



SERANGOON SECONDARY SCHOOL

11 Upper Serangoon View
Singapore 534237



8 January 2021

Through Principal

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Mdm Tay Siok Hwa
Principal
Serangoon Secondary School

2021 Term 1 Letter – Lower Secondary

1. Happy New Year! We are delighted to welcome all our students back to school, and are glad to share with you that your child/ward is settling in into the new school year in a careful and safe manner. In this letter, we would like to update you on:

- COVID-19 Safe Management Measures
- School Hours
- Term 1 School Events
- Term 1 Weighted Assessments
- National Digital Literacy Programme
- School Expectations
- Security – Access Control Into/Within School
- Care of School Properties, including our newly-renovated school library (see right)
- Photography and Videography at School Events / Publication of Students' Work
- School-Home Partnerships
- Communication Channels



COVID-19 Safe Management Measures

2. While we are in Phase 3 of Re-Opening, the resurgence of COVID-19 cases in other countries is a timely reminder for all of us to remain vigilant and observe the following safe management measures:

- **Stay Home in these Situations.** Please inform the school/Form Teachers and keep your child/ward at home if:
 - your child/ward, or any household members aged 18 and above, has flu-like symptoms such as **sore throat, cough, runny nose, and fever**. Medical treatment should be sought immediately.
 - any household members, regardless of age, are on Quarantine Order (QO)/Stay-Home Notice (SHN) and serving QO/SHN at the same residence as your child/ward.

In these situations, your child's/ward's teachers will get in touch to ensure that learning continues meaningfully at home. Let us play our part in this joint effort to keep our nation and our school safe.

- **Daily Visual Screening and Temperature-Taking.** Students with flu-like symptoms will be sent home after their parents/guardians have been contacted. We firmly believe students must take responsibility for their well-being. Hence, they must bring their thermometers for the daily temperature-taking exercise. Students without thermometers are required to purchase one immediately from the school bookshop.
- **Face Masks.** Face masks must be worn properly at all times, except during physical activities and eating/drinking.
- **Enhanced Hygiene Measures.** The wipe-down routine will continue in 2021. Common spaces and equipment must be wiped down after use with paper towels and disinfectant. All spaces are equipped with paper towels, disinfectant, and hand sanitisers. Classrooms, offices, canteen, and toilets are cleaned and disinfected regularly.
- **Frequent Hand-Washing.** Students are reminded to wash their hands frequently with soap, especially before eating or after visits to the toilet.
- **Seating Arrangements.** Fixed exam-style seating in classrooms will continue. We also continue to provide additional seating at the Indoor Sports Hall Level 1 to minimise intermingling across classes during recess.
- **Staggered Arrival and Dismissal Times.** Introduced last year to reduce congestion, this measure will continue in 2021. Please see Para 3 for details.

School Hours

3. The arrival, dismissal, and recess timings are:

Level	Arrival	Recess	Dismissal on Mon – Thu	Dismissal on Fri
Sec 1	7.30 am	10 – 10.30 am	As per class timetable https://serangoonsec.moe.edu.sg/parents-n-students/class-timetables	12.20 pm on odd weeks 12.30 pm on even weeks
Sec 2	7.45 am	10 – 10.30 am		12.30 pm on odd weeks 12.20 pm on even weeks
Sec 3	7.45 am	11 – 11.30 am		12.20 pm on odd weeks 12.30 pm on even weeks
Sec 4 & 5	7.30 am	11 – 11.30 am		12.30 pm on odd weeks 12.20 pm on even weeks

4. To ensure our students' well-being, they will be given additional five-minute **snack break(s)** within curriculum time. Sec 1 and 2 students will have a snack break at 1.00 pm while Sec 3, 4, and 5 students will have snack breaks at 9.30 am and 1.00 pm. Students are encouraged to bring snacks that are simple, nutritious, and easily consumed within the designated break time, e.g. sandwiches and muesli bars. They will not be allowed to purchase food in the canteen or the café during the time given.
5. All Sec 1, 2, and 3 timetables have **CCE/LLP** during Even Week Wednesdays from 1.30 pm to 2.30 pm. This period for Character & Citizenship Education (CCE) and Learning for Life Programme (LLP) is for selected student development experiences such as Values-in-Action projects and student leadership training. The detailed schedule is in **Annex A** – students who are involved are required to attend the respective session(s) as part of the formal school curriculum, while students who are not involved will be dismissed at 1.30 pm on such days instead.
6. **Co-Curricular Activities (CCAs)** are a key component of students' holistic development. Through CCA, students discover their interests and talents, develop character, and learn social-emotional competencies to prepare them for future challenges. CCA is compulsory for all secondary school students. Our CCA Days are on:

Day	Time
Wednesdays	3 – 6 pm
Fridays	2 – 6 pm (except 1.15 – 5 pm for Contemporary Dance)

7. To provide additional support for learning, **Mastery Learning Programme (MLP)** lessons may be conducted for students after school on the following days. Teachers will inform classes of the details of each MLP at least one day before the MLP session. We seek your cooperation that your child/ward attends MLP lessons so that he/she can be well-supported in his/her academics. Please refer to the schedule below:

Sec 1 & 2 MLP Schedule	
Day	Subject Area
Mondays	English
Thursdays	Math

Term 1 School Events

8. The highlight of Term 1 is the annual StaRs Programme, our iconic cohort-level student development experience for all students. As announced by the Ministry of Education (MOE), **non-residential** outdoor adventure learning activities can resume in 2021, and our StaRs Programme will be held on **2 to 5 March 2021**. The table below provides brief details, and more information will be given in February.

Level	StaRs Programme 2021	Venue
Sec 1	Outdoor Adventure and Self-Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objectives: Sec 1 StaRs seeking to learn and grow together. Focus: confidence building, stepping out of comfort zone, self-leadership, and peer bonding. 	School Other external venues will be provided later.
Sec 2	Outdoor Adventure and Team-Building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objectives: Sec 2 StaRs striving to build harmony and be good team players. Focus: Team-building through obstacle course, kayaking, and outdoor cooking. 	Boys' Brigade/Girls' Brigade Campsite

Level	StaRs Programme 2021	Venue
Sec 3	Outdoor Adventure and Team Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objectives: Sec 3 StaRs striving to impact and inspire others positively. Focus: Leadership training and problem-solving through high elements in obstacle course, water adventure, and land expedition. 	Sarimbun Scout Camp
Sec 4 & 5	Camp Breakthrough <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objectives: Sec 4/5 StaRs striving for excellence and serving with honour. Focus: Education & Career Guidance (ECG) on post-secondary education options and interview skills, and Values-in-Action (VIA) projects where students initiate and advocate for an area which they would like to serve. 	School Other external venues will be provided later.

9. Our first Parent Engagement Session of the year will be held at the end of Term 1. There are two parts:
- For all levels between 12 and 31 March 2021.** In view of the COVID-19 situation, Form Teachers will contact parents/guardians through a phone call to update you on the progress of your child/ward holistically.
 - For selected levels on 12 March 2021.** There will be Zoom Webinars on the following topics. We strongly encourage you to attend these talks, so as to better prepare your child/ward in their Sec 2, 4, and 5 year:
 - Sec 2: Upper Secondary Subject Combinations and Eligibility Criteria
 - Sec 4 & 5: Preparing for National Exams and Understanding Post-Secondary Education Options
10. Please refer to **Annex B** for the key school events in Term 1, as well as other important dates for the rest of the year. More details on the events will be provided at a later date.

Term 1 Weighted Assessments

11. As announced by MOE, each subject has at most one weighted assessment per school term. This allows teachers to better pace out teaching and learning, and enhance students' learning experiences. In turn, this helps students to build their confidence and develop an intrinsic motivation to learn. Weighted assessments can take different forms for different subjects: Class Tests, Projects, Coursework, or Assignments. For **class tests**, the schedule for Term 1 for Sec 1 and 2 is:

Sec 1 Class Test Schedule for Term 1										
Week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Subject(s)								Math (ALL)	StaRs Programme	
								Science (ALL)		
								Computer Applications (NT)		

Sec 2 Class Test Schedule for Term 1										
Week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Subject(s)					English (ALL)		Food & Consumer Education (ALL)	Math (ALL)	StaRs Programme	
								Science (ALL)		
								Computer Applications (NT)		

12. In the event of absence from class tests due to valid reasons, e.g. representing school or country in official sanctioned competitions and conferences, a "Valid Reason (VR)" will be given for the class test. This is in recognition of students' holistic development, given that the student development and academic domains are both important. Students can attempt the class test at a later date for the purposes of practice, and feedback will be given to support their learning.
13. Beyond weighted assessments, teachers also formatively assess learning outcomes, strengths, and areas for growth of each student by employing questioning techniques during lessons, and assigning class work and homework.
14. Students are strongly encouraged to seek consultations with teachers in other subject areas, whenever they are in doubt. This will help to address learning gaps earlier in a timely manner.

National Digital Literacy Programme

15. As announced by MOE in June 2020, under the National Digital Literacy Programme, all secondary school students will be equipped with a school-prescribed personal learning device (PLD) by end-2021. This is to enhance teaching and learning by enabling personalised learning and using e-pedagogy.
16. Our school has identified the Lenovo 500e Chromebook for our **Sec 1, 2, and 3 students** for its portability, durability, and the affordances for teaching and learning. Sec 4 and 5 students do not need to purchase the PLD as they are graduating by end-2021.
17. Singapore Citizen students can use their Edusave Account to pay for the PLD. Subsidies will be provided for students on MOE Financial Assistance Scheme to ensure that the out-of-pocket cost is \$0. For more details on financial support, please approach our school.
18. At the Sec 1 Parent Engagement & CCA Orientation on 15 January, Sec 1 parents/guardians will be briefed on funding support and the school's plans to support students in the responsible use of devices. Parents/Guardians of Sec 2 and 3 students will be briefed via Zoom Webinar, and more details will be provided in due course.



School Expectations

19. Regular attendance is integral to student learning and engagement in school. Attendance in school is important to ensure that all students gain knowledge and skills consistently throughout the school term. Being present in school regularly will also increase the opportunities for positive relationship-building amongst students and between teachers and students.
20. A medical certificate, from a medical practitioner registered under the Medical Registration Act on the Singapore Medical Council website, is required if your child/ward is unwell and unable to attend school. A parent's letter may be provided for other types of valid absences, e.g. bereavement. **Permission must be sought from the Principal via Form Teachers for all other absences, including overseas travel, during the school term.**
21. As part of the whole-of-nation effort to harness digital technologies to transform Singapore, parents may now receive a digital MC (DigiMC) from doctors instead. Kindly submit the DigiMC to the school via FormSG (<https://go.gov.sg/sss-emc>). The details to submit a DigiMC may also be found on our school's website at <https://serangoonsec.moe.edu.sg/parents-n-students/general-matters/submission-of-electronic-medical-certificate>.
22. Students coming in after 7.30 am (for Sec 1, 4, and 5) or after 7.45 am (for Sec 2 and 3) are late for school and will be required to serve detention. We encourage students to arrive in school at least five minutes before the respective reporting time. This will help them frame their mind and prepare themselves to learn for the rest of the day.
23. With face masks mandatory due to COVID-19, students can wear the **half school uniform** (PE shirt with pants/skirt) on all days. Members of Uniformed Groups (UGs) can also wear their UG pants/skirts with their boots/shoes on Wednesdays and/or Fridays.
24. As a school, we strive to inculcate appropriate and responsible device usage in our students. Unless allowed by teachers for learning purposes during lessons, handphone usage is restricted to before 7.25 am and after dismissal. Handphones are not allowed during recess, so that students can focus on taking their meals or interacting with their peers. Parents/Guardians can contact the General Office at 6385 1589 if you need to contact your child/ward urgently.
25. Further information on school expectations and rules, such as on student bearing and appearance, can be found in Pages 10 to 18 of our Student Handbook.

Security – Access Control Into/Within School

26. Our school maintains a range of active security measures, including mandatory check-in procedures at the school's main entrance, 24-hour video surveillance, alarms, and school security personnel. We require all visitors to register their presence at the Guard Room and wear a visitors' pass issued by the security personnel. No visitors are allowed to proceed to the classrooms while the school is in session. We seek your understanding and cooperation to keep our school environment safe and secure.

Care of School Properties

27. We are glad to share with you that the school has been undergoing renovation and repainting works since last year, giving the different parts of the school a fresh coat of paint and a new look. We have renovated our school library (Learning Hub) and refurbished all our classrooms, providing students with more and better learning spaces in a cosy environment. Student toilets have also been renovated. Painting of the school campus is ongoing and is scheduled to be completed by April 2021.



Fig 1: Interior and Exterior of the Learning Hub



Fig 2: Classrooms with a fresh coat of paint and new noticeboards

Fig 3: Renovated toilets

28. Care of school facilities is essential to ensure that these investments serve students well. We have impressed upon all members of the Serangoon Secondary community (staff, students, and contracted staff) that everyone is responsible for the care of the upgraded facilities. In the event anyone wilfully damages school properties, either directly or indirectly, the school will take appropriate actions to recover the cost of replacing the damaged property (e.g. \$700 per door frame). We enlist the support of all parents/guardians in our effort to inculcate a sense of care and responsibility towards the upkeep of public properties.

Photography and Videography at School Events / Publication of Students' Work

29. We wish to inform you that photographs and videos taken at all school events, as well as students' work, may be published on the school's official media platforms (e.g. school website) and used for briefings, workshops, displays, and other educational purposes. Please notify your child's/ward's Form Teacher in writing by 31 January 2021 if you do not wish to grant such permission.


School-Home Partnerships

30. As a parent/guardian, you are the key navigator of your child's/ward's growth. Your child/ward will benefit the most when we work together to fulfil our shared responsibilities to bring out the best in him/her. You may visit MOE's Schoolbag.sg website (<https://www.schoolbag.sg>) for more information on how to partner schools.
31. Other than this Term 1 letter, in line with MOE's Parents Gateway (PG) mobile app to strengthen school-home partnerships, official school communication will be disseminated via PG and the school website, and no longer in hard copy. We strongly encourage you to be onboard PG if you have not already done so. Please ensure you have your SingPass and 2-Factor Verification (2FA) ready in order to access the app.
- a) Download and install the Parents Gateway mobile app from Apple or Play Store
 - b) Perform a one-time registration process
 - c) Enable 'Allow Notifications' to receive push notifications
32. The school works with Methodist Welfare Services, the parenting support provider assigned by the Ministry of Social and Family Development, to offer the Triple P Parenting Program to all parents. This evidence-based program helps you to:
- Create a stable, supportive, harmonious family environment
 - Teach your children the skills they need to get along with others
 - Deal positively, consistently and decisively with problem behaviour should it arise
 - Encourage behaviour you prefer
 - Develop realistic expectations of your children and yourself
 - Take care of yourself as a parent
33. There are two runs of the above workshop this year. Parents/Guardians of Sec 1 students are invited to participate in the first run (January to March), while the second run (July to September) will be open to parents/guardians from all levels. Registration details will be provided via PG once available.

Communication Channels

34. Teachers can be contacted at **6385 1589** during **weekdays** between **7.30 am and 6.00 pm**. Alternatively, you may reach our staff by sending an email to serangoon_ss@moe.edu.sg.
35. You may also wish to visit our school website (www.serangoonsec.moe.edu.sg) for updates and key information on our school programmes.
36. We thank you for your continued support of the school and our programmes. If you require any clarifications, please do not hesitate to contact the following personnel at 6385 1589:
- Mdm Low Siew Ping, Year Head (Lower Sec)
 - Ms Lee Zhi Li, Assistant Year Head (Sec 2)
 - Mr Kwek Cher Wei Dennis, Assistant Year Head (Sec 1) (Covering)
37. We look forward to your partnership, and wish you and your family a fruitful and meaningful year ahead!

Yours sincerely,


Mdm Low Siew Ping
Year Head (Lower Sec)

CCE/LLP Period Schedule for 2021 Term 1

Dates	CCE/LLP Period	Students Involved
13 Jan	SECI Profiling	1SD1, 1SD2, 1SD3, 1SD4, 1SD5, 1SD6
27 Jan	SECI Profiling	1SD7, 1SD8
	Prefectorial Board Meeting 01	Prefects
	Upper Sec Class Committee Training	Upper Sec Class Comm
10 Feb	Lower Sec Class Committee Training	Lower Sec Class Comm
	Prefectorial Board Meeting 02	Prefects
24 Feb	StaRs Programme Briefing & Preparation	All Sec 1 to 3 classes
10 Mar	Prefectorial Board Meeting 03	Prefects
	Peer Support Leaders Training 01	Peer Support Leaders

Serangoon Secondary School – 2021 School Events, Programmes, and Holidays

Term 1						
Date	Event	Sec 1	Sec 2	Sec 3	Sec 4 & 5	Parents/Guardians
4 – 5 Jan	Class Synergy Programme	✓	✓	✓	✓	
4 – 5 Jan	Orientation	✓		✓		
15 Jan	Sec 1 Parent Engagement & CCA Orientation	✓				
11 Feb	Chinese New Year Celebrations	✓	✓	✓	✓	
12 – 13 Feb	Chinese New Year (Public Holiday)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
15 Feb	Chinese New Year (School Holiday)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
2 – 5 Mar	StaRs Programme	✓	✓	✓	✓	
12 Mar	Parent Engagement Session	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
13 – 21 Mar	March Term Break	✓	✓	✓	✓	
15 – 16 Mar	March Term Break Lessons	✓*	✓*	✓*	✓	

Terms 2 to 4						
Date (tentative)	Event	Sec 1	Sec 2	Sec 3	Sec 4 & 5	Parents/Guardians
22 – 26 Mar	4NT Elective Modules				✓*	
29 Mar – 1 Apr	3NT Elective Modules			✓*		
1 Apr	Prize Presentation Day	✓	✓	✓	✓	
2 Apr	Good Friday (Public Holiday)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
30 Apr	NRIC Registration	✓*	✓*	✓*		
1 May	Labour Day (Public Holiday)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
3 May	Labour Day (School Holiday)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
13 May	Hari Raya Puasa (Public Holiday)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
May	Mid-Year Examinations		✓		✓	
25, 27 – 28 May	Learning Week 1	✓	✓	✓	✓	
26 May	Vesak Day (Public Holiday)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
28 May	Parent Engagement Session	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
29 May – 27 Jun	Mid-Year School Holidays 7 – 20 Jun: Protected time; no activities. (Students may have CCA and/or Mastery Learning Programme classes on other days)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
31 May	O-Level Mother Tongue Examination				✓	
1 Jun	O-Level Mother Tongue B Examination				✓*	
5 Jul	Youth Day (School Holiday)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
6 – 9 Jul	2NT Elective Modules		✓*			
20 Jul	Hari Raya Haji (Public Holiday)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
6 Aug	National Day Celebrations	✓	✓	✓	✓	
9 Aug	National Day (Public Holiday)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
10 Aug	National Day (School Holiday)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Aug	N-Level Preliminary Examinations				✓*	
Aug & Sep	O-Level Preliminary Examinations				✓*	
2 Sep	Teachers' Day Celebrations	✓	✓	✓	✓	
3 Sep	Teachers' Day (School Holiday)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
4 – 12 Sep	September Term Break	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Sep & Oct	N-Level Written Examinations				✓*	
Oct	End-of-Year Examinations	✓	✓	✓		
27 – 29 Oct	Learning Week 2	✓	✓	✓		
Oct & Nov	O-Level Written Examinations				✓*	
29 Oct	Parent Engagement Session; Last day of school for Sec 1 – 3	✓	✓	✓		✓
30 Oct – 31 Dec	Year-End School Holidays 21 Nov – 12 Dec: Protected time; no activities. (Students may have CCA and/or Mastery Learning Programme classes on other days)	✓	✓	✓		
1 – 10 Nov	Sec 3 Bridging Programme 3NA/3NT will end on 5 Nov			✓*		
4 Nov	Deepavali (Public Holiday)	✓	✓	✓	✓	

*For selected students only

Note: The above dates are subjected to changes in view of the COVID-19 situation.