

10. Homework

- Homework is an important factor for academic success in Asian communities. It is therefore to be seen as a friend to learning rather than as a foe.
- Quality homework encourages independence in learning at home (e.g. reading, projects), consolidates, extends and applies learning at school (exercises, reading, revision).
- Quality homework should avoid drilling such as excessive copying, repetitive exercises (without purposeful meaning), and it should never be excessive (not more than half an hour for lower primary and an hour for upper primary students).
- Quality homework should promote the reinforcement of higher order thinking and the motivation to strive for excellence.

Actions via Partnership with Other Organisations and Sectors

11. Life-wide Learning Opportunities for Whole-person Development



Refer to Exemplars

- IV. 1 「全方位學習日/夜多面睇」
- IV. 2 全方位學習日/夜的延續活動—中文科寫作教學
- IV. 3 把全方位學習活動編進校曆表
- IV. 4 An Educational Tour of an Overseas Country

- Life-wide learning offers learning opportunities conducive to whole-person development. It offers learning in real contexts, and experiential learning that cannot be provided by classroom learning, especially in moral and civic education, physical and aesthetic development, career-related experiences and community service.
- It complements some aspects of learning in the eight KLAs which are less effectively achieved in the classroom, e.g. conducting urban surveys in geography, marine investigation into biodiversity, and artistic appreciation in museums.
- It also offers experience of interdisciplinary studies, e.g. making a decision about the use of a piece of land.
- It should focus on processes and their impact on learning rather than "quantity" and "activity formats".
- New initiatives need to be supported by research and development to inform our understanding of how students change in terms of values, attitudes and actions.
- The choice of life-wide learning activities should be both school-based and learner-focussed as it is more geared towards personal development. A related web site is available at <http://cd.ed.gov.hk/life-wide/main/default.asp> for reference.

- Different government departments (e.g. the Leisure and Cultural Services Department), non-government agencies, educational institutions and employer sectors can make a unique contribution to enriching life-wide learning opportunities that keep pace with the future needs of curriculum development. Further partnerships with these organisations will be established.

12. Smooth Transition between Kindergarten and Primary School, Primary and Secondary School

- Students need to adapt to changes in their school environment during the transition from Kindergarten to Primary 1, and also from Primary 6 to Secondary 1. It should not be the responsibility of students alone, but of both institutions and parents.
- Kindergarten, primary and secondary schools should collaborate closely on goals, learning and teaching methods and assessment to ensure smooth continuity from one level of schooling to another. The pre-primary sector should not be given pressure to teach in a more "school-like" manner, upper primary schools should not be asked to teaching like "junior secondary" schools.
- Kindergartens can do the following to enhance children's readiness for Primary:
 - ⇒ Offer children positive experiences in group settings and strengthen their social skills and understanding of routines
 - ⇒ Provide children with ample opportunities for conversation, discussion, co-operative work and playing with peers
 - ⇒ Create a stimulating environment to enhance children's interest in learning
 - ⇒ Establish partnerships with parents in fostering children's motivation to learn
- Primary schools can do the following to promote conditions and behaviours that ease the transition process:
 - ⇒ Provide pupils with a warm social climate within the school and an inviting physical environment
 - ⇒ Implement a pupil-centred curriculum consisting of a wide range of activities related to pupils' direct experiences
 - ⇒ Reach out to kindergartens and child-care centres in pursuit of continuity in the curriculum



Refer to Exemplar

XI. 1 幼稚園與小學的銜接



Refer to Exemplars

- XI. 2 Helping Primary Six Students to Prepare for Life in a Secondary School with English as the Medium of Instruction
- XI. 3 Developing Self-Esteem of Secondary One Students through Summer Bridging Programmes



Refer to Exemplars

- X. 1 Home - School Communication Approach - Information Technology for Parent and Child
- X. 2 家校合作—提高學生中文寫作興趣及能力

- ⇒ Eliminate the early use of direct instruction and formal assessment methods
- ⇒ Continue to enhance motivation to learn by providing active, engaging and meaningful learning activities for the pupils
- ⇒ Provide adequate time for pupils to adjust to the new environment
- ⇒ Ensure teachers are responsive to the wide range of developmental levels, experiences and needs of pupils
- ⇒ Encourage parents to participate in school activities such as meetings, school visits and parent support groups
- Secondary schools can do the following to enhance students' skills to become competent learners:
 - ⇒ Invite primary pupils to visit their schools or attend open days
 - ⇒ Organise induction programmes in the early weeks of Secondary 1
 - ⇒ Conduct life education programmes in collaboration with other professionals, such as educational psychologists and community service workers, to strengthen students' time management skills and foster their self-esteem, learning motivation and sense of responsibility

13. Home-School Co-operation

- It is important for schools and teachers to solicit participation and positive attitudes from parents right from the beginning. There is evidence to show that this leads to improved learning.
- Schools and teachers can help parents to
 - ⇒ understand that standardised learning and teaching materials alone cannot help children to achieve high standards. Instead, to optimise the different potential of students, diversified learning and teaching styles, strategies, contexts and resources are more important.
 - ⇒ understand the purposes of assessment. Enable them to see that marks and ranking in class do not reveal the actual abilities of students. Knowing the strengths and weaknesses of students is more important.

- It is useful to communicate with both parents and students together (e.g. using a newsletter, an open door parent-teacher conference, a parent bulletin board, assignment notebooks) to build up trust and rapport with each other.

Conclusion

We do not expect all schools to implement all the above initiatives at the same time. Schools are advised to make reference to them and decide which should be implemented in their contexts to suit their students' needs.