

SINGAPORE

PE lessons made more fun for primary school pupils



Rivervale Primary 6 pupil Winston Sng (holding ball) plays a modified version of handball with friends during morning recess. TNP PHOTO: LIN ZHAOWEI

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Winston Sng, 12, never used to like physical exercise. But after his school, Rivervale Primary, introduced structured games during recess time, he found himself learning to enjoy sports.

Rivervale Primary's initiative is one of the new, innovative approaches that schools are taking towards physical education.

Winston told The New Paper: "I felt that it (sports) was boring and I did not like to exercise... I would rather use my handphone."

Rivervale Primary started its Structured Recess Activity (SRA) in 2016, where games are conducted during recess time.

Ms Lena Seet, principal of Rivervale Primary, said this activity aims to "extend the psychomotor and cognitive skills taught during PE lessons but with an added element of fun".

The games are also tailored to the ages of the pupils. For instance, lower primary pupils play games that involve throwing and catching, and psychomotor skills like jumping and skipping. They might also do simple circuit training.

The pupils get reward cards where physical activity helps them to earn stamps. The stamps can then be converted into small souvenirs.

Upper primary pupils play team sports, such as modified handball and volleyball. They also have "inter-class leagues" so the pupils get the chance to understand how league tables work and strategise how to win in the league.

It was the team games that drew Winston into voluntarily exercising during his recess.

He said: "I joined my friends for SRA one day, and it was very fun. I also realised sports is a good thing to do if you need to de-stress."

Over at Beacon Primary School, the Outdoor Adventure Club, which was formed in 2015, allows the pupils to plan hikes around the neighbourhood.

The pupils use Google Maps to plan their routes, as well as research on secondary schools in the area that they can visit. The hikes can be as long as 5km.

Their teacher, Mr Jemuel Ong, said: "It's about stretching them and expanding on what's taught during PE lessons. It also gives them independence and ownership in planning the route and develops their interest in physical activity regardless of their fitness."

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