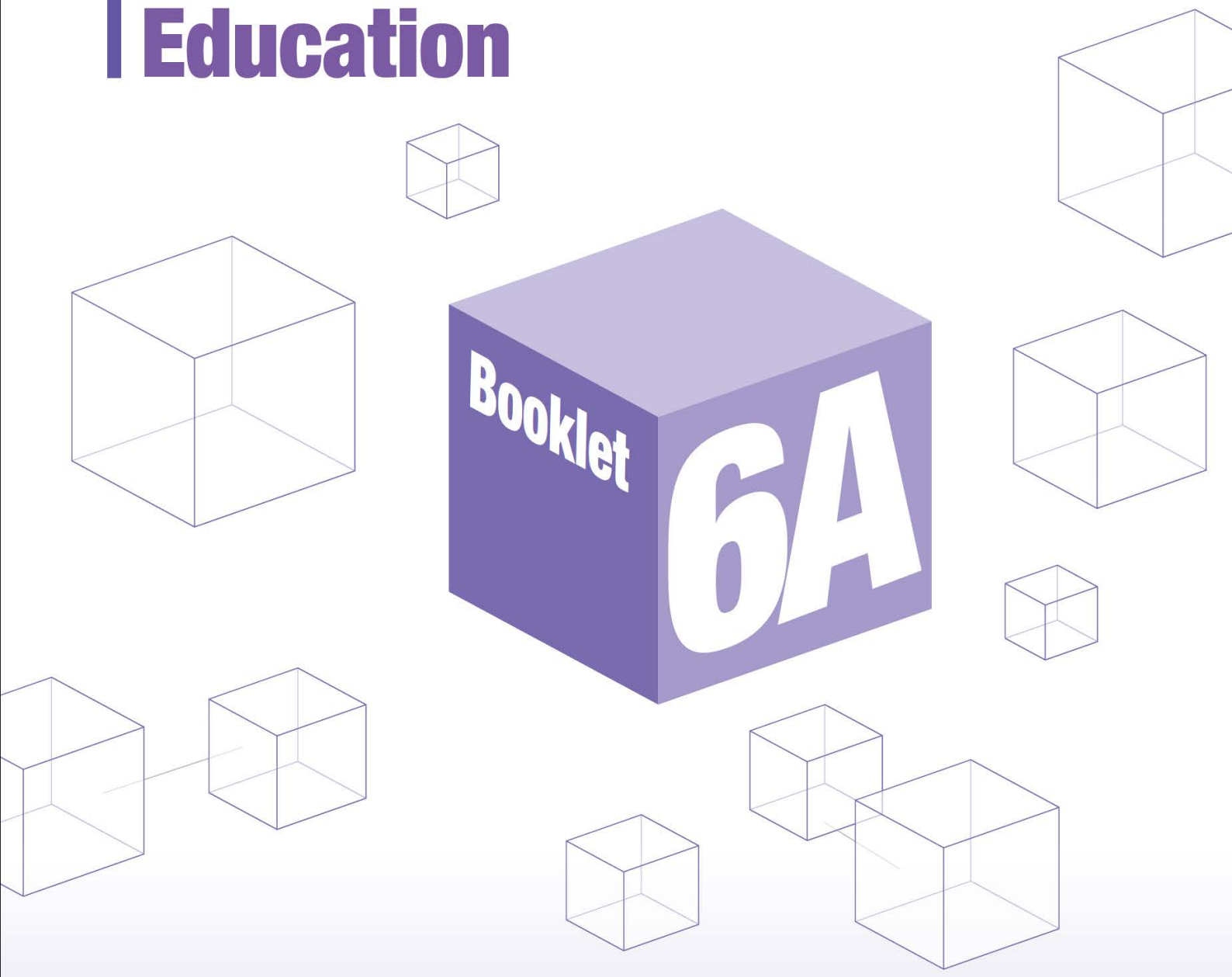
Moral and Civic Education: Towards Values Education



Booklet 6A Moral and Civic Education: Towards Values Education

This is Part A of Booklet 6, one of the 11 Booklets in the Secondary Education Curriculum Guide. Its contents are as follows:

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6A.1 Background

- In the 21st century, Hong Kong, like many cities in the world, has been facing various economic and social changes and challenges. To maintain our competitive edge and bring new opportunities for future development, our future generation is expected to have a broad knowledge foundation, to demonstrate rational thinking and moral judgement competence, and to be courageous and with perseverance in putting positive values and attitudes into action.

- All along, schools in Hong Kong have been devoted to cultivating students' moral and civic values. Since 2002, schools have been encouraged to nurture in their students the five priority values and attitudes, i.e. perseverance, respect for others, responsibility, national identity and commitment, and set these priority values and attitudes as the key objectives in promoting Moral and Civic Education (MCE) as one of the Key Tasks to implement the curriculum reform. Most schools have also developed their own MCE curriculum and related learning activities.

- The MCE curriculum framework was revised in 2008 to align with societal changes and meet schools' needs in cultivating students' positive values and attitudes. With the addition of two positive values and attitudes, schools are encouraged to nurture in their students the **seven priority values and attitudes**, i.e. perseverance, respect for others, responsibility, national identity, commitment, integrity and care for others.

- Students in secondary schools are often faced with different changes such as new schools, new groups of friends, and new academic knowledge, skills and tasks. These changes may bring excitement as well as different expectations and increasing demands from the people around. As adolescents, they may also come across controversial life events and social issues that caught the attention of the public. It is important for all secondary students to develop a positive understanding of themselves and learn how to make reasonable judgements and decisions about any negative influences that might impede the development of their fullest potential. Positive values and attitudes not only help students develop a healthy lifestyle and positive learning attitudes, but also equip them with good qualities to meet the requirements of their future workplace and be a sensible citizen in Hong Kong.
- Our ongoing renewal of the school curriculum since 2014 has reaffirmed the importance of providing holistic and balanced learning experiences, creating

conducive learning environment and enhancing students' understanding of positive values and attitudes from different perspectives for the implementation of MCE. A direction towards strengthening values education which include MCE and Basic Law education is necessary to help students cope with the changes and challenges and to foster their whole-person development.

Reflective Question

✧ How can students' positive values and attitudes enhance their capabilities to face the ever-changing society and challenges?

6A.2 Purposes of the Booklet

- To review and consolidate the experience and achievements in implementing values education at the secondary level
- To provide suggestions for the planning and implementation of values education (including moral and civic education, Basic Law education) at the secondary level

6A.3 Learning Objectives of Values Education

6A.3.1 Cultivating Positive Values and Attitudes

- Values and attitudes may be defined as qualities that an individual or society considers important as principles for conduct and are intrinsically worthwhile.
- The cultivation of positive values and attitudes can:
  - develop secondary students' competency in judging right from wrong;
  - facilitate the development of a positive identity; and
  - enhance secondary students' self-esteem and self-confidence.
- Schools can implement values education (including moral and civic education, Basic Law education) through providing a holistic and balanced curriculum which aims to cultivate in students the seven priority values and attitudes.

(i) Perseverance

- Perseverance enables students to overcome challenges and failures with courage and strive in the face of hardship to achieve their goals. Students' perseverance should be built on rational judgements and practical decision-making.

(ii) Respect for Others

- In a diversified society like Hong Kong, it is easy for students to meet people of different backgrounds, abilities, races, religions, beliefs and lifestyles. When getting along with people having diverse or even conflicting views, students should accept the fact that everyone is unique and try to establish peaceful and friendly relationships with everyone in order to live and work with others in harmony.

(iii) Responsibility

- We expect our young generation to develop a caring and helpful attitude to others, and to take appropriate action for the betterment of their peers, the community and society so as to become a responsible member in various domains.

(iv) National Identity

- Hong Kong is an inseparable part of China. Helping secondary students continue to understand the place we live in and develop a sense of national identity during the learning process is one of the learning goals of primary education and secondary education.

- In view of the country's continuous development, improving students' understanding of the country, the Basic Law, the concept of "one country, two systems", as well as strengthening their sense of national identity will benefit both their future development and the betterment of the whole society.

- Non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students should also increase their understanding of China, cultivate mutual respect and build a harmonious community.

Basic Law education

- The Basic Law is a constitutional document for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR). It enshrines within a legal document the important concepts of "One Country, Two Systems", "a high degree of autonomy" and "Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong". It also prescribes the various systems to be practised in the HKSAR. The Basic Law and our daily lives are intimately related.

- Encouraging students to understand the Basic Law not only enriches their knowledge of the local, national and global community, but also reinforces the cultivation of their values and attitudes, including the rule of law, justice, national identity, democracy, freedom, human rights, equality and rationality, so as to equip students to become positive and responsible citizens, contributing to the betterment of society, the country and the world.

(v) Commitment

- Being committed is not only to complete one's own duties, but also to proactively think about how to complete the tasks and make things better persistently. A person with a strong sense of commitment is not afraid of difficulties and has the courage to accept new challenges. When he makes a mistake, he has the courage to admit it and make improvement.

(vi) Integrity

- Integrity is a valuable asset to an individual. It facilitates truthful communication and helps establish mutual trust. It is also a value one should uphold to get along with others in his life. A person of integrity can keep his promises and his words and deeds are in accord. Integrity has also been an inherent core value of our society which we have strived for and been proud of.

(vii) Care for Others

- Care for others is to show sincerely one's concern for others' situations, feelings and needs. Unlike sympathy, care for others includes an element of empathy, meaning caring for the situations, feelings and needs of others. Adolescence is the ideal stage for students, who already possess the ability to think from others' perspectives and understand others' feelings, to learn and practise how to care for others.

- Schools are encouraged to strengthen values education and cultivate other values and attitudes in accordance with the mission and contexts of their schools, the stakeholders' views, etc. Schools can also make reference to the set of core and sustaining values and attitudes proposed in the Curriculum Development Council (CDC) report *Learning to Learn – The Way Forward in Curriculum Development* (2001). *(The set of "Values and Attitudes for Incorporation into the School Curriculum" is also available at Appendix 2 of Booklet 2.)*

Reflective Question

✧ What values and attitudes can best fit the promotion of values education in your school to address the needs of your students?

6A.3.2 Enhancing the Ability to Make Value Judgements

- At the secondary level, most students have acquired basic understanding of certain positive values and attitudes such as care for others, integrity and respect for others, and agree that these values and attitudes are worth treasuring and promoting.

- Nonetheless, students may encounter various life events and issues in which various and even conflicting values and attitudes are embedded. Students are encouraged to analyse these events and issues in a rational and objective manner, and adopt positive values and attitudes as one of the guiding principles to make judgements and decisions.

Reflective Question

✧ How can you create an ideal learning environment conducive to the promotion of students' value judgements during lessons?

- Below are two examples on the implementation of Basic Law education in secondary schools.

Example 1

- In order to promote Basic Law education, a secondary school, with the concerted effort of various KLAs/subjects, organises a Basic Law writing competition, an inter-class Basic Law quiz competition and an inter-house Basic Law debating competition during the Basic Law Week. Through these cross-curricular activities, not only students' understanding of the Basic Law is enhanced but also their civic awareness and critical thinking skills.

Example 2

- A secondary school has adopted the learning and teaching materials from a research and development project on the resources for the Life and Society curriculum. Through learning about the Basic Law, analysing data and discussions, etc. in the three topics under the foundation part of the core modules in Life and Society (S1-3), namely "Rights, Responsibilities and the Rule of Law", "Decision-making Process and Development of Electoral System" and "Right to Freedom of Opinion & Expression", students enhance their knowledge of the Basic Law and understand how the Basic Law is closely related to their daily life and protects their rights.

6A.4 Learning Content of Values Education

- Apart from life events which are closely related to students' daily life, secondary teachers may adopt life events or issues which embed various or even conflicting values and attitudes as the learning content of values education, with a view to enhancing students' analytical and reasoning skills, as well as the ability to adopt positive values and attitudes.
- Schools are encouraged to continue nurturing students' positive values and attitudes through incorporating related elements into various KLAs/subjects, cross-curricular domains in values education (e.g. moral education, sex education, Basic Law education, life education), and other relevant learning experiences.

6A.4.1 Relevant Learning Content in Various Key Learning Areas (KLAs)/Subjects

- MCE has been accorded as one of the Four Key Tasks for the implementation of the curriculum reform started in 2001. The CDC report *Learning to Learn – The Way Forward in Curriculum Development* (2001) suggests that KLAs/subjects should provide the context for the development and application of generic skills, values and attitudes.

- Over the past decade, schools have taken an active role in incorporating MCE into their school curriculum. Schools could build on their existing good practices and adopt the Key Task of MCE with a direction towards values education to foster students' whole-person development. Values education (including moral and civic education, Basic Law education) can be carried out through: (i) deepening students' understanding of the priority and other positive values and attitudes; and (ii) nurturing students' abilities to reflect on and apply positive values and attitudes when making decisions.

6A.4.2 Life Events and Issues

- Schools are encouraged to choose appropriate life events and issues from five domains, i.e. (i) personal development and healthy living; (ii) family; (iii) school; (iv) social life; and (v) community and national domains, as the learning content along the key stages of learning. The domain of working life in Key Stage 4 adopted since the launch of the Revised Moral and Civic Education Curriculum Framework in 2008 also applies here.

- When teachers select life events and issues as learning materials for values education, they should consider:

  - changes and needs of students at different development stages;

  - events relevant to students' life experiences; and

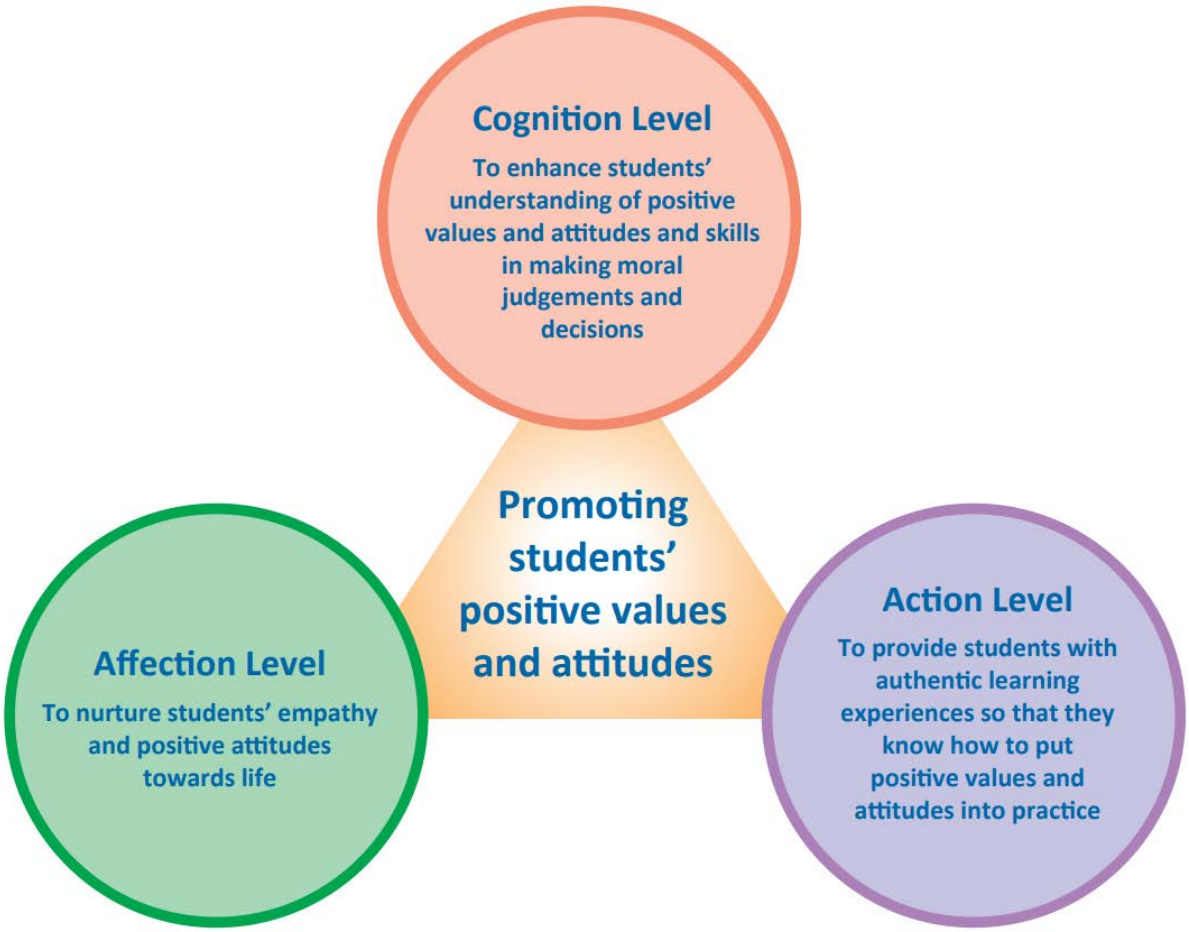
  - current affairs and life events and issues drawing attention of the community.

6A.5 Implementation Strategies of Values Education

6A.5.1 Integration of Cognition, Affection and Action

- Schools are encouraged to provide holistic learning experiences to students through integrating the elements of cognition, affection and action for the promotion of values education (see Figure 6A.1).

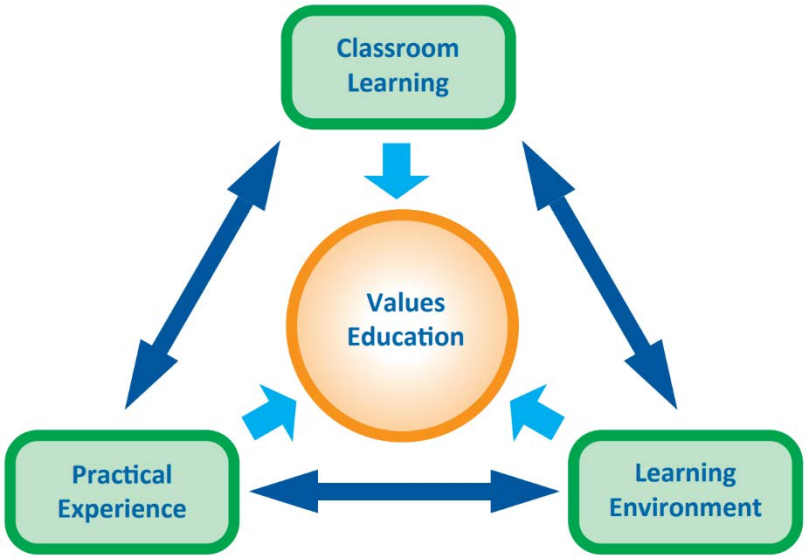
Figure 6A.1 Integration of Cognition, Affection and Action



6A.5.2 Provision of Holistic and Balanced Learning Experiences

- The implementation of values education should provide students with holistic and balanced learning experiences through integrating classroom learning, practical experience and learning environment (see Figure 6A.2).

Figure 6A.2 Major Components for the Implementation of Values Education



- **Classroom Learning**

  - All KLAs/subjects can provide relevant contexts to engage students in discussions and help them reflect on and apply positive values and attitudes from multiple perspectives. In some KLAs/subjects such as Science Education and Geography, students can also understand positive values and attitudes from multiple perspectives through discussing the subject matter.

Example 3

In an English lesson, S2 students take part in a charity project with the theme "Charities and Helping Others" to promote students' integrative use of language skills. The project starts with a talk by a social worker on underprivileged children who are deprived of education. Students then discuss the roles and responsibilities of the more fortunate ones to understand the importance of social responsibility. Students are then asked to sign a "contract" to commit themselves to a series of fundraising events leading up to the "Jumble Charity Sale" to support childhood education.

- Some schools allocate lesson time for their life education or values education with the aim of promoting whole-person development.

- Some schools make good use of the class teacher periods or school assemblies and invite school members or guest speakers to share their views on some contemporary or hot social issues. Students are encouraged to adopt positive values and attitudes as one of their guiding principles when they provide views on the issues.

- **Practical Experience**

  - Schools can arrange authentic learning experiences such as participating in club/student union elections, uniformed group activities, field visits, volunteer services, overseas visits and exchange programmes for students to practise positive values and attitudes, and experience the joy and excitement of upholding positive values and attitudes.

- **Learning Environment**

  - Positive values and attitudes can be demonstrated by the schools' various stakeholders in their daily interaction with students. Apart from classroom teaching, teachers' words and deeds, their classroom management and attitudes also have a profound influence on students' development of positive values and attitudes.

  - Schools can incorporate the cultivation of positive values and attitudes in the school development plan with the support of the administrative practices in order to create a holistic and authentic learning environment.

  - Schools can solicit participation and support from parents, alumni, and the community to create a learning environment conducive to the cultivation of students' moral and civic qualities.

Reflective Question

✧ How can your school collaborate with various stakeholders to create a learning environment conducive to the cultivation of students' positive values and attitudes?

6A.5.3 Strengthening the Co-ordination among Different Domains in Values Education

- Schools can include the cultivation of students' positive values and attitudes as one of their schools' major concerns, and strengthen the co-ordination between different cross-curricular domains to integrate the values and attitudes into their learning objectives. For example, school can promote "Responsibility":

  - in moral and ethical education through deepening students' understanding of their responsibilities;

  - in Basic Law education through enhancing students' awareness of civil rights and civic responsibilities in the family, school and society;

  - in sex education through helping students uphold a responsible attitude when handling their interpersonal relationships; and

  - in education for sustainable development by fostering students' sense of environmental responsibility and encouraging them to establish a green and healthy lifestyle.

6A.5.4 Whole-school Curriculum Planning

- Schools should adopt a holistic and balanced curriculum planning that is closely connected with the KLAs/subjects, and design relevant learning experiences for the implementation of values education.
- Curriculum planning for implementing values education at the secondary level should include the following stages:

Schools take their missions, stakeholders' views, students' needs and preferences, etc. into consideration so as to set specific learning objectives for various Key Stages.

Schools review the learning elements of values education in different KLAs/subjects, life-wide learning, Other Learning Experiences and cross-curricular activities so as to provide holistic learning experiences for students.

Schools create a platform to encourage teachers to share good teaching practices and experiences, and arrange professional development programmes to enhance teachers' knowledge of the learning content of values education and pedagogical skills.

Schools make reference to different resources from the EDB, press, magazines, books, electronic media, the Internet, etc., and apply for support services provided by the EDB and related government departments, tertiary institutions and non-governmental organisations, etc.

Schools use diversified and appropriate strategies to understand students' progress in the learning process with reference to the learning objectives, and give them positive feedback and suggestions for improvement.

6A.5.5 Student-centred Curriculum Planning

- All along, schools in Hong Kong have adopted a student-centred approach and developed their own values education and implementation strategies in consideration of the school's strengths and directions, the students' performance and developmental needs, and the expectations from different stakeholders.
- Below are two examples on adopting a student-centred approach in the planning and implementation of values education.

Example 4

- A secondary school finds that their students' self-management skills and self-confidence are declining, and it is possibly due to their absence of clear goals on what to achieve in future. Therefore, the school designs and launches values education activities which focus on promoting students' self-understanding, goal setting, and career and life planning.

Example 5

- The sponsoring body of a secondary school has been providing diversified community services for many years. With its support, values education which makes reference to the origin and history of the sponsoring body as well as its current services is developed by the secondary school, thereby enabling students to understand its mission and vision, appreciate its contribution to the community, and learn to serve the community and the underprivileged.

6A.5.6 Interfaces between Key Stages

- Most students at the primary level (i.e. in Key Stages 1 and 2) are in their childhood years and a small portion may have entered adolescence. Starting in primary schools and continuing through secondary schools, schools should develop students' understanding and recognition of positive values and attitudes, as well as healthy living habits.
- Sophistication in students' cognition at the secondary level (i.e. in Key Stages 3 and 4) provides a solid foundation for schools to develop students' moral judgement and rational thinking skills through guiding them to analyse some complicated or controversial life events and social issues.

6A.5.7 Creating a Conducive Atmosphere

- Schools are encouraged to put emphasis on establishing an atmosphere conducive to the promotion of students' positive values and attitudes.

- Apart from the school curriculum, schools should also organise different types of activities to deepen teachers' and parents' understanding of values education and develop partnership among them.

Reflective Question

✧ How can your school's daily administrative arrangements encourage students to make reflection on positive values and attitudes and put them into practice?

6A.6 Roles of Different Stakeholders

6A.6.1 Principals

- To disseminate the importance of values education to all members of the school; to facilitate consensus building of the whole school and setting of the direction of values education, support it and be consistent in their key decisions, words and deeds;

- To empower a vice principal/MCE co-ordinator or appoint an experienced co-ordinator with strong leadership to oversee the whole-school curriculum development, take charge of the reviewing, planning and development of values education, and regularly evaluate its effectiveness;

- To encourage teachers to actively participate in professional development programmes for values education, and promote internal and external sharing of good practices so as to enhance teachers' professionalism;

- To keep close contact with parents, alumni, other schools, community organisations, government departments, non-governmental organisations, etc; and

- To co-ordinate the participation of different stakeholders and introduce different types of resources to support the promotion of values education.

6A.6.2 Vice Principals/MCE Co-ordinators

- To take the role as the leader and co-ordinator; to collaborate with various KLAs/subjects and administration committees (e.g. Discipline Committee, Counselling Committee, Student Personal Growth Committee and Other Learning Experiences Committee); to set priorities in nurturing values and attitudes through values education with reference to different themes in KLAs every year, and to review the implementation of values education;
- To formulate the development plan of values education; to set concrete learning objectives by taking school context and student-centred factors into consideration, and to constantly review its implementation;
- To plan values education; to select appropriate life events and social issues as the learning content, and adopt diversified learning and teaching strategies to promote values education holistically;
- To regularly report the progress of the implementation of values education to the principal and discuss the proposal for development, and to explore suitable resources to refine the content of the values education; and
- To provide teachers with information related to professional development programmes for values education, to encourage teachers to actively participate in them and to arrange sharing with peers to enhance professionalism.

6A.6.3 KLA/Subject Panel Heads

- To make reference to the KLA/subject Curriculum Guides under their charge, identify learning elements that can nurture students' values and attitudes, and incorporate them strategically into the curriculum at each level;
- To implement the values education plans in response to the directions of the school's development; to collaborate with other KLAs/subjects and seek joint efforts to design cross-curricular themes and activities to promote values education, and to regularly evaluate the learning effectiveness; and
- To discuss with teachers in subject panel meetings and sharing sessions the learning and teaching strategies that can help students develop their positive values and attitudes as well as moral judgement and rational thinking skills.

6A.6.4 Teachers

- To understand the objectives and strategies for the implementation of values education; to recognise that it is the mission and shared responsibility of all teachers of the school to develop students' positive values and attitudes;
- To act as a facilitator in students' learning; to create an open atmosphere to arouse students' interest in learning, and to encourage them to share their views truthfully and show respect for different views;
- To put emphasis on how to strengthen students' positive values and attitudes and capabilities to think from multiple perspectives when designing daily classroom learning activities;
- To take the school's vision, students' characteristics and developmental needs into consideration, and create learning opportunities for students to demonstrate positive values and attitudes; and
- To encourage students to participate in values education activities organised by the school and other schools or organisations, and to strengthen the learning effectiveness through discussion and sharing afterwards.

6A.6.5 Parents

- To listen attentively to and understand their children's opinions, and give them guidance during communication, rather than to impose certain views and values and attitudes on them as teenagers may have their own values and attitudes as well as opinions;
- To create a good learning environment for their children at home by showing concern for their developmental changes and needs; to discuss with their children what they have encountered in their daily life; to share their own values and attitudes and encourage their children to reflect on and express their personal opinions;
- To mind their own words and deeds, and to act as a role model for their children; and
- To proactively ask about and understand the implementation of values education in school; to actively participate in values education activities organised by the school to enhance the collaboration between parents and school for nurturing students' positive values and attitudes.

6A.6.6 Students

- To actively take part in the classroom activities of values education; to think from multiple perspectives, discuss, actively express ideas, listen attentively to and respect the views of others to develop positive values and attitudes;
- To pay attention to current affairs concerning society, the nation and the world in order to deepen their understanding of different events and issues, widen their horizons and learn to make rational and objective judgements and decisions; to communicate and discuss with teachers and parents proactively if necessary; and
- To actively participate in the learning activities such as exchange tours, voluntary services and uniformed groups organised by schools, government departments and non-governmental organisations, and to live a positive and healthy life.

6A.7 Assessments

6A.7.1 Purposes

The assessments of values education should have the following purposes:

Assessment for learning	• To provide positive and clear feedback for students to understand what improvement they should make and highlight their learning outcomes in order to help them develop positive values and attitudes.
Assessment as learning	• To encourage students to deepen their understanding of positive values and attitudes through discussion, sharing and application and to consider what self-enhancement and other improvements can be made.
Assessment of learning	• To provide information for teachers and other stakeholders to understand students' learning progress and performance so as to shed light on how to fine-tune and improve the curriculum.

6A.7.2 Conducting Assessments in Values Education

- Teachers should note the following when they conduct values education assessments:
  - Provide positive and clear feedback to students, demonstrate students' values education learning outcomes and help students reflect on what improvements they can make.
  - Avoid assessing whether students' values and attitudes meet the expected standards and comparing the performance of different students.

Reflective Question

✧ How can schools avoid the labelling effect on students when conducting values education assessments?

6A.8 Support Available to Schools and Teachers

- The EDB has been providing diversified curriculum resources to secondary schools including learning materials, learning resources websites and professional development programmes for the promotion of values education.

  - **Learning materials**: Learning materials like lesson plans, short films and worksheets, with clearly stated objectives, teaching procedures, reference materials and extended activities are provided for teachers to adapt flexibly.

  - **Learning resources websites**: Learning resources on different themes covering current affairs and various cross-curricular domains in values education have been uploaded to the EDB website on "Moral, Civic and National Education" (*www.edb.gov.hk/cd/mcne*).

  - **Professional development programmes**: A series of professional development programmes including various seminars and workshops are regularly provided for teachers and different stakeholders. The EDB also co-operates with teacher education institutions and non-governmental organisations to enhance teachers' professional knowledge and competency. (*For details of the professional development programmes, please visit:http://tcs.edb.gov.hk)*

- The EDB also provides school-based support services which include:

  - assisting schools in developing the plans for values education;

  - creating teachers' networks to facilitate exchange of ideas and good practices;

  - establishing partnership with tertiary institutions to keep teachers informed of the latest development of values education; and

  - collaborating with schools to pilot new pedagogical approaches and disseminating the findings and experiences to schools.

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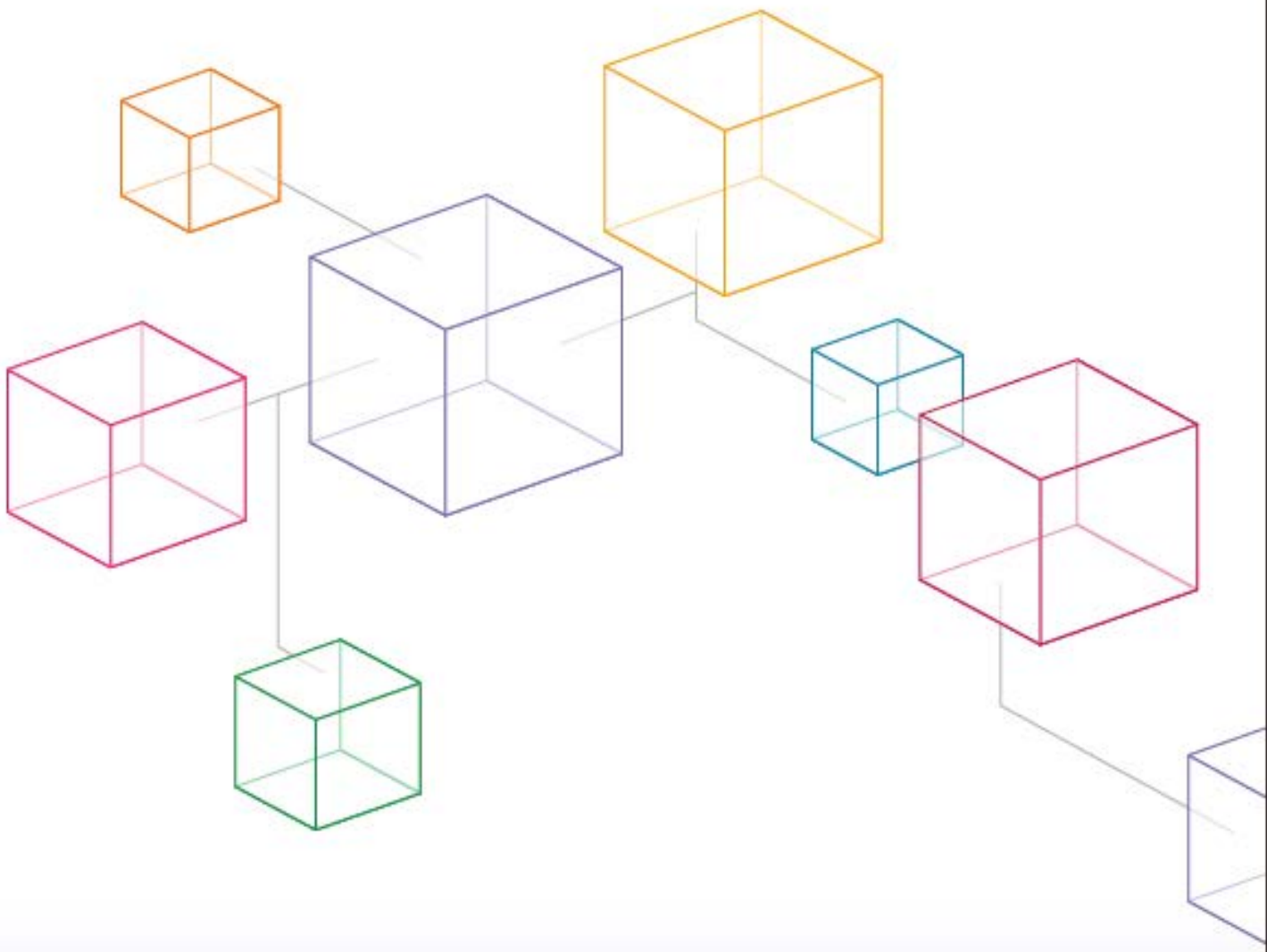
Website

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