

I. Foreword

No one would dispute the fact that the school sector has experienced unprecedented challenges over the past two school years. The prolonged COVID-19 pandemic has led to an ongoing switch between online and face-to-face classes. Instead of perceiving this as a disruption to the normal instructional practices, teachers collaborating with the Task Force on Language Support have explored immense opportunities for experimenting new modes of learning and teaching. We witnessed different stages of development among teachers. At the early stage of suspension of face-to-face classes, teachers showed a quick mastery of the use of different e-resources and online teaching strategies to encourage students' participation and interaction in online lessons. Going beyond this achievement, schools began to explore the blended mode of learning and teaching with a view to widening students' space of learning, catering for their diverse needs and enhancing their self-directed learning capability. The concerted efforts of teachers in trying out innovations amid different circumstantial constraints have created a new normal in the education sector characterised by a paradigm shift in the mode of instruction and the judicious use of technology inside and outside the classroom.

Concurrently, there has also been new development in the school curriculum. While the Final Report of the Task Force on Review of School Curriculum sets out the directional recommendations for optimising the school curriculum to foster whole-person development and diverse talents, schools under our support have been making reference to the updated Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guides, the Values Education Curriculum Framework (Pilot Version) and the Framework of Implementation Strategies for Life Planning Education, among others, to conduct ongoing renewal of their school curricula. In the course of planning and implementing the renewed school curricula, school leaders recognised the importance of enhancing the leadership capabilities of language panel heads to manage change and their professional capacity for conducting holistic curriculum planning. Our language teachers responded readily by integrating different curriculum initiatives such as Language/Reading across the Curriculum, Chinese literature and culture, Life Planning Education, values education, e-learning and self-directed learning into their language curricula in a coherent manner to achieve the overall aim of the optimisation. The good practices developed provide valuable insights into how different curriculum initiatives can be used as entry points for maximising students' learning time to nurture in them 21st century skills such as communication and problem solving.

To capture the valuable experience of these schools and to inspire teachers to improve teaching practices with regard to each unique school context, we have included in this publication the distillation of more than twenty practices in the Chinese and English Key Learning Areas. Rather than exemplary practices to be replicated, the experience of these schools are meant to illustrate the curriculum development process in their respective contexts.

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 experience with different audiences through our seminars, learning communities and web pages (<https://resources.edb.gov.hk/cd/languagesupport> and <https://hkedcity.net/goelearning/>).

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