

## **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 timetabling 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 optimisation 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 digital literacy, etc.
- Encourage students' active learning by effective use of technology. Teachers are recommended to adopt an interactive teaching approach, and 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 and wholesome learning experiences during weekends and holidays, e.g. leisure reading, service learning, physical activities, exploring the community and the nature, online learning, visits to museums, cultural, arts, or 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 of the assessment policy and practice

- Develop a school assessment policy focusing on "Assessment for Learning" and "Assessment as Learning". Avoid disrupting student learning due to frequent tests or examinations.
- Change the assessment practice by reducing the weighting of the final examination. Schedule the final examination period to a later time in the school year instead of early June.
- Replace tests and examinations with diversified assessments in the first term of Primary One. Holistic consideration should be given to deferring or reducing the frequency, content or scope of dictations, tests and examinations in Primary One, and adopting flexible and interesting assessment modes to create space and facilitate the interface between the

kindergarten and primary levels.

- Avoid shortening the lesson time of students during or after the period of examinations (particularly at the primary and junior secondary levels).
  - Avoid spending too much time on pre-test/examination or post-test/examination correction of answers.
  - Provide well-planned post-examination activities to enhance student learning, e.g. community service, career-related experiences, values education programmes, physical and aesthetic activities, etc.
- Arrangement 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 not counted in the calculation of school days.
  - Review the practice of scheduling discretionary holidays and consider reducing the number of discretionary holidays.
- Flexible timetabling to extend and enrich students' learning experiences
- Arrange more double periods, long periods of 45-55 minutes or a combination of long and short periods in different terms or throughout the year to provide students with diversified learning experiences to meet different learning needs and learning objectives.
  - Consider arranging flexible lesson time in different modes across levels based on 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 ink painting exhibitions, fitness, dance and drama performance) during lunch break, before or after school to facilitate students' whole-person development.
  - Arrange block time for whole-school activities, large group teaching or cross-class group activities.

More recommendations on how to enhance student learning are given in the *Primary Education Curriculum Guide* and the *Secondary Education Curriculum Guide* prepared by the CDC in 2024 and 2017 respectively. Relevant information is available at the website of the Curriculum Development Institute (CDI) (<https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/renewal/guides.html>).

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