

MoE vows to help special needs students thrive

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BATU PAHAT: The Education Ministry is committed to making sure special needs students are given the best opportunity to thrive in the education system.

Deputy Education Minister Teo Nie Ching said the ministry planned to equip preschool teachers with the skills needed to improve the learning experience of special needs students.

Teo said the plan was still at the initial stage but the ministry hoped to implement it at all private and public preschools nationwide in the years ahead.

Preschool teachers would be trained by the ministry's special needs officers at the district level, Teo told reporters after officiating the closing ceremony of the Seventh National Early Childhood Intervention Conference at Katerina Hotel here yesterday.

She said the lack of skills to accommodate special needs students at an early age was a major concern.

Teo said the ministry was moving towards inclusive education where those with special needs would be in the same class as other students.

Teo said the Inclusive Education System, which has been highlighted in the National Education Blueprint, benefited students with special needs and those without.

"It allows special needs students to feel included, to work with other students, develop friendships and learn social skills," she said.

"On the other hand, students without special needs are able to understand and respect the different abilities of their peers."

Teo said schools would also need to be equipped with facilities for special needs students.

"Out of 10,202 schools, only 169 of them are equipped with facilities for students with special needs and we are committed to providing more of them," she said.

She added that the estimated amount needed for such facilities would be about RM100,000 for each school.