like more information or clarifications on this report.

Thank you and we hope that you will continue to be part of our efforts!

P. Keerthana
Volunteer Researcher with Beyond Social Services

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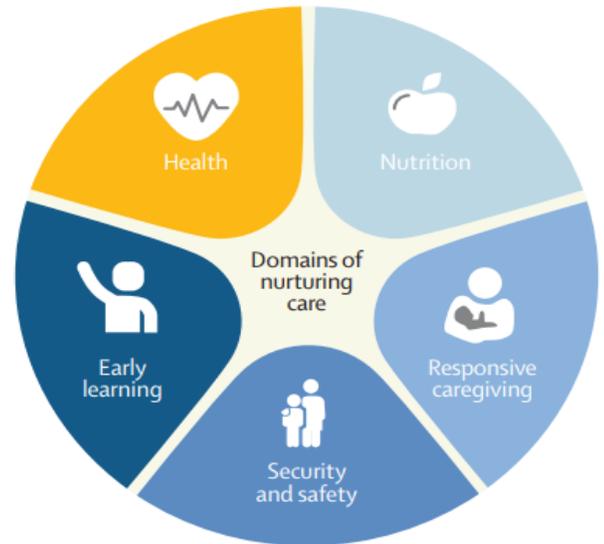
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Introduction

According to World Health Organisation (WHO), a child's brain develops the fastest in the first 2-3 years. The foundation of children's development includes the following dimensions: nutrition, safety and security, health, responsive care and early learning.

About 250 million children under 5 are at risk of not reaching their full potential. This leads to about 25% reduction in average adult earning potential. Early childhood development pays off through better health and learning capacity, increased adult earning, poverty reduction, fewer inequalities and more peaceful societies.



Source: 2016 Lancet Early Childhood Development Series

Research by Canadian Researchers Mustard, McCain and Shanker has shown that between birth and age of three, positive experiences such as those gained through play are crucial for developing neural pathways in the young child's brain (*Straits Times, 2016. Early childhood education: Importance of learning through play*). This highlights the significance of children having continuous and consistent high-quality support for their development and learning from infancy through the early elementary years.

The Centre has been conducting these formal annual parental surveys from 2017 to better understand parents' experiences with the Centre, their children's development and the challenges faced. Slightly different methodologies and questions were adopted for the 2017 and 2018 surveys - more details to follow in the upcoming sections.

Healthy Start Child Development Centre – A Background

Healthy Start Child Development Centre (HSCDC) provides a full day, early childhood programme for children up below 7 years old whose developmental and learning needs have been hindered by their social disadvantages. These children should leave our programme ready for primary school and our Centre should serve as a focal point that encourages the value of education as well as a culture of learning among the families of our children and within the neighbourhoods where they live. We will do this by providing a quality environment and a pre-school curriculum that nurtures children's growth emotionally, socially, cognitively and physically. We will also be a warm and welcoming place that actively involves parents and caregivers to take an active interest in their children's education.

Hence HSCDC works towards these goals:

- a. That disadvantaged children are identified early and are provided educational, health and nutritional support;
- b. That children are prepared for Primary School Education and school success;
- c. That caregivers acquire the skills and knowledge necessary for ensuring the healthy development of their children;
- d. That individuals and organizations in our community take an active interest in the well-being of disadvantaged children.

We emphasize home-school-community partnership as the involvement of the local and external community enriches and enhances the quality of learning in HSCDC for the children and families.

Admission to the programme is through referrals from community workers from Beyond and from external social service organisations. HSCDC serves as a safety net for children who may be unable to gain access to mainstream childcare.

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Curriculum Goals of HSCDC include the following:

- To nurture children's self-concept within the context of family and society, to help in growing their self-esteem, to feel capable and lovable, and to instill self-discipline, responsibility, and care.
- To provide the care and environment for children's healthy physical development, positive social-emotional development, good psychomotor and cognitive skills with particular emphasis on developing their skills of communication, observation, critical and creative thinking and problem solving. This also contributes to preparing the children for Primary One and starting off on a more level footing with peers their age.
- To provide a safe, secure and positive environment where learning is fun and children learn co-operation as life-long value with respect for the feelings, needs, and rights of others.
- To nurture a positive and caring partnership with parents.
- To introduce and instill in children the socially and environmentally appropriate values in caring for the environment.

Study Methodology

We used a consistent study methodology for the two years: 2017 and 2018, while major components remain the same, some refinements were made to the 2018 survey. More details are elaborated below.

Survey questions were categorised into the following broad themes.

Table 1: Themes and rationale included for 2017 study

Themes	Centre's programme and curriculum	Outings/ events	School-Home Communication and Engagement	Quality of care and nutrition	Community Tabung project
Rationale	Since this area is key to determining academic preparedness of the children, we looked at parent feedback on centre's curriculum. We have also covered feedback on their child's readiness for primary school.	Outings and events are important for the children to get an understanding of the world around them and learn from their environment.	Our centre places strong emphasis on home-and school, working together for the welfare of the child. We would like to understand parents views on quality of engagement and communication between teachers and parents, and how engagement, communication and feedback channels could be improved.	Our Centre serves as a safe and welcoming space for the children. Hence, we would like to understand what parents/ caregivers feel about the quality of care provided to children	We would like to understand parents/ caregivers views on the effectiveness of the project and how parents would like to be involved and informed about the project.

Note: 2018 parental survey only focused on the first 3 areas: Centre's programme and curriculum, outings/events and school-home communication. The purpose was to streamline the questions being asked to parents and reduce parents' cognitive overload too, as we understand most of them are juggling work and family commitments.

2017 Parental Survey Results

The 2017 parental survey results are detailed and analysed in the following pages. These results were analysed in 2018.

A total of **20 parents/caregivers** were surveyed for the 2017 parental survey. Not all parents were able to answer all of our survey questions. Since the number of respondents varied across the survey questions, the presentation and analysis of our results has been done with reference to the number of respondents for a particular question.

1. Curriculum

- **Programme**

More than 50% of the parents surveyed shared that the current programme is adequate; more critical feedback was given for the core areas such as literacy, numeracy and socio-emotional skills.

Learning category	Current programme is adequate	Current programme needs strengthening	Suggestions from parents/caregivers for improvements (Summary)	Specific feedback from parents/caregivers on what the Centre is doing well
Literacy	13 parents	7 parents	More emphasis can be placed on Literacy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • i.e. more reading, handwriting and spelling practice • Kids could take turns to read aloud • Exposure to more word cards • Guidance on sentence formation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements have been seen in speaking, reading and writing • Children are able to recognise new and difficult words better • Children are able to speak and articulate in English fluently

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate more learning through play 	
	13 parents	7 parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More basic maths practice, e.g. practice in simple addition, subtraction, numbers, counting and calculation • Homework for practice and revision • incorporate more learning through play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effort has been put in by Centre to teach numerical skills
Art/Music	19 parents	1 parent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More activities on colouring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children generally enjoy and have developed an interest in music • Enough exposure has been given to art and music
Physical Education	17 parents	3 parents (mentioned "Not sure")	Nil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centre has given adequate exposure to physical activity. • More active than before • Children like the outdoor activities
Social-emotional skills	18 parents	2 parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers can give more positive remarks and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children are independent in

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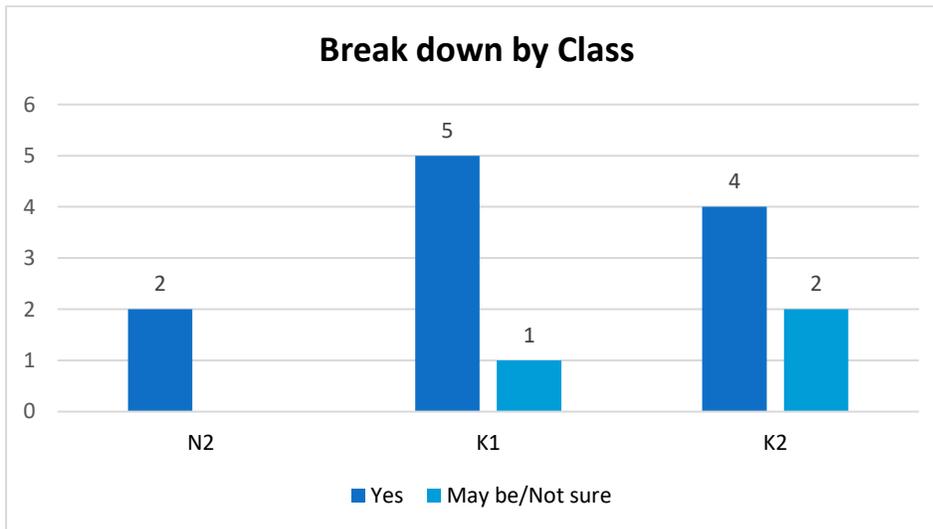
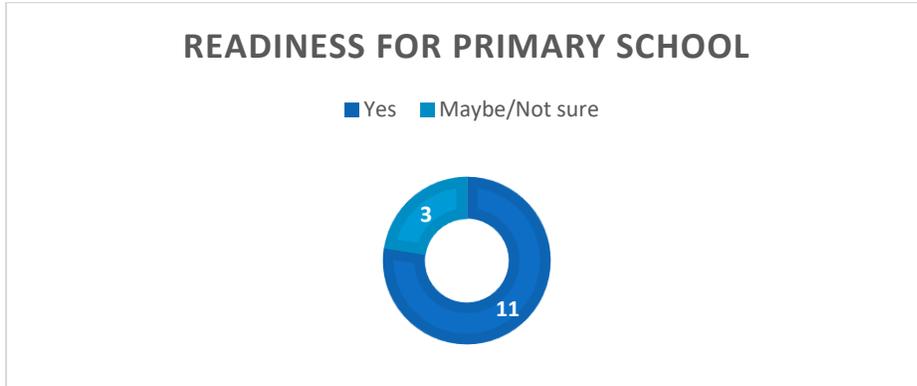
			<p>praise and encouragement to children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School can encourage more socialisation among children so that they interact with everyone and are not selective in their interactions. 	<p>managing their routines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children are able to express emotions
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Observations
 In summary, although parents saw improvements in literacy and numeracy in their child, it was also the area in which most suggestions for improvement were made by them. This is understandable since parents would like to see academic progress and for their children to be prepared for primary school.

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- **Readiness for Primary school**

We obtained responses from 14 parents/caregivers from N2, K1 and K2 classes.



Observations

Majority of the parents/caregivers felt that their children will be ready for primary school. 2 parents said that Maths and English were fine.

Further feedback suggested by parents/caregivers

Parents suggested that (i) more spelling would help the child prepare for primary school and (ii) Chinese language support would help.

2. School-home communication and engagement

Out of 19 respondents on parental engagement, all parents responded that they are informed at least to some **extent** about what their child is learning at school. Almost 80% of the respondents indicated “Enough” and “A lot” in terms of how well they are informed. Refer to the detailed breakdown of the results below.

Responses	Little	Some	Enough	A Lot
Number of parents	0	4	7	8
Types of engagement methods preferred	Nil	<p>Most parents wanted regular two-way feedback and Parent Teacher meetings as a means of giving and receiving information on their child’s learning.</p> <p>Class participation/volunteering and, take home activities were other ways that some parents felt they would like to be know what their child was doing and learning at school.</p> <p>Some parents liked the quarterly school newsletter as a means of getting a general picture of what was happening at school.</p>		

Observations

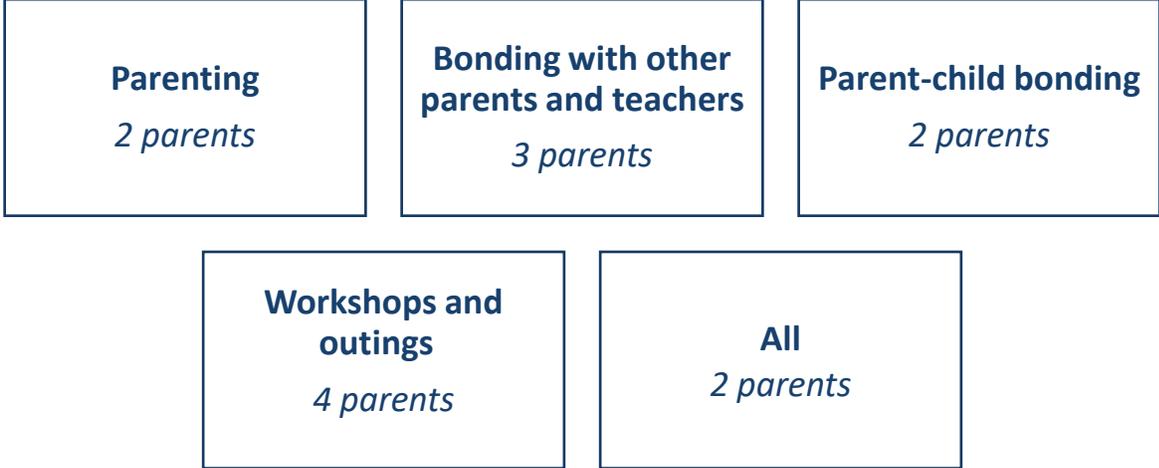
The centre could place greater emphasis on regular engagement with the K1 and K2 classes particularly with regard to Parent-teacher meetings so that parents/caregivers are kept apprised of their children’s academic and other progress. This would mean that home and school, would work together to help the children in their readiness for primary school. The centre could also look at alternate ways of engaging with parents/caregivers when face-to-face PTMs are not possible (e.g. video conferences).

3. Outings and events

Our parents/caregivers acknowledge and appreciate the efforts of the Centre to make available these opportunities for outings and events for the children. Majority of the parents surveyed would like to see outings and activities which are educational, interactive, and in which children are able to explore and learn more.

Few parents have also suggested that outings could involve parents, so as to provide opportunities for parent-child bonding. In addition, parents expressed interest to volunteer at the outings/events that the Centre organises. However, finding time could be a challenge for those with work commitments.

Out of the 19 respondents, most parents/caregivers are interested in attending activities/events organised for them. The following table details the breakdown of the parents (13 of them) who had expressed a preference in the types of activities that they would like to see.



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4. Tabung Programme

We also used the 2017 study as an opportunity to gain feedback from parents about the *Tabung* programme. Overall, parents/caregivers feel that the Tabung programme is a good programme that benefits children and families (for example, one parent said that it is a good way to increase CDA balance for her child).

More than half the parents surveyed had been making monthly contributions to the Tabung programme. Breakdown is detailed as follows:

- 15 parents made contributions for 10 months or more
- Only 1 parent made contributions fewer than 6 times
- 11 out of 19 respondents participated in monthly Tabung counting days at least once. 5 of them could not participate due to work commitments.

Additionally, during separate 1-on-1 conversations held with parents who were active participants in the *Tabung* programme in 2017, all 5 parents shared that the *Tabung* has been a wonderful programme in helping to educate their children on the importance of savings

"I want to share the importance of Tabung and spread the message."

"Other kindergartens do not have this project. Tabung educates children on how to save."

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5. Quality of care and nutrition

Overall, all parents feel satisfied with the quality of care (i.e. in terms of routine care, hygiene, safety and emotional support/guidance) received by their child/children at the Centre. 2 parents gave specific feedback that more attention to younger children especially those who are more active could be given.

Most parents agreed that the Centre has been working well with them to address concerns that they have for their children.

Most parents are satisfied with the nutrition/quality and variety of food served at the Centre. 11 parents responded that they would like to receive the schedule of the food menu periodically. The Centre has since uploaded food menu schedules via Little Lives App, which parents can access. Further, the parent handbook which is given to each parent at the time of orientation has a copy of the weekly food menu.

Streamlining Key Activities through the Little Lives App



Little Lives is a Preschool Management Software that provides preschools with a management system that enhances daily operations and parent-school communication. The App was introduced at the Centre in 2018.

The app allows schools to record students' administrative records digitally, from attendance taking to portfolio management. The system allows recording of learning activities and observations throughout the year and generates a portfolio to show parents at the end of the year. It keeps track of children's learning and progress throughout the years, helping to update parents on their development too. Reports are generated at the click of a button. They are kept digitally including attendance, health, enrolment and more. This improves the overall efficiency of operations of the Centre.

In our interview with Mr Kok Wah, Home-School Partnership Admin with Healthy Start Child Development Centre, he shared that previously, the Centre used newsletters but that teachers preferred to use more IT enabled devices or features that allowed them to upload class pictures and videos more easily. He further shared that newsletters were hard to keep track of. With little lives, newsletters, information bulletins etc. can be sent to all parents/caregivers via the app. All such communication as well as children's records can be accessed at any point of time and there is lesser paper usage.

Little Lives App features that have aided efficiency in important activities at the centre are:

- **Attendance** – This feature helps the teachers and the Centre to monitor the children's attendance and observe trends in attendance. Long absences can be monitored and followed up on. Attendance can be tracked and analysed on a yearly, monthly, weekly or daily basis through an interactive dashboard. This is useful to understand which families could be facing challenges in sending the children to school and explore ways to support them.
- **Portfolio** - This feature (only accessible by teachers and parents) allows parents to track their children's progress and development. It is especially useful for parents who would like to have regular updates about their children's performance but may find it challenging to check in personally with teachers due to their busy schedules. Teachers regularly post videos and pictures of the children allowing the family to view their child's progress. This feature is a useful addition to in-person meetings and teachers find it efficient to inform families of how the children are doing more frequently. The Portfolio

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tab is now being used more commonly. Teachers have been encouraging parents to use this App.

- **Events-** Similar to the newsletters that were used for communication in the past, the events tab in the Little Lives App helps to update parents about events, highlights and other information. Bulletins on specific topics, for example, healthy eating for children and families and Tabung collections are also posted by the Centre management on the app. Bulletins can be uploaded separately for each of the classes for updates specific to each class.
- **Centre Log-** This is one of the main features of the App, which serves as a central repository for the updating of any key incidents that have occurred, e.g. illnesses, injuries and so on. There is an incident reporting feature system where teachers record the incident report if there is any issue. This ensures that teachers, parents and Centre management are updated on serious issues and the necessary follow up actions taken promptly.
- **Automated Check-in** - Little Lives also facilitates automatic check-ins for parents when they come to drop off or pick up their children from school. Parents are able to sign-in electronically through a tablet to register their child's attendance. At the time of drop off and pick up, they have to just take a selfie of themselves with the child and upload this picture for record and monitoring purposes. At drop off, quick health check (body temperature, check of hands, feet and mouth) is also done and logged in. These records can be accessed by the teachers immediately. There are 3 tabs- *Check in/out, temperature, attendance/remarks*. Any of the centre staff can check if a particular child is present/absent by accessing the app. This has increased the overall efficiency of the registration process.

Moving forward: Designing the 2018 questionnaire and executing the survey

Based on parents' feedback from the 2017 parental survey, we realised that some questions could be streamlined or removed to reduce the length of the questionnaire. Hence, we ensured that there was no repetition of questions for which the responses are clear to us or for which enough insight has been gained, as they would not be necessary for subsequent surveys.

We were also flexible in accommodating the diverse needs of the parents with regard to obtaining their responses to the questionnaire. For example, we sent a few of them the questionnaire and received their feedback through Whatsapp or e-mail as they were unable to meet us personally due to work commitments.

2018 Parental Survey Results

1. Curriculum

A total of **26 parents/caregivers** responded to the 2018 survey and parents responded to all questions.

Overall, we are heartened to get positive feedback from parents and caregivers on the efforts of the Centre. They have also recognised our new efforts such as the Little Lives app. See Table below for more details on the specific areas of improvement in our children.

Generally, children have improved in all areas of the curriculum, be it small developmental milestones or larger ones.

Educational Domains	Areas of progress since past year	No of parents who noticed child's progress	Suggested areas for improvements	No of parents who suggested improvements
Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved fluency in speech and pronunciation Increased usage of varied vocabulary Able to construct longer sentences and use more complex words 	18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grammar Spelling 	9
Numeracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Counting has improved, e.g. able to count to larger numbers 	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sequence in counting Addition and subtraction 	5
Art/Music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good picture memory Distinguishing of colours is very quick Children generally enjoy singing, dancing and are more active than before Greater interest to use more colours in art work 	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hand grip with art tools, e.g. pencils and tripod stand Drawing skills 	6

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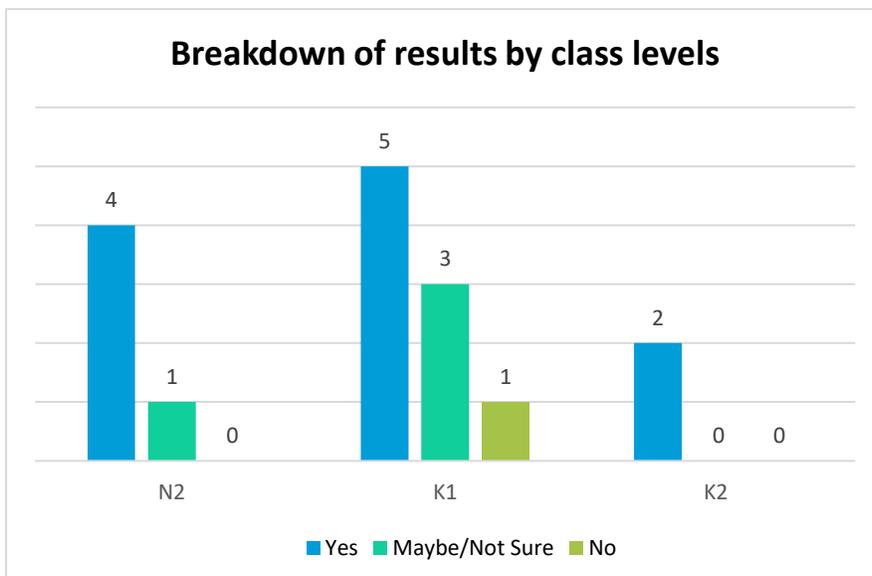
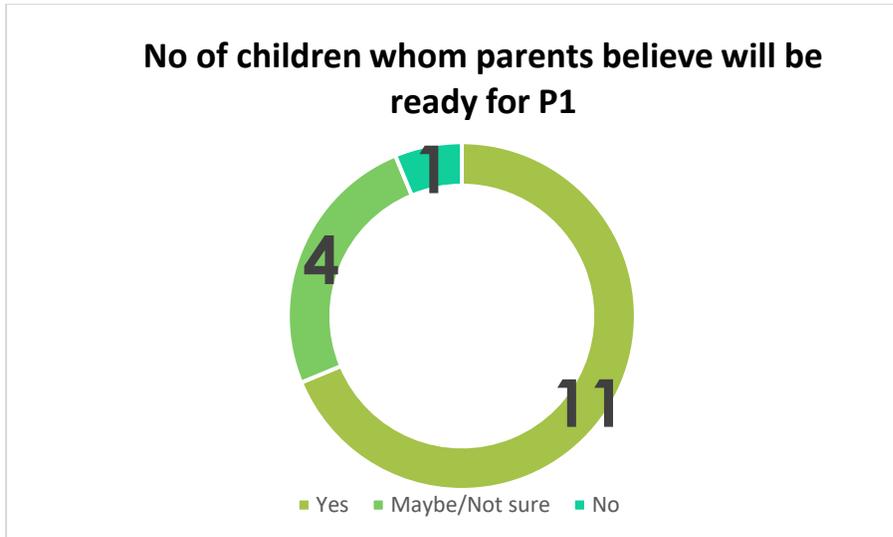
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved creativity 			
Physical Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children love to go outings and are excited to take part in activities • Rarely fall down and are more stable during activities • Greater interest in games and sports, enjoying the games together with other classmates • Active participation throughout 	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More team-based games 	1
Socio-emotional skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children are able to get along well with one another, display emotions at appropriate times and care for one another • Understand clearly about what to do and what not to do in different situations or circumstances 	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interaction with classmates • Selective in friends • Controlling emotions 	3

Note: A few parents commented that they are *“Not sure”* as they do not observe how their children are like during school hours.

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- **Readiness for P1**

Note: For this question, we took into account responses from the 16 parents/caregivers of children in N2, K1 and K2 whom we interviewed, as primary school readiness would be relevant for them. Refer to the charts below for the detailed results.

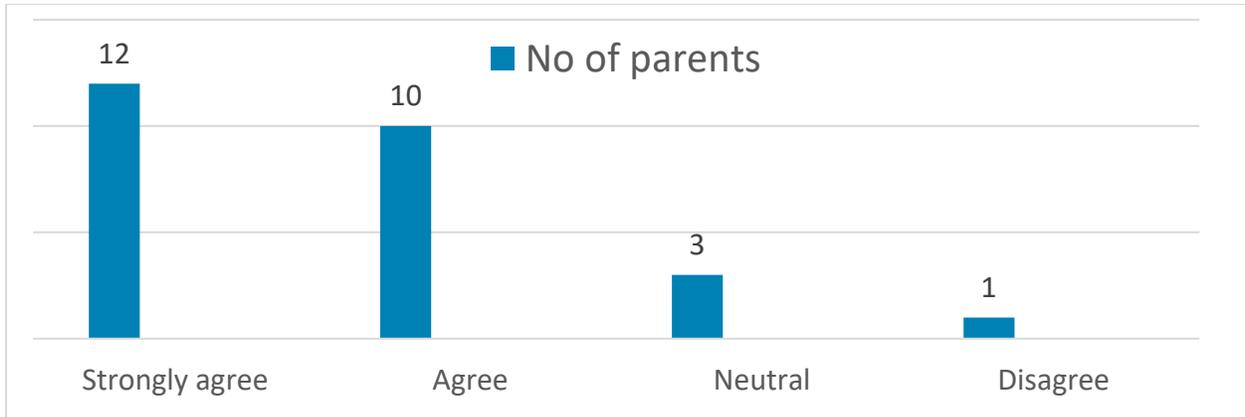


Interpretation of results: Majority of parents believe that their children will be ready for P1, with a few parents still being not sure or hesitant about their child's readiness.

Further feedback suggested by parents: Parents provided feedback that (i) more take-home exercises (e.g. reading) can be provided and (ii) some children would require help in calculation.

2. Parental engagement

- **Awareness about children's progress**



22 parents agreed that they are updated with their children's progress. Some reasons given were:

Little Lives App to monitor children's progress and growth

Teachers give regular feedback on children's progress and performance

School gives back past papers, allows parents to track their progress (N1 Level)

- **Preferred communication mediums**

The top 3 communication mediums preferred by parents are (i) quarterly newsletter, (ii) parent teacher meetings and (iii) take-home activities that help make parents aware of the topics/areas that are being covered at school. Specifically, for parent teacher meetings, 2 parents mentioned that there can be more parent-teacher meetings but this depends on their own schedule as well.

There are 2 parent-teacher meetings held each year. The first meeting is a mid-point check in for parents about their children's progress. The final meeting is held close to the end of the year. In addition to the above, through our conversations with teachers, we understood that apart from the formal parent-teacher meetings, teachers have also been scheduling more informal check-ins and casual chats with parents when parents come to pick up their children

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after school. These casual chats and check-ins help the teachers to update the parents about their children's progress and raise any important issues which need to be brought to parents' attention.

When asked if the Little Lives app has helped parents be more informed of their child's progress, 2 parents shared that the app has been useful in helping them monitor their child's progress.

"We have the Little Lives app, so it is sufficient." (Parent whose child is an infant)

3. Ability to volunteer

Majority of parents (>50% of survey participants) shared that they are not able to volunteer mainly due to i) Lack of time and ii) Work Commitments and difficult daily schedules.

However, despite constraints, 14 parents (>50%) are still willing to volunteer in future. This was about the same as our 2017 results where we saw that parents are interested to volunteer with the Centre but time is a constraint.

"I can help to cater food. Interested in volunteering, but I have many difficulties now." (Parent of infant child)

"I like to organise activities if got time. I like to be with my son so that I can monitor what he is doing." (Parent of child in N1 class)

Key learning points for designing of future studies

1. Plotting age specific questions for upcoming studies

We saw the importance and practicality of designing questionnaires which are specific to a child's age or class as this may influence parents' comments and opinions. For instance, not all children might require homework or take-home activities especially younger children in PG or N1/N2 classes. However, children from K1 or K2 are at the stage where they are getting ready for Primary 1 and hence, take home activities would be more critical in helping the children progress.

2. Conducting interviews with teachers to plot age specific questions

Teachers are aware of the developmental milestones for different age groups and interact with the children extensively. Hence, we are conducting interviews with teachers to understand the differences in their teaching methodology across various age groups. We also interviewed teachers to get an idea of the challenges that they face and to better understand their perspectives on how it is to conduct classes and manage the curriculum in our setting. This would help us design better recommendations moving forward. More detailed feedback from the teachers will be captured in the 2019 report which we aim to release in the later part of 2020.

Meanwhile, we have used some of the teachers' feedback for plotting of age specific questionnaires for our 2019 survey.

We understand the challenges that both parents and educators face. We also hope that more parents will be willing to continue to help us with these studies and interviews as we strive to get more feedback to improve the Centre's services. As such, before the commencement of every survey, we will make sure that we inform parents and also increase awareness about the importance of such parental feedback.

Considerations and conclusion

The findings and results from the 2017 and 2018 parental surveys have been useful in identifying recommendations that the Centre could adopt to help address some of the areas of concern for parents, teachers and our children. The surveys also helped us understand how we should design the parental survey questionnaires, to elicit better responses from parents.

The Centre will examine these issues in greater detail in order to evaluate measures that could be introduced.

******End of report******