

SINGAPORE

Coding, computational thinking will help Singapore become a Smart Nation: Yaacob

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POSTED: 09 Feb 2015 17:29
UPDATED: 09 Feb 2015 23:55

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The Code for Fun enrichment programme, where students learn how to create animations and games using programming language such as Scratch, has been adopted by Wellington Primary School.



SINGAPORE: Coding and computational thinking are important skills that will allow Singapore to come up with new solutions as it transits to becoming a Smart Nation, said Minister for Communications and Information Dr Yaacob Ibrahim on Monday (Feb 9).

He was speaking on the sidelines of a school visit to Wellington Primary School, where he observed some of the key initiatives under the Code@SG movement taking root.

Said Dr Yaacob: "It will create opportunities and challenges so we hope that the next generation of people will seize the opportunities, but more importantly for me, also to meet the challenges and devise solutions which are needed to make our Smart Nation an effective vision for Singapore."

The school has adopted the Code for Fun enrichment programme, where students learn how to create animations and games using programming language such as Scratch. This is part of Wellington Primary School's New Media Curriculum, which is open to students from Primary 1 to 6.

The Code for Fun enrichment programme is offered to all primary and secondary schools to increase students' exposure to coding and computational thinking.

Twelve-year-old Eugene Chong, for example, has achieved what

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most adults would struggle to grapple with. Together with three of his team members, the Primary 6 student has developed a computer game from scratch. Called Harvest City, the game teaches players financial literacy, where they learn how to earn money, spend wisely and save what they can.

Creating the game was a process that taught Eugene more than what he usually learns in the classroom. He said he has learnt how to be independent, work with his team and more about the coding process.

He said: “For coding, if we are not sure, we can just go to the internet or we could seek help or guidance from the teachers or our classmates.”

LAB ON WHEELS TO IGNITE PASSION FOR TECHNOLOGY

Also making a brief stopover at the school was the Infocomm and Development Authority of Singapore's (IDA) Lab on Wheels, which aims to ignite the young's passion for technology and expose students to the possibilities that can be created with it.



The 40-seater bus will travel to 80 primary schools and conduct fun activities such as coding a game in an hour, learning about 3D technologies, tinkering with electronics and programming a robot.

To date, 19,000 students have benefited from the Code@SG movement since it was launched last year. IDA said it hopes to reach out to a total of 72,000 students by April 2016.

- CNA/ek

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