

Further FAQs for primary candidates

1. Can you tell me more about the curriculum that is used for English?

We have a bespoke primary programme which has been specifically designed with the needs of the Bruneian students and the cultural context in mind. This is based on an additive bilingual approach to second language learning. This can be used prescriptively or merely as a guide. Additionally, we have a lower and upper primary syllabus which provide teachers with core and additional learning objectives to be covered in each term. Both the programme and syllabi draw on western approaches from countries such as the UK, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand, but have been adapted for Brunei.

2. What provision is there for SEN students in the classroom if any?

SEN students are integrated into mainstream classes. Similar to many of our home countries students are not formally assessed for specific learning needs until they are almost 7 years of age. At this point, if they are found to have a specific need with which they require additional support, they will be withdrawn from the class or have someone assigned to be with them in the class. In more severe cases they may be assigned to a special unit. Prior to assessment there is little provision made.

3. How much parental communication is there?

Generally parents are reluctant to engage directly with CfBT teachers as they are concerned over their level of English. Communication tends to take place via the class teacher who is a Malay speaker. However, some teachers have established WhatsApp groups with parents which have proven to be popular and effective. During the Covid-19 school closures interaction with parents has significantly increased and teachers are hoping that this will continue when students return to school full time.

4. What is the organisation in a primary school? E.g. is there a grade head that the teacher should take concerns about a child to?

In most schools there would be a Head of Department for English who would deal with the academic organisation of subject delivery. All schools have a Head of Academic (Guru Kanan) who can be approached for academic matters. For concerns over student wellbeing or more social matters the teacher would normally refer to the class teacher who can then liaise with parents/MoE on their behalf. The head teacher within the school is also available for support and concerns. Some schools have a school counsellor who would deal with behaviour issues. Any concerns over child safeguarding should be reported to the Education Project Manager at CfBT (EPM) or the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

5. What data reporting does the teacher have to do?

There is generally less admin here than in most home countries. Assessment is carried out formatively through the EDS (triangle) system. Students are assessed against prescribed learning objectives as Emerging, Developing or Secure. This is usually submitted termly on an Excel spreadsheet. Summative assessment is carried out twice a year in the form of a written test. Marks from these are entered into a central database. There is no requirement to write

student reports. However, teachers are required to write individual lesson plans for each lesson to be taught. These are submitted weekly to a member of the school administration team for approval

6. As primary teachers are the only CfBT teachers at a primary school, what support is provided to them?

When new primary teachers are deployed to schools we usually ask that a member of the school team be nominated to help them settle in. The teacher usually forms a strong working bond with other members of the English team or Pra Malay teacher within the school depending on the year groups they are teaching.

Additionally, the teacher is allocated a CfBT mentor. This is an experienced teacher working in another school, but teaching similar year groups. The mentor is available to the teacher for guidance on day to day teaching, admin, resources and settling into life in Brunei. The CfBT Welfare Department are available for support with non-professional matters and the Education Project Manager is available to support with relationship building within school and all professional aspects of the job, including performance management and professional development.