

Existing and planned measures on the promotion of racial equality

Education Bureau

The Government is committed to encouraging and supporting the integration of non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students¹ into the community, including facilitating their early adaptation to the local education system and mastery of the Chinese language. All eligible children, irrespective of their races or places of birth, enjoy equal opportunities for admission to Primary One and Secondary One of public sector schools under the respective school places allocation systems which are fair and transparent with due regard to parents' school choices. The Education Bureau (EDB) has been providing NCS students with all-encompassing learning support through diverse strategies to help them master the Chinese language and integrate into the community. The policy intent is to encourage parents of NCS students to arrange for their children to study in schools with an immersed Chinese language environment as early as possible to facilitate their mastery of the Chinese language. Major support measures are as follows:

The “Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework”

- Services Concerned
- With regard to learning Chinese in class, the “Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework” (“Learning Framework”), which was complemented by learning and teaching materials, has been implemented in primary and secondary schools since the 2014/15 school year to help NCS students learn Chinese.

Existing Measures

The Learning Framework

- The Learning Framework has provided steps and methods for learning and teaching, and assessment according to the needs of NCS students of learning Chinese as a second language. With reference to the Learning Framework, teachers can set learning targets, learning progress and expected learning outcomes on reading, writing, listening and speaking, as well as adapt and develop teaching materials at the school-based level for NCS students with different starting points and abilities, so as to help them learn Chinese progressively.

¹ For the planning of educational support measures, students whose spoken language at home is not Chinese are broadly categorised as NCS students. The Education Bureau collects student information, including their spoken language at home and ethnicity, etc., from schools every school year for education-related purposes.

- To provide teachers with guidance and support in curriculum planning, learning and teaching, and assessment, EDB has continually been developing diversified learning and teaching resources, such as the “Chinese Language Assessment Tools for NCS Students” and teaching reference materials. All these resources have been uploaded to the EDB webpage and will be updated on an ongoing basis. Among others, EDB has developed a set of learning and teaching materials, including student textbooks, workbooks and teaching reference materials, for NCS students at the primary level. The materials have been uploaded to the EDB webpage and distributed to schools. Schools may adapt these materials with reference to their curriculum to cater for the diverse learning needs of NCS students. In addition, EDB has designed Online Chinese Language Self-learning Resources for NCS students to provide diversified learning materials so as to help them extend learning beyond classes and consolidate their learning.

Funding Support for Schools

- To facilitate schools’ implementation of the Learning Framework and the creation of an inclusive learning environment, EDB provides an additional funding for all public sector and Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) primary, secondary and special schools offering the local curriculum according to the number of NCS students admitted. The amount of the additional subsidy ranges from about \$0.15 million to about \$1.5 million per year.

Professional Development for Teachers

- All Chinese Language teachers teaching NCS students are provided with training opportunities. To enhance teachers’ professional capability of teaching NCS students, EDB continues to organise structured and diversified modes of teacher professional development programmes, as well as arranging teacher professional experience sharing, to enhance the professional capability of Chinese Language teachers in teaching NCS students.

- EDB supports the Education University of Hong Kong to continue offering the programme “Certificate in Professional Development Programme on the Teaching of Chinese Language for NCS Students” (5 weeks) for in-service Chinese Language teachers teaching NCS students in primary and secondary schools. The programme aims to enhance their effectiveness of teaching NCS students Chinese.
- Schools are invited to share their good practices and school-based experiences in supporting NCS students’ learning of Chinese and promoting cultural integration, with a view to facilitating professional exchange among schools. Besides, annual sharing sessions for schools are organised in collaboration with the Equal Opportunities Commission to explain how the Race Discrimination Ordinance, Cap. 602 of the Laws of Hong Kong, is relevant to schools in formulating policies, and encourage schools to promote cultural inclusiveness.

School-based Support Services

- EDB provides diversified school-based support services which include helping schools adapt their school curriculum and develop appropriate learning and teaching materials by making reference to the Learning Framework. Through providing on-site support, building professional learning communities and facilitating experience sharing among schools, teachers’ professional capacity for helping NCS students learn Chinese effectively is enhanced. Every school year, schools may apply for the relevant support services according to their development needs.

Assessment
of Future
Work

- EDB reviews and evaluates the effectiveness of related support measures on an ongoing basis, and refines the measures as necessary. We will look into the learning objectives, curriculum planning, instructional materials and teaching strategies adopted by the schools, language proficiency and learning motivation of NCS students and other contributing factors for effective learning.

Additional
Measures
Taken/To Be
Taken

- EDB will continue collecting views from stakeholders and consider refinement of the support measures as appropriate.

Articulation to Multiple Pathways

Services Concerned

- NCS students may, taking into account their needs and aspirations, choose to study Chinese Language, or Applied Learning Chinese (for NCS students) (ApL(C)) in the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE), and/or obtain internationally recognised alternative Chinese Language qualifications at the senior secondary level to prepare for further studies and career pursuits.

Existing Measures

ApL(C)

- Starting from the 2014/15 school year, the introduction of ApL(C) pegged at the Qualifications Framework Levels 1 to 3 provides eligible NCS students² at the senior secondary level with an additional channel to obtain an alternative Chinese Language qualification to prepare them for further studies and career pursuits. ApL(C) results are reported as “Attained” and “Attained with Distinction” on the HKDSE certificate.

Alternative Chinese Language Qualifications

- Alternative Chinese Language qualifications include those under the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) and General Certificate of Education (GCE) Advanced Subsidiary (AS)-Level and Advanced (A)-Level. Eligible NCS students² entering for these examinations are only required to pay a “subsidised examination fee” on par with that of the HKDSE Chinese Language³.

² Specifically, these NCS students are those who have learnt Chinese Language for either –
(a) less than six years while receiving primary and secondary education; or
(b) six years or more in schools, but have been taught an adapted and simpler curriculum not normally applicable to the majority of students in local schools.

³ With the Government’s measure to pay the examination fees for school candidates entering for the HKDSE from 2019 to 2024, the “subsidised examination fee” of eligible NCS students entering for the above-mentioned non-local Chinese Language examinations from the 2018/19 to 2023/24 school years was waived accordingly.

³ With the Government’s measure to pay the examination fees for school candidates entering for the HKDSE from 2019 to 2024, the “subsidised examination fee” of eligible NCS students entering for the above-mentioned non-local Chinese Language examinations from the 2018/19 to 2023/24 school years was waived accordingly.

Others

- Post-secondary institutions/training organisations have been invited to organise vocational Chinese Language courses pegged at Level 1 or 2 of the Qualifications Framework for NCS school leavers. Students meeting the relevant requirements can receive a subsidy of up to 85% of the tuition fee.
- Assessment of Future Work
- The alternative Chinese Language qualifications and ApL(C) are recognised for meeting the general entrance requirements for admission to University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded universities and most post-secondary institutions as well as appointments to the Civil Service.
- Additional Measures Taken/To Be Taken
- For eligible NCS students taking the HKDSE Chinese Language but not reaching Level 3 or above, the UGC-funded universities may exercise their discretion on the Chinese Language requirement and consider their applications for admission on a case-by-case basis.

Other Support Measures

Summer Bridging Programme

- Services Concerned
- The Summer Bridging Programme aims to facilitate NCS Primary 1 entrants' adaptation to the use of Chinese in classroom learning and help NCS students progressing to Primary 2 to 6 consolidate what they have learnt in the school year and prepare them for Chinese learning in the following school year.
- Existing Measures
- Starting from the summer of 2007, the Summer Bridging Programme for NCS Primary 1 entrants has been extended to NCS students progressing to Primary 2, 3 and 4. The Programme has been refined by engaging parents of participating NCS students for more effective learning of Chinese through parental support and home-school co-operation since 2013. From 2023 onwards, EDB has extended the Programme to cover NCS students progressing to Primary 5 and Primary 6 to provide more comprehensive and continuous Chinese learning support for NCS students.
- Assessment of Future work
- Review of the implementation situation and effectiveness of the Summer Bridging Programme is conducted on an annual

basis.

Additional Measures Taken/To Be Taken

- EDB will continue to collect views from stakeholders and consider refinement of the Programme as appropriate.

Grant for Supporting NCS Students with Special Educational Needs

Services Concerned

- Starting from the 2019/20 school year, EDB provides a recurrent cash grant known as the Grant for Supporting NCS Students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) (the NCS-SEN Grant) for public sector ordinary schools and DSS schools admitting NCS students with SEN to help schools strengthen the emotional, communication and social support for these students, helping them adapt to different learning stages and integrate into school life.

Existing Measures

- The NCS-SEN Grant is disbursed under a 3-tier structure according to the number of NCS students with SEN admitted in each school and the grant rates are adjusted annually according to the change in the Composite Consumer Price Index⁴.
- Schools can pool the NCS-SEN Grant and other additional resources, such as the Learning Support Grant, for holistic and flexible deployment to employ teaching assistants to assist teachers in designing activities and teaching materials, procure translation services to enhance the communication and collaboration with parents of NCS students, provide the students concerned with social and emotional management training, etc.

Assessment of Future Work

- The professional staff of EDB conduct regular visits to schools to get a grasp of their utilisation of the additional resources for providing appropriate support and offer advice to schools on effective deployment of resources to help the students concerned adapt to and make smooth transition through different learning stages.

Additional Measures Taken/To Be Taken

- EDB will continue to promote professional exchanges and sharing among schools in the utilisation of the NCS-SEN Grant.

⁴ In the 2023/24 school year, the respective rates of the three tiers of subsidy under the NCS-SEN Grant are \$105,191, \$210,382 and \$315,573.

Providing Life Planning Education Activities for NCS Students at the Secondary Level

Services Concerned

- To facilitate NCS students at the secondary level in understanding their career orientation, and learning about different study pathways and jobs through career exploration activities and work experience opportunities.

Existing Measures

- Starting from the 2018/19 school year, EDB has commissioned a non-governmental organisation to organise career exploration activities for NCS students at the secondary level, including visits to post-secondary institutions, workplace visits, work experience programmes, etc., to help them make informed choices on further studies and careers, set personal goals and plan their future. The programme has also provided training courses for teachers and parents of NCS students of the participating schools to enhance their capability of supporting NCS students in life planning education.

Assessment of Future Work

- EDB adopts various means to evaluate and monitor the effectiveness and progress of the programme, such as conducting regular visits to the participating schools to learn about the implementation of the activities and listen to the views and needs of teachers and students, as well as conducting review meetings with the service provider and requesting the submission of reports by the service provider.

Additional Measures Taken/To Be Taken

- EDB will refine the programme with reference to the review findings.

Promotion of Early Adaptation

Services Concerned

- Parents of NCS children are encouraged to send their children to local kindergartens⁵ for early exposure to an immersed Chinese language environment conducive to NCS children's language learning and their smooth transition to mainstream primary schools.

⁵ "Kindergartens" refer to kindergartens, kindergarten-cum-child care centres and schools with kindergarten classes.

Existing
Measures

Kindergarten

- School-based support services are provided to support kindergartens in enhancing teachers' professional capacity for teaching Chinese to NCS children and facilitate their smooth transition from kindergarten to primary education. Teacher training programmes on the learning and teaching of the Chinese language for NCS students in kindergartens will also be enhanced. Seminars/workshops on young children development and catering for learner diversity are organised to enhance teachers' professional capacity.

Others

- In collaboration with non-governmental organisations, district-based programmes have been conducted for motivating NCS children to learn Chinese through activities.
- As regards kindergarten admission, dedicated briefing sessions in English (with interpretation services in languages of diverse races provided as necessary) for parents of NCS children are organised. EDB has also produced a PowerPoint with English narration on "K1 admission arrangements", with relevant content translated into languages of diverse races to facilitate NCS parents' understanding about the implementation details and points to note under K1 admission arrangements. The above-mentioned PowerPoint has been uploaded onto EDB webpage for reference of parents of NCS children. In the meantime, we also organise briefing sessions in collaboration with the Support Services Centres for Ethnic Minority funded by the Home Affairs Department, with a view to better reaching out to parents of NCS children, so as to enhance their understanding of admission procedures of kindergartens, and also encourage them to arrange for their children to study in local kindergartens for early exposure to an immersed Chinese language environment.

Assessment
of Future
Work

- EDB will continue to conduct curriculum development visits and focus group interviews to collect information and good practices on catering for learner diversity, particularly on NCS children's learning of Chinese, for sharing with schools.

- Additional Measures Taken/To Be Taken
- As from the 2017/18 school year, EDB provided kindergartens joining the Kindergarten Education Scheme (Scheme-KGs) and admitting 8 or more NCS students with an additional grant comparable to the mid-point salary of the salary range for one kindergarten teacher to facilitate kindergartens' support for NCS students. Starting from the 2019/20 school year, EDB has further enhanced the measure by providing a 5-tiered grant. A kindergarten admitting one NCS student also receives the grant, and the grant rate for the highest tier is a double of the previous level. At the same time, EDB has strengthened professional development for kindergarten teachers on support for NCS students.

Information for NCS Students and Their Parents

- Services Concerned
- The objective of the services is to help NCS students and their parents understand the local education system in Hong Kong, major education policies and the related education services, and facilitate parents of NCS students in making informed school choices.

Existing Measures

Widening the School Choices of Parents of NCS Students

- EDB has been actively encouraging parents of NCS students to arrange for their children to study in schools which provide an immersed Chinese language environment. This is conducive to their children's learning of Chinese as well as integration into the community. EDB has abolished the so-called "designated schools" system⁶ since the 2013/14 school year, with a view to dispelling the misnomer "designated schools" and raising schools' awareness of supporting NCS students' learning of Chinese. With the implementation of the enhanced support measures, the number of public sector and DSS schools offering the local curriculum and admitting NCS students has gradually increased from about 590 in the 2013/14 school year to about 700 in the 2023/24 school year, which covers about 75% of the schools in total. This shows that the new support mode and measures have widened the school

⁶ From the 2006/07 to 2012/13 school years, schools admitting a critical mass of NCS students, having experience in taking care of NCS students, and ready to partner with EDB to develop school-based support measures and share experiences with other schools were provided with a special grant. These schools were generally referred to as the so-called "designated schools".

choices of parents of NCS students.

Dissemination of Information

- All relevant information, including, among others, arrangements for admission to Primary 1 and Secondary 1, and Household Application for Student Financial Assistance Schemes, published in Chinese and English with translation into languages of diverse races is provided to NCS students and their parents.
- Dedicated briefing sessions with simultaneous interpretation services for parents of NCS students are organised to introduce the education support measures for NCS students and the arrangements for admission to Primary 1 and Secondary 1 of public sector schools. Contents of the briefing sessions have been uploaded to the EDB webpage.
- Since the 2015/16 school year, the Committee on Home-School Co-operation (CHSC) has published the English printed version of the School Profiles for distribution to parents of NCS students studying at the K3 and Primary 6 levels via kindergartens and primary schools. Starting from the 2018/19 school year, a separate column on “Education Support for NCS Students” has been added to the School Profiles for schools to provide information on their support for NCS students. Public sector primary and secondary schools and DSS primary and secondary schools admitting NCS students and provided with the additional funding are required to specify the schools’ additional support measures for enhancing NCS students’ learning of Chinese and the creation of an inclusive learning environment in the schools. The School Profiles are uploaded to the Chinese and English versions of the CHSC website. Starting from the 2019/20 school year, EDB has further enhanced the newly added column by requiring the schools concerned to provide more information on the relevant support measures.

Other Measures to Facilitate Communication

- A dedicated webpage (<https://www.edb.gov.hk/ncs>) has been set up to facilitate the understanding of NCS students and their parents about the relevant education services and information.

- For daily enquiries, hotline service has been put in place and simultaneous interpretation services, by means of telephone conferencing among the enquirer, EDB and Centre for Harmony and Enhancement of Ethnic Minority Residents, the Support Services Centre for NCS population funded by the Government, have been offered since July 2010.

Admission to Kindergartens

- While student admission in kindergartens continues to be school-based, kindergartens have been reminded that the application forms and relevant information must be provided in both Chinese and English. In this regard, EDB has provided bilingual templates of relevant documents to kindergartens for reference.
- EDB has issued circular memoranda reminding schools to create an icon, a simple message in English or to provide a link to the English version of the websites on the home page of the school websites prominently, to facilitate parents in obtaining the English version of the information instantly when browsing the home page of the school websites. Furthermore, we require kindergartens to provide on the school websites the links to the English version of the EDB webpage on K1 Admission Arrangements in kindergartens and the webpage indicating the school information in the Profile of Kindergartens and Kindergarten-cum-Child Care Centres prominently to facilitate parents of NCS children in browsing relevant information. EDB has also reminded schools to state explicitly on the school websites that during interviews with NCS children, interpretation or translation services should be arranged for applicants as necessary, or parents and children are allowed to be accompanied by a Chinese-speaking relative or friend to facilitate communication. Kindergartens should provide on the school websites the information on the school's support for NCS children, enquiry telephone number and email address for parents of NCS children.
- The Profile of Kindergartens and Kindergarten-cum-Child Care Centres has been published in both Chinese and English annually to provide information on every kindergarten for parents' reference when making school choices. Starting from 2018, a new column "Support to NCS Students" has been included for kindergartens to set out the support provided to their NCS students.

- Starting from September 2018, EDB has set up a hotline (telephone number: 2892 6676) for parents of NCS children to facilitate their enquiries about admission to kindergartens.
- A set of communication cue cards with audio files in languages of diverse races has been provided for kindergartens to express care and concern for parents of NCS children in their daily contact in order to create a more inclusive school environment.
- Relevant publicity materials, such as leaflets, posters, application form and guidance notes on “Application for Registration Certificate for Kindergarten Admission”, as well as the subtitles of publicity announcements, have been translated into languages of diverse races for reference of parents of NCS children.
- Briefing session on admission to kindergartens was organised for non-governmental organisations serving the communities of diverse races, with a view to leveraging their networks to disseminate information to parents of NCS children. The Equal Opportunities Commission has been invited to brief kindergartens on equal opportunities for student admission.
- Should individual NCS children encounter difficulties in applying for admission, EDB will make referrals as appropriate to Scheme-KGs which still have vacancies.
- Templates of kindergartens’ commonly used circulars for parents have been translated into English and languages of diverse races and uploaded onto the EDB webpage to support kindergartens in enhancing their communication with parents of NCS children.
- EDB will continue optimising the dedicated webpage. Relevant information leaflets will also be updated as and when necessary. Besides, EDB encourages schools to continue enriching the contents of the Chinese and English versions of the School Profiles and their school webpages to provide more information on their school-based support measures for NCS students for reference of parents of NCS students.

Assessment
of Future
Work

Additional
Measures
Taken/To
Be Taken

Strengthening Parent Education

- Starting from the 2020/21 school year, EDB has commissioned non-governmental organisations and a post-secondary institution to provide diversified parent education programmes for parents of NCS students, including talks, workshops, exhibitions, community explorations and visits, etc. so as to help the parents of NCS students support their children's learning, encourage their children to master the Chinese language, and help them have a more comprehensive understanding of the multiple pathways available to their children.

Facilitating Communication

- To assist Scheme-KGs in enhancing their school websites and ensure both Chinese and English school information is provided for parents' reference, EDB has provided a one-off Website Enhancement Grant to Scheme-KGs in the 2020/21 school year. All Scheme-KGs should provide basic school information in both Chinese and English, including an introduction to the school, information on admission arrangements, school fees, the school's support for NCS children, enquiry telephone number and email address for parents of NCS children on the school website, etc. To support schools' enhancement of their websites, EDB has provided schools with a grant of \$10,000. For schools that provide all information on their websites in both Chinese and English, a grant of \$20,000 has been provided.

Enquiries

For enquiries concerning the existing and planned measures on the promotion of racial equality, please contact the Non-Chinese Speaking Student Support and Education Commission Section via the following channels -

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