

School No.: 323853

Report of Quality Review

Khalsa Diwan Kindergarten

G/F, 371 Queen's Road East, Hong Kong

17, 18 & 20 May 2016

**Kindergarten Inspection Section
Education Bureau**

Education Bureau (2017)
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

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Dates of Quality Review: 17, 18 & 20 May 2016

School Met the Standards of Quality Review

School Did Not Meet the Standards of Quality Review

Performance of the School

1. Continuous Development of the School

1.1 The school, situated in a Sikh temple, was one of the voluntary services provided by the Gurdwara. It had been providing free education for kindergarten children since its establishment in 1975. The school served the ethnic minority families and their children. Thus, English was used as the medium of teaching while Chinese was also taught every day. To make good use of resources so as to better serve children of different cultural background, the school management had joined the Pre-primary Education Voucher Scheme (PEVS) in recent years.

1.2 In meeting the opportunities and requirements of the PEVS, the school management team had thoroughly reviewed its situation and formulated relevant yearly development plans. To align with the school's mission of caring for the needs of the families, it also committed to providing complimentary schooling necessities to children. Concurrently, the school management had put great effort to observe the prescribed requirements of the PEVS and to follow up the advice given by various related government sections, for example, incorporating Chinese learning into its curriculum, improving the learning environment, recruiting enough qualified teachers and supporting staff, as well as attending the school self-evaluation training workshop. With the great effort of the school management, gradual improvements in the quality of the school had been made.

1.3 As most parents would stay in the temple after taking their children to school, they could support teachers to take good care of the children whenever needed. Therefore, they were well acknowledged of their children's learning at school. Parents also actively participated in school activities and festive celebrations. They were devoted to render timely support to the school, such as preparing snacks for children and taking photos of children while they were playing. Mutual trust was established with good home-school cooperation. The school also maintained close ties with the community and external organisations in providing appropriate

support to the children. These included a language learning programme, health services and visits to primary schools. The school was determined to collaborate with parents and seek every means to broaden the horizons of children and foster their development.

2. Learning and Teaching

- 2.1 The school devised the curriculum framework with reference to the “Guide to the Pre-primary Curriculum”, which was aligned with the school’s mission of fostering children’s whole person development. The school adopted an integrated approach when designing the curriculum. Different themes which met the needs and interests of children were selected. All the learning areas were covered comprehensively. To enable children to get to know the society through first-hand experiences, the school invited different parties to visit the school and organized various outings, for example, demonstration of fire safety measures by firemen and a visit to the post office etc. These activities effectively aroused children’s interests in learning and connected them to the society. The school also emphasised developing children’s self-care ability through routine training so as to develop their social etiquette and to formulate good habits. However, formal writing tasks were assigned to nursery class children, dictations were conducted in upper kindergarten level and drillings on calculation were given to lower and upper kindergarten levels, which might weaken children’s learning interest and provoke resistance to learning in general. The school should abolish these developmentally inappropriate practices immediately.
- 2.2 The school comprised of children of different ethnic groups, including Indians, Nepalis and Filipinos. English was their second language. To better equip children to adapt to the local community and smoothly transit to primary education, the school took steps to introduce Chinese learning to the children. In recent years, the school had deployed a Chinese speaking teacher to conduct daily Chinese learning activities such as songs and language games for all levels. Children were able to repeat the newly learned Chinese words or phrases after the teacher. In order to further arouse children’s interest in learning Chinese, the school invited professionals from a university to organize a Chinese literacy programme this year. The school devised suitable strategies and implemented them earnestly to provide

children with more exposure, so as to enrich their Chinese learning experience. However, Chinese was also used as the medium of instructions during some discussion activities which were found quite demanding for the non-Chinese speaking children. Since the children were not yet able to comprehend complicated ideas and express them in Chinese, they were not attentive during these activities. The school was urged to consider thoroughly the aims and strategies of Chinese language teaching and learning. More interactive activities like storytelling and reciting nursery rhymes should be used to arouse children's interest in learning the Chinese language.

- 2.3 Last year, the principal planned to develop a mechanism for curriculum coordination, monitoring and reviewing. Teachers were requested to formulate the curriculum framework and to plan the teaching schedules of each theme. However, as the filing system was not established and there was a sudden big turnover of teachers, the curriculum related documents were all lost and new teachers of this year had difficulties in designing learning activities without much reference. The school was advised to set up a filing system immediately. While the school was establishing the curriculum coordination mechanism, monitoring and team collaboration should be strengthened by means of professional sharing, discussions and lesson observations among the teachers.
- 2.4 Though the school had tried to incorporate music, physical fitness, arts and free choice activities into the daily schedules, it was found that the timetable was quite disorganized. The time-slots for different activities varied from day to day which was very undesirable. Sometimes either music or physical fitness activities were too short, while at other times free choice activities were not enough. As a result, children did not have adequate opportunities to maximize their enjoyment of learning and could not acquire more effective learning experiences. The school was reminded to organise a balanced time-table with sufficient time allocated to music, physical fitness, and free choice activities every day.
- 2.5 The school made good use of its spacious outdoor area for physical activities. Children could run and hop freely. The classrooms were decorated with children's work. Teaching materials according to themes were displayed to consolidate children's learning. Teachers set up a few interest corners with some toys for children to explore during the free play time. To meet the developmental needs of

children and to enhance the effectiveness of learning, the school ought to provide more diversified stimulating and exploratory materials for physical and free choice activities. Learning materials should be arranged systemically and made easily accessible to children.

- 2.6 Teachers were patient and caring. A warm and joyful learning atmosphere was created. Teachers used positive reinforcements like praising and encouragements. The small class size structure allowed teachers to cater for children's individual differences. However, teachers sometimes focused too much on the delivery of knowledge and skills. Teachers were reminded that play should be adopted as the learning strategy for children to acquire and consolidate concepts. Teachers should also join in children's play so as to scaffold children's learning. Moreover, children should be given more chances to share their experiences, ideas and feelings through open-ended questions.
- 2.7 Children were happy and they enjoyed the school time. They were eager to join different kinds of activities, in particular singing nursery rhymes with free movements. Nursery class children enjoyed mumbling simple English vocabularies. They gradually developed their abilities to speak in English. Children in lower kindergarten level could communicate well in English. The upper kindergarten children showed confidence in using English and were skilful at applying phonics clues in word recognition and writing. Their English proficiency was generally good. Children had taken the initial step in learning Chinese. Some of them were able to imitate the pronunciation and intonation of the teacher. Most children had cultivated good living habits and self-caring skills. They were able to maintain good personal hygiene. Children cared about their friends and were ready to assist others. Some would show their empathy to peers who were suffering from sickness.
- 2.8 The assessment of children's learning development in different areas was mainly based on teachers' daily observation. Parents were informed of the results at the end of each term. However, test papers were also used at upper kindergarten level which had imposed unnecessary pressure on both children and their parents. The school must abolish this practice immediately.

3. Recommendations for Improvement

- 3.1 The school management should provide enough support to teachers to adapt to the environment. Curriculum leadership and team collaboration should be strengthened. A whole-school approach should be adopted for school self-evaluation and the school development plans.
- 3.2 The curriculum should meet the developmental needs of children. Formal writing in nursery level, calculation drills, dictations and tests must be abolished. Continuous observation in an authentic learning environment should be adopted for assessing children's performance.
- 3.3 The school should improve children's daily schedules so as to ensure a balanced curriculum for cultivating children's whole person development. Play-based learning strategies, together with an enriched environment, should be used.