



## Foreword

This publication is a short selection of the myriad school-based curriculum development projects implemented by our officers in collaboration with teachers in primary and secondary schools across the city. Rather than exemplary practices to be replicated, these experiences are meant to illustrate how school-based curricula can be developed to address the specific needs of students and teachers in a range of contexts. Above all, they aim to document and celebrate the achievements of those with whom we have joined hands, and inspire teachers in other schools to see the process of curriculum development as closely intertwined with and as an integral part of the development of their own subject and pedagogical knowledge, as well as leadership skills.


The different cases reported here demonstrate how teachers from diverse professional backgrounds and across different key stages have put in place a wide range of measures to promote the holistic development of their students' language and thinking skills, values and attitudes.

The implementation of the New Senior Secondary Curriculum (NSSC) has brought several issues into sharp relief, learner diversity and how to cater for it being perhaps one of the most pressing. Now more than ever, this is an area that concerns English and Chinese language teachers, eager to know how they can go about addressing the oftentimes divergent interests and proficiency levels of their students, be they local Chinese students learning English or using English to learn content subjects, or Non-Chinese Speaking (NCS) students studying in local schools and learning the curriculum through the medium of Cantonese. In these pages, you will learn about the strategies used by some of our teachers to stretch the potential of all their students, regardless of their level of proficiency.

The NSSC has also provided language teachers with an opportunity to enrich their school-based curricula by diversifying the sources of language input and providing more authentic opportunities for students to use and refine their language skills. Different schools have done this in different ways, but evidence from the frontline indicates that both students and teachers have welcomed the changes to the curriculum, especially as regards the teaching and learning of the elective components.

The reform of the secondary sector has also provided our primary colleagues with the impetus to rethink some of their practices. We believe that an understanding of the curriculum for the different key stages as a flexible, open document, but also as a coherent whole is a pre-requisite for the kind of effective teaching and learning that helps students build a firm language foundation for future studies. That is why we have included examples of holistic planning of the language curriculum, and of how the transition between key stages can be better planned to ensure that the work done in each key stage is aligned with and prepares students for the requirements of subsequent key stages.

Curriculum leaders have a pivotal role to play in ensuring that the positive impact of the curriculum reform is embedded in schools. Language panel heads and teacher leaders need to be equipped with different leadership capabilities in order to make good decisions, plan holistically and realistically, and motivate their teams to work towards agreed goals. We have captured the practices of different schools and networks, through working on different language focuses, in promoting the professional development of their panel members and the development of a learning community within and across schools, and fostering a concerted effort to improve the quality of student learning.



This special issue of “The Language Teaching Album: A Collection of School-based Practices 2011-2013” captures a part of the journey the Task Force started with schools exactly 10 years ago. This journey has been premised on the notion that sustainable improvement depends on a continuous cycle of reflection in and on action. We are thankful to all those who have worked with us over the years on our quest for better quality and more equitable language education. We are united in our enthusiasm and commitment to develop practices that lead to effective learning for all!

This publication is just one of the platforms we use for sharing and professional enhancement. The Task Force would like to thank schools and teachers for sharing their school-based experiences with different audiences through seminars and workshops, our web-page (<http://resources.edb.gov.hk/cd/languagesupport>), Language Matters (the newsletter of the Task Force) and thematic CD-ROMs which compile school-based learning and teaching resources and document the learning and teaching process.

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