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Infant Education Curriculum Reform Promoting the pilot project, Sharing successful experiences

(1) Introduction

The Education and Youth Affairs Bureau launched the “Infant Education Curriculum Pilot Project” in the Academic Year 2011/2012, encouraging schools to take the lead in implementing the “Curriculum Framework for Formal Education” (hereinafter referred to as the “Curriculum Framework”) and the “Requirements of Basic Academic Attainments for Infant Education”. The primary purpose is to implement the development goals of infant education mentioned in the “Ten-year Plan for the Development of Non-tertiary Education” so as to promote curriculum reform and innovative teaching methods for infant education, to advocate the game-based learning methodology and to avoid the tendency of shifting the educational requirements of infant education to the primary school levels.

Representatives from the seven schools participating in the “Infant Education Curriculum Pilot Project” held an experience sharing session on 2nd June this year to share the experiences and achievements of the implementation of the new curriculum to teachers from other infant schools.

Important aspects of the “Curriculum Framework” related to the level of infant education are highlighted below:

- The criteria for curriculum development in infant education;
- The five learning areas: “Health and Physical Education”, “Language”, “Individual, Society and Humanity”, “Mathematics and Science”, “Arts”;
- There should not be less than 195 school days in each academic year;
- The allocation of time per week for education activities should be between 1200 and 1650 minutes;
- The allocation of time per week for teaching activities should not be more than 900 minutes;
- A break between classes must be arranged for students;
- The teaching of handwriting should not be included in Year 1 of infant education.

“Requirements of Basic Academic Attainments”:

Refer to the basic requirements that students should have after completing a certain education level (such as after the three years’ learning of the infant education level). It is the foundation of students’ future development and lifelong learning; the key elements include knowledge, skills, abilities, emotion, attitude and values.

“Requirements of Basic Academic Attainments for Infant Education” is designed according to five learning areas.

(2) Experience and achievement sharing

1. Sharing of experiences and achievements related to the implementation of “Curriculum Framework”

The number of education activity days in the academic year of the participating schools varied between 195 school days and 200 school days. In order not to impact on regular school holidays through the academic year (for example: Christmas Holiday, Chinese New Year Holiday, Easter Holiday...), schools which conducted 5 school days per week schedule concluded the academic year in the

second week of July; schools which conducted 5.5 school days per week schedule (the Saturday morning class was considered as a “half-school day”) ended in the fourth or fifth week of June. Some schools suggested that although the “Curriculum Framework” recommended the minimum number of school days for education activities was to be 195 days in an academic year, in order to allow for greater flexibility and in light of classes being suspended for unexpected reasons, they had to arrange for a few more school days than the required minimum of 195 days.

For curriculum planning, participating schools, in general, allocated between 1400 to 1500 minutes per week for educational activities. According to the developmental needs of the different age levels of the infants, the time allocated for educational activities varied from over 800 minutes for Grade 1 through to about 900 minutes for Grade 3. It should be noted that this time for educational activities per week did not include time allocated for optional activities for the infants, such as interest activities and lunch, etc.

What is “Education Activity”?

All education related activities provided to infants by the school, including: conservation activities, games, learning activities and physical activities etc.

With respect to break time for classes, participating schools generally scheduled the education activities in the morning; and arranged a little learning and other activities in the afternoon. Toilet time and snack time were mainly scheduled for the break time between periods.

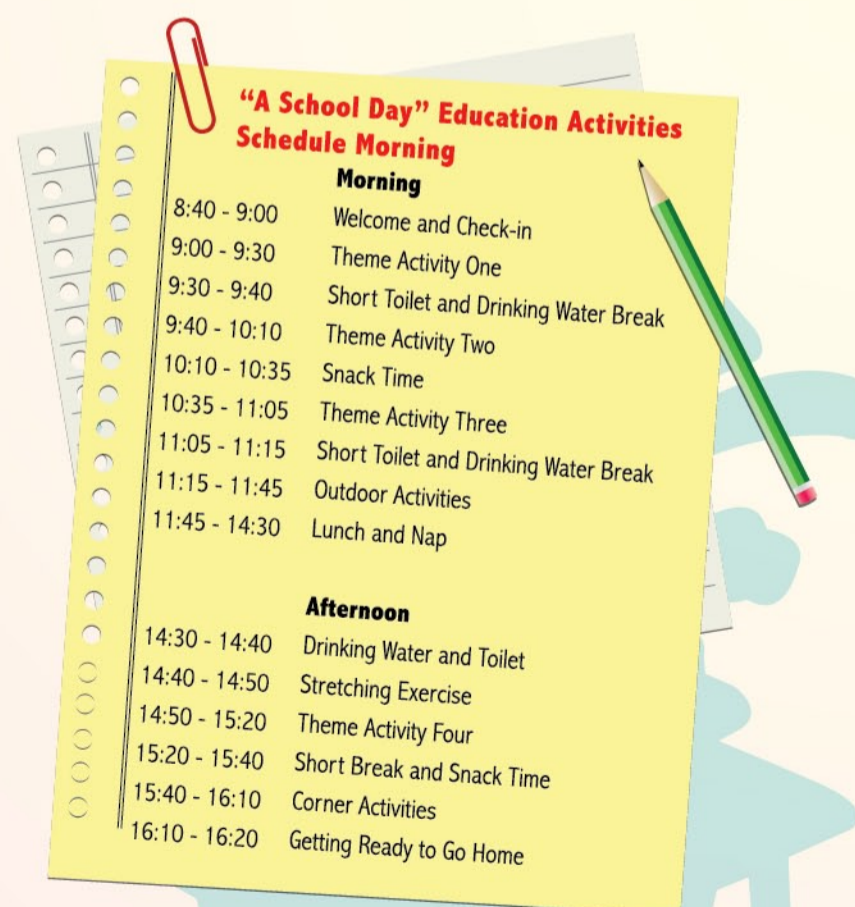


Figura 1: Horário de aulas e de descanso dos alunos (exemplo)

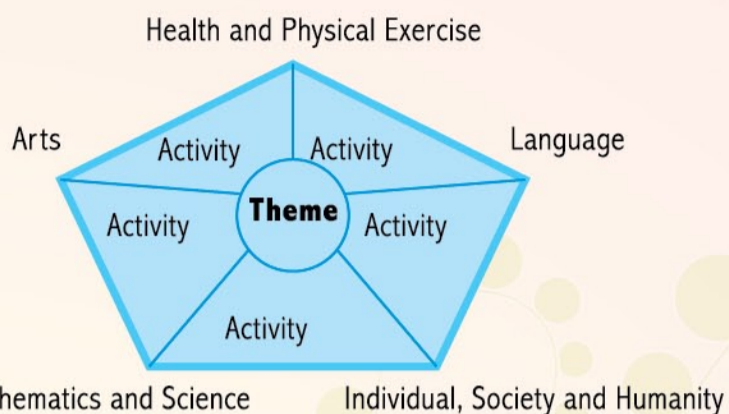


Diagram 2 Learning Areas, Themes and Activities in Infant Education Curriculum

(2) Sharing of experiences and Achievements related to the Implementation of the “Requirements of Basic Academic Attainments for Infant Education”

The “Requirements of Basic Academic Attainments for Infant Education” proposes the basic qualities and standard that infants should have after having completed the level of infant education. Therefore, participating schools need to implement the requirements of basic academic attainments in the curriculum content of the various grades, themes and activities. The steps are as follows:



Strategies to incorporate the “Requirements of Basic Academic Attainments for Infant Education” into education activities are demonstrated below:

(1) An example of the breakdown of one of the “Requirements of Basic Academic Attainments”, so that it is incorporated into the teaching activities of the three grades of infant education:

Learning Area	Requirements of Basic Academic Attainment	Learning Requirements/ Goals of Different Grades	Goals of Teaching Activity
Language	B-2-2 Be able to express personal opinion and participate in simple discussion; like talking with people	Grade 1: Be willing to talk with people and express one's opinion courageously	Conversation Activity: Willing to talk with classmates and teachers
		Grade 2: Like to talk with people, able to participate in simple discussion and express one's views	Story Activity: Like to discuss the content and plot of the story and express their own views
		Grade 3: Like to talk with people; be able to engage in a dialogue and discuss a certain topic and fully express personal views.	Early Reading Activity: To discuss with schoolmates and teachers the content of passages read and be able to express their views more completely and clearly.

(2) An example of incorporating several “Requirements of Basic Academic Attainments” in one teaching activity:

Name of Activity	Sorting Fun	Class	Grade 1
Goals of the Teaching Activity	Learning Requirements/ Goals for Infants in this Grade	Requirements of Basic Academic Attainments	
1. Be able to respond to teacher's question courageously; 2. Be able to sense the regular sequence of patterns; 3. Be able to sort things according to the regular pattern of ABABAB.	Be able to try to compare and sort in order according to the attributes of objects, such as size, weight, quantity, etc.	D-1-2 Be able to compare and sort in order according to the attributes of objects, such as size, weight, quantity, etc.	
	Be interested in common mathematical problems in life and try to look for the answer.	D-4-3 Like to bring up their observed problems and try to find answers.	
	Be able to try to tell the operation process and results verbally with teachers' hint.	D-5-4 Be able to tell the observed process and result verbally and take record in their familiar ways.	
	Be able to carry out colouring games with different colours and colouring materials.	E-3-2 Be able to use different colours and colouring materials to paint and design.	

To complement the teaching activities of requirements of basic academic attainments, we need to focus on:

- (1) Health and physical activities: the attitude towards healthy life and formation of behavioural habits of infants; be able to pay attention to safety and self-protection and to be interested in sports.
- (2) Language activities: to provide a variety of language learning activities which include story, poetry, narration, conversation and early reading etc., to arouse infants' interest in reading and writing and to strengthen their communication and expression ability.
- (3) Individual, society and humanity activities: to cultivate infants' self-acceptance and gregarious character, as well as to cultivate their attitude and emotions on the society unconsciously through a variety of activities and the various aspects in daily life.
- (4) Mathematics and science activities: Let infants have interest in things and phenomenon related to “Mathematics and Science”, be close to nature, have curiosity and be eager for knowledge, be able to use different sensory organs including hands and brains, to explore problems and to express boldly.
- (5) Arts activities: Create conditions and opportunities to guide infants to feel the beauty of environment, life and arts in order to enrich their imagination and creativity. At the same time, let infants use their own methods to express their emotion and experiences courageously.

(3) Several preparations for the implementation of new curriculum

1. To enhance the ability of curriculum development

Teachers have to strengthen and develop their abilities in curriculum planning and management. Besides handling their daily teachings, they should also be concerned about the curriculum development trends of infant education and the direction and policy of curriculum development in Macao, be familiar with the “Fundamental Law of Non-tertiary Education System”, the “Ten-year Plan for the Development of Non-tertiary Education”, the “Curriculum Framework” and the related content of the “Requirements of Basic Academic Attainments for Infant



Education". In addition, they need to participate in the development of school-based curriculum, enhance teaching quality and actively participate in decision making in curriculum of various levels in the school.

2.To establish the school-based teaching research system

Teachers need to carry out such planned and targeted teaching research activities as group lesson planning, case study and discussion, class observation and lesson evaluation, so as to jointly explore the experiences of implementing the new curriculum and to promote academic exchange and professional development between teachers. In the early implementation stage of the new curriculum, schools may establish curriculum development working groups composed of the school leadership, heads of teaching units (e.g. the head of academic affairs), and representatives of teachers of various grades, in order to plan for and follow up the work relating to teaching research and administrative coordination.

3.To promote home-school co-operation

Teachers help to promote home-school co-operation allowing parents to understand and complement schools' implementation of new curriculum, so as to jointly promote and cultivate infants' learning interest and habits. In particular, through such activities as parent explanatory sessions and seminars, parents' understanding of education can be enhanced and the preparation time before the kindergarten's regular activities can be used to advocate school policy, so as to strengthen the communication between schools, teachers and parents.

4.Conclusion

Carrying out the pilot project is an important act for the implementation of

curriculum reform, especially through the accumulated experiences gained from this project. On the one hand, it provided references for other schools, and on the other hand, it provided sound basis and direction for new curriculum. From now on, along with the promotion of pilot projects for the curriculum of other education levels, gradual promulgation of various related curriculum decree laws, the education of Macao will advance gradually towards the development goals of all levels and types of education in the "Ten-year Plan for the Development of Non-tertiary Education". It will specially focus on the development of students' language proficiency, physical and mental qualities, moral and civic accomplishments, innovative thinking, international perspective and artistic accomplishments.

Remarks:

- 1.The seven schools participating in the "Infant Education Curriculum Pilot Project" were: Macau Pooi To Middle School (Praia Grande Branch), Escola dos Moradores de Macau, Escola Hou Kong Infantil, Escola Catolica Estrela do Mar, Escola Kao Yip (Primaria e Pre-Primaria) Sucursal, Escola Ilha Verde and Escola Oficial Zheng Guanying.
- 2.For related information of "Infant Education Curriculum Pilot Project" and the "Requirements of Basic Academic Attainments of Infant Education (Draft)", please visit the curriculum development information website of the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau at <http://www.dsej.gov.mo/crdc/mainnews.php>.

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03 《非高等教育私立学校教学人员制度框架》 法律的重点关注事项 专访教育暨青年局老柏生副局长

前言

现代社会的立法过程须同时关注民主、公开、正义和秩序等几个核心价值。

1991年颁布的第11/91/M号法律《澳门教育制度》第廿五条第四款已有为私校教师订定“章程、职程及薪酬制度”的条文，经过了大约十多二十年的反复咨询和讨论，澳门特别行政区立法会于2012年2月28日举行的全体会议表决通过第3/2012号法律《非高等教育私立学校教学人员制度框架》(以下简称《私框》)，从制度上赋予了私立学校教学人员更明确的责任和义务，为长远地提升教学人员的素质和稳定性提供了法理依据。

本期《教师杂志》专访在教育暨青年局统筹法律改革事务的老柏生副局长，除了详细地陈述了立法的过程之外，也就前线教学人员共同关注的议题坦诚地讲出了他的意见。

制订《私框》的过程是否很艰巨？

老副局长：《非高等教育私立学校教学人员制度框架》法规草案的制订是一件非常复杂的工作，所以制订的历史和过程也是艰辛和漫长的，中间有教育界和政府付出庞大的心血。

可否谈谈《私框》制订的历史背景？

老副局长：在1991年颁布的第11/91/M号法律《澳门教育制度》规定，将颁布教师“章程”和“职程”。因此，教育委员会在不同时期先后成立了三个专责小组跟进相关事宜。

1992年6月，第一个专责小组开始运作，1994年，教育委员会全体会议共识把教师“章程”和“职程”分成两部分：前者包括教师的权利和义务等；后者包括职级、晋升等事项，属于前者章程性质的立法工作已于1996年完成，同年颁布第

15/96/M号法令《私立教育机构教学人员通则》。至于职程部分，仍由专责小组继续讨论。

第三个专责小组于1998年2月、1999年3月及5月分别向教育委员会提交三份意见书，但在全体会议的讨论中均未能达成共识，当时遇到的主要困难是：私立学校之间薪酬制度、办学条件都存在千差万别，要订出一套放之四海而皆准的规范制度是较难在教育界中获得共识的。在未能取得共识下，直到2001年7月的教育委员会全体会议，决定把“教学人员职程”的制订工作，纳入即将进行的澳门教育制度的检讨工作当中。

在2006年底颁布的第9/2006号法律《非高等教育制度纲要法》，当中订明须为私立学校的教学人员订定制度框架，以规范其工作类型、职级、考评、工作量、退休保障及相应的权利和义务。《纲要法》颁布后，当时的崔司长，亦即是现在的行政长官下达明确指示，须优先处理这份教学人员的职程框架制度法案。

在制订过程中有没有进行公开谘询？

老副局长：2007年起，教育暨青年局开始就有关问题进行密集研究及讨论，随后在2008年2月推出《非高等教育私立学校教学人员制度框架》法规(初步建议)及2008年10月推出《非高等教育私立学校教学人员制度框架》法规(谘询意见稿)，相继展开两个阶段的公开谘询工作，首阶段共举办意见征集会51场，其中42场到学校进行讲解，收集各界的意见及问题共1,346条。第二阶段举办了9场意见征集会，并透过电话、电邮、邮寄等途径，共征集教育界人士、教师、学校、社团、社会人士提出的意见448条。