Preschool teachers get skills boost

Courses being offered near workplaces during week to encourage more to upgrade

By Lin Zhihui

Two courses have been designed to encourage more preschool teachers to upgrade their skills. Under a new scheme initiated by NTUC's Seed Institute, they can look forward to attending short professional development courses held near their workplaces, on weekends.

Previously, such courses were held at the early childhood education training institute's premises in Toa Payoh Road during the weekend.

The Seed Institute runs a range of courses, from workshops to diploma and degree programmes.

Liz Seow, director of The Seed Institute, said: "We believe that key stakeholders, from operators to the children and parents, will in turn benefit from the rise in quality of early childhood education. Teachers who go for CPD will pass on this knowledge to the children and parents, which will in turn benefit the children and parents."

Teachers from various kindergartens taking part in the first continuing professional development course yesterday at Jurong West Street 52 community club.

Mr Leo Yin Fong, its academic director, hopes more preschool teachers will be motivated to go for continuing professional development (CPD) courses, now that they are more accessible to them. "We believe that key stakeholders, from operators to the children and parents, will in turn benefit from this course as it is suitable for early childhood educators working in the community."

The first such course started yesterday at Jurong West Street 52 community club, with 25 teachers in attendance.

Set to take place over four weekday afternoons, the course will provide insights into teacher-pupil interaction and classroom management. It costs $45 a person, with 90 per cent of the fee subsidised by the Singapore Workforce Development Agency. Attendance.

Ms Susie Tan, principal of Little Kingdom Child Care, said: "These programmes in the afternoons are usually more relaxed, with nap time and free play sessions for the pupils. They are easier for part-timers to handle."

The Seed Institute is planning to hold at least two more rounds of such workshops later this year, for the benefit of more than 100 preschool educators.

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S'pore-based researchers named in elite list

SINGAPORE'S reputation as a research hub has got a lift from the fact that 10 of 12 people picked for an annual list of top inventors had done their research here.

Yesterday, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Technology Review and Cyber Media announced the names of the 12 innovators aged under 35 who had made it to the Technology Review 35 (TR35) list.

Their projects were selected from more than 200 submissions from four south-east Asian countries to Australia and New Zealand. Ten out of the 12 did their research here in institutions such as National University of Singapore and Nanyang Technological University.

They are one step closer to attending the Global TR35 Function at the Cambridge-MIT Institute come October. There, they can present their projects and interact with other innovators from around the world to gain larger exposure and funding.

Mr Mathew said: "There are lots of good research here. Singapore is a hub for such activity."