

Our Deyi Stories

FROM WHERE I STAND

Full Subject-Based Banding in the Eyes of our Students

Singapore's education landscape has been abuzz with many changes that have been introduced recently – from the revamp of PSLE scoring to the introduction of full subject-based banding in all secondary schools by 2024.

While members of public debate the pros and cons of the move, perhaps it is timely to see what students have to say about this. After all, they are the ones who have to go through this process. And our Secondary One students are best placed to give their opinions since Deyi Secondary School is one of the pilot schools that is carrying out full subject-based banding.

So let's meet Wydia Chan, Felicia Haerenie Darmawan, Saswadharani d/o Suresh Kumar and Muhamad Abdul Hazim Bin Mohd Khalid. They are from Express, Normal (Academic) and Normal (Technical) courses but are all classmates from 1 Determination.

Each student turned thoughtful when asked about their experiences since joining Deyi. 'Having mixed classes was confusing at first – we were always paired with students from other classes for different subjects,' Wydia shared. Both Felicia and Saswadharani agreed and added that group work can be more awkward at times as they have to learn to work with others whom they were unfamiliar with.



However, when asked whether this has affected their ability to build strong friendships with their fellow classmates, all four shook their heads vigorously. 'Look at us – we're close friends!' Felicia pointed out with a cheeky grin. The others quickly shared about how school experiences have helped make the transition to learning in a new environment in a different style much easier. Abdul Hazim highlighted how the students in the class were eagerly preparing and training for their first ever school Sports Meet.

"Yes, but then Covid-19 happened..." he grumbled dejectedly.

Regardless of these issues, clearly the new system has had some impact. 'When we see how Abdul Hazim straddles different subjects at different levels of difficulty, we really respect him,' the girls confessed.

Asked whether they would recommend having full subject-based banding, all four students took some time to reflect on their experiences before giving a positive reply. Wydia concluded by stating that "At the end of the day, it's a great way to mix around with other students from different classes and courses. And I like how this system lets us learn at a more challenging pace when we can handle it."



BUILDING SCHOOL SPIRIT DURING A PANDEMIC

2020 is a year that will not be easily forgotten. It is the year when the virus Covid-19 ravaged across the globe - bringing chaos to many societies and leaving destruction in its wake. Covid-19 literally brought the world to a standstill as many governments across the world imposed lockdowns in attempts to slow down the rate of transmissions of the disease.

Singapore, too, has been impacted.

Our students, too, had to rise to the occasion.

Competitions were cancelled, local learning journeys were cancelled, all forms of school exchanges were cancelled, enrichment activities were cancelled, CCAs were cancelled, and the list goes on. Students watched with growing dismay as many school experiences that they had taken for granted, but which had been so integral to their overall educational experience, had to be taken away from them.

Despite these challenges, Deyi Secondary School had endeavoured to provide some normalcy for our students. We are committed to try and work within these constraints to maintain our students' spirits and foster school spirit.

To that end, level programmes were adapted and scaled down but still pushed through so that students have some positive and meaningful memories for this school year. Secondary One students made keychains for frontline healthcare workers while Secondary Two students designed tote bags for migrant workers. These efforts showed our students' appreciation for the workers' contributions to the country.

And if our students are too young to vote, then the school will bring the elections to them. Such was the anticipation for this year's elections for the Student Council. Building on the buzz generated by the General Elections of 2020, this was a perfect opportunity for students to have an idea of the importance of having elections and voting, while relishing the opportunity to select their own student representatives. Relying extensively on technology, candidates created videos and posters to rally students to support them. Voting was also done online. This was a truly unique and meaningful experience for many students to show that their voices mattered.

2020 has been a tough year, but with some creativity and dedication, our students can still have interesting experiences with fellow schoolmates.

