

Recommendations on making good use of learning time to enhance student learning

There is evidence showing that good use of learning time is one of the important conditions for enhancing students' learning effectiveness. Learning time refers to not only classroom periods as students can gain learning experiences anywhere and anytime. Learning time includes lesson time (teacher-student contact hours in settings not limited to the classroom), the time outside class at school (such as recess, lunch breaks, after-school time, open days, examination days) as well as the time spent outside school including holidays. Hence, schools should holistically plan and make good use of students' learning time with greater flexibility in time-tabling arrangement, providing more diversified learning experiences within and beyond the classroom, and also nurturing students' abilities as well as attitudes for self-directed learning, thereby enabling them to make the most benefit out of learning. Some recommendations are provided as follows for schools to achieve the above objectives:

Create more space for students

➤ Curriculum adaptation and quality use of learning time

- Adapt the school-based curriculum by making reference to the Key Learning Area and Subject Curriculum Guides of the Curriculum Development Council (CDC) to reduce overlapping content.
- Adjust the timetable and review the weighting of lesson time of different subjects in order to create space for further promotion of cross-curricular learning and life-wide learning (e.g. Mainland exchange programmes) with a view to strengthening national education and national security education, STEAM education, media and information literacy, etc.
- Encourage students' active learning by effective use of IT. Teachers are recommended to adopt an interactive teaching approach, provide students with adequate support (e.g. relevant government/departmental websites, videos, powerpoint presentations or information which are suitable for students) and more space enabling self-directed learning of students.
- Guide students to extend diversified, healthy and wholesome learning experiences during weekends and school holidays, e.g. leisure reading, service learning, physical activities, exploring the community and the nature, online learning, visits to museums, cultural/arts/science and technology fairs, so that students can learn to plan and self-manage their time, lead a healthy lifestyle, and also broaden their horizons and perspectives.

➤ Review assessment policy and practice

- Develop a school assessment policy by giving more emphasis on "Assessment for Learning" and "Assessment as Learning". Avoid disrupting student learning by frequent tests or examinations.
- Change the assessment practice by reducing the weighting of the final end-of- term examination. Schedule the final examination period to a later time in the school year instead of early June.
- Tests and examinations should be replaced by diversified assessments in the first term of Primary One. Holistic consideration should be given to abolishing, postponing dictations, tests and examinations in Primary One or reducing their frequency and content or scope, and replacing them with flexible and diversified assessments so as to create space for facilitating the interface between kindergarten and primary.

- Avoid shortening the time students attend at school during and after examinations (particularly at the primary and junior secondary levels).
 - Avoid spending too much time on pre-test and pre-examination revisions and post-test and post-examination correction of answer scripts by students.
 - Provide well-planned post examination activities to enhance student learning, e.g. Community service, career-related experiences, moral and civic education programmes, physical and aesthetic experiences, accelerated learning programmes, etc.
- Scheduling of staff development days and discretionary holidays
- Schedule staff development days for Saturdays as far as possible to avoid affecting the learning time of students. Staff development days are excluded from the calculation of school days.
 - Review the practice of scheduling discretionary holidays and consider reducing the number in each school year.
- Exercise flexibility in time-tabling arrangement to extend and enrich students' learning experiences
- Arrange more double periods, longer periods of 45-55 minutes or a combination of long and short periods in different terms or throughout the year to provide students with a wide range of learning experiences to meet different learning needs and objectives.
 - Arrange flexible lesson time in different modes across levels according to the school context and needs.
 - Make flexible use of lesson time to create space for life-wide learning, STEAM learning activities, Reading across the Curriculum, thematic learning, cross-curricular project learning, etc.
 - Organise cultural, aesthetic and physical activities (e.g. concerts, Chinese brush painting exhibitions, fitness, dance and drama performance) during lunch break, before and after school to facilitate students' whole-person development.
 - Arrange block time for whole-school activities, large group teaching, cross-class grouping activities.

More recommendations on how to enhance student learning are given in the *Primary Education Curriculum Guide (Pilot Version)* and the *Secondary Education Curriculum Guide* prepared by the CDC in 2022 and 2017 respectively. Relevant information is available at the website of the Curriculum Development Institute (CDI) (www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-guides).

For further enquiries, please contact the Kindergarten & Primary Section of CDI at 2892 5831 or the Council and Secondary Section at 2892 6403.