

Existing and planned measures on the promotion of equality for ethnic minorities

Education

The Government is committed to encouraging and supporting the early integration of non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students¹ (notably ethnic minority (EM) students) into the community, including facilitating their 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. Starting from 2014, the Education Bureau (EDB) has implemented a series of enhanced support measures to step up the support for NCS students to facilitate their effective learning of the Chinese language and the creation of an inclusive learning environment in schools. 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”

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| Services Concerned | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The “Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework” (“Learning Framework”), which was drawn up in consultation with teachers and language experts, has been implemented in primary and secondary schools since the 2014/15 school year to help NCS students overcome the difficulties in learning Chinese as a second language with a view to facilitating their bridging over to mainstream Chinese Language classes in the long run. |
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Existing Measures

The “Learning Framework”

- Developed from the perspective of second language learners, the “Learning Framework” provides a systematic set of objectives and expected learning outcomes that describes the learning progress of NCS students at different learning stages. This is to support teachers in setting progressive learning targets, learning progress and

¹ For the planning of educational support measures, students whose spoken language at home is not Chinese are broadly categorised as NCS students.

expected learning outcomes to enhance the learning effectiveness of NCS students.

- To support teachers in curriculum planning, learning and teaching and assessment, EDB has also been developing diversified learning and teaching resources such as the “Chinese Language Assessment Tools for NCS Students” and reference materials for schools. These resources have been uploaded onto the EDB webpage and will be constantly updated. Among others, EDB has developed a series of learning and teaching materials, including student textbooks, workbooks and teaching reference materials, suitable for NCS students at the lower primary levels (i.e. Primary 1 to 3) for teachers’ reference and use. The series will further be extended to the upper primary levels (i.e. Primary 4 to 6). In addition to the above-mentioned learning and teaching materials, based on schools’ experiences in the implementation of the “Learning Framework”, it is found that NCS students of Levels 2 and 3 of the “Learning Framework” (i.e. Primary 3 and 4 in general) are at the most critical stage in their learning of the Chinese language. In view of this, EDB has also commissioned a tertiary institution to develop, in collaboration with primary schools, eight sets of “textbooks” pegged at Levels 2 and 3 of the “Learning Framework”. The eight sets of “textbooks” that are suitable for NCS students in Primary 3 and 4 in general have been published, distributed to NCS students and their schools and uploaded onto the EDB webpage.

Professional Development for Teachers

- All teachers teaching NCS students are provided with adequate training opportunities. Diversified and advanced professional development programmes that include curriculum planning and the “Learning Framework”, assessment for learning and second language learning and teaching strategies are organised so as to enhance teachers’ professional capacity for teaching Chinese as a second language and to raise their cultural and religious sensitivity.

- Besides, the Professional Enhancement Grant Scheme for Chinese Language Teachers (Teaching Chinese as a Second Language) under the Language Fund has been launched since 2014 to enhance Chinese Language teachers' professional capability for teaching Chinese as a second language. As it is envisaged that there could be a continued demand for pursuing the recognised programmes by teachers who need to better equip themselves with the necessary pedagogical knowledge and skills, the Scheme has been further extended up to the 2021/22 school year. To further encourage eligible teachers to apply for the subsidy, the maximum basic subsidy rate has been increased from 30% to 50% of the tuition fee (i.e. from \$34,000 to \$64,000) per eligible teacher starting from the 2019/20 school year.
- The 5-week programme "Certificate in Professional Development Programme on the Teaching of Chinese Language for NCS Students", conducted by the Education University of Hong Kong among other programmes / courses, for Chinese Language teachers teaching NCS students in primary and secondary schools will continue.
- Besides, to raise teachers' cultural and religious sensitivity in taking care of NCS students, EDB organises annual sharing sessions in collaboration with the Equal Opportunities Commission. Through sharing of good practices, teachers are empowered especially to overcome practical difficulties in daily teaching and administration, and treat both NCS students and Chinese-speaking students fairly in schools, notwithstanding the differences in their cultures and customs.

Enhanced Funding Support for Schools

- Starting from the 2014/15 school year, EDB has substantially increased the additional funding to schools to currently over \$200 million per year. All public sector schools and Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) schools offering the local curriculum and admitting 10 or more NCS students are provided with an additional funding ranging from \$0.8 million to \$1.5 million per year

depending on the number of NCS students admitted to facilitate schools' implementation of the "Learning Framework" and the creation of an inclusive learning environment in schools. The schools concerned are required to, based on the results of the "Chinese Language Assessment Tools for NCS students", adjust the learning targets and teaching strategies with reference to the learning progress so described in the "Learning Framework", as well as the learning performance and progress of their NCS students, and adopt diversified intensive learning and teaching modes as appropriate, such as pull out learning, split-class/group learning, after-school consolidation, etc. to enhance the effectiveness of NCS students in learning the Chinese language. The schools concerned could also appoint EM assistants and/or procure translation services to strengthen communication with parents of NCS students and organise multi-cultural activities.

- As regards schools admitting a handful (i.e. one to nine) of NCS students, their NCS students can benefit from the immersed Chinese language environment of the school as well as the "Learning Framework". Starting from the 2014/15 school year, these schools may also apply for an additional funding of \$50,000 on a need basis to offer after-school Chinese language support programmes to consolidate what their NCS students have learnt in classes. NCS students in these schools also benefit from other support measures for NCS students.

School-based Support Services

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

according to their development needs.

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| Assessment of Future Work | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• EDB reviews and evaluates the effectiveness of various support measures for NCS students 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• EDB will continue collecting views from stakeholders and consider refinement of the support measures as appropriate. |

Articulation to Multiple Pathways

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| Services Concerned | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• NCS students may, taking into account their needs and aspirations, choose to sit for the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE)(Chinese Language), or study Applied Learning Chinese (for NCS students)(ApL(C)), and/or obtain internationally recognised alternative Chinese Language qualifications at the senior secondary levels to prepare for further studies and career pursuits. |
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| Existing Measures | <p><i>(ApL(C))</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Starting from the 2014/15 school year, the introduction of ApL(C) pegged at the Qualifications Framework Levels 1 to 3 provides NCS students at the senior secondary levels 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” in the HKDSE. |
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Alternative Chinese Language Qualifications

- Alternative Chinese Language qualifications include the Chinese examinations 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 the GCE Advanced (A)-Level. Eligible NCS students² sitting for these examinations at present are only required to pay a “subsidised examination fee” on par with that of the HKDSE (Chinese Language).

Others

- To enhance the employability of NCS school leavers, the Standing Committee on Language Education and Research launched in April 2016 the “Vocational Chinese Language Courses for NCS School Leavers” pegged at Level 1 or 2 of the Qualifications Framework. Students meeting the relevant requirements could receive a subsidy of up to 85% of tuition fee.
 - 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.
 - 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.
- Assessment of Future Work
- Additional Measures Taken/To Be Taken

Other Support Measures

The Chinese Language Learning Support Centres

- Services Concerned
- Remedial programmes after school hours or during holidays for NCS students have been offered since mid-2007 with a view to reinforcing the learning of the Chinese

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.

language of NCS students, in particular the late starters, and rendering professional support to teachers.

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| Existing Measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Chinese Language Learning Support Centres (the Centres), commissioned to a tertiary education institution, continue to offer remedial programmes at 20 venues in the 2018/19 school year. The Centres also provide learning and teaching resources and organise workshops for experience sharing for Chinese Language teachers as well as workshops for parents of NCS students in the support for NCS students' learning of Chinese.• The number of NCS students enrolled in the Centres was about 810 in the 2018/19 school year. |
| Assessment of Future Work | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The after-school programmes for NCS students and workshops for teachers and parents will be kept under review in light of changing circumstances alongside the provision of after-school support in learning the Chinese language by individual schools admitting NCS students with the additional funding provided. |
| Additional Measures Taken/To Be Taken | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• EDB will continue to offer the existing programmes and consider making refinements as appropriate. |

Summer Bridging Programme

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| Services Concerned | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Summer Bridging Programme aims to help NCS children adapt to the new learning environment, widen their learning experience and exposure in using Cantonese as the medium of instruction in the real classroom situation, consolidate what they have learnt at Key Stage 1 and prepare for their transition to Key Stage 2. |
| Existing Measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Starting from the summer of 2007, the 4-week Summer Bridging Programme has been extended to cover not only incoming NCS Primary 1 entrants, but also NCS students proceeding to Primary 2, 3 and 4.• Starting from the summer of 2013, the Summer Bridging |

Programme has been refined by allowing parents of NCS students to accompany their children during the Programme with a view to enhancing their exposure to, and use of, Chinese and support for their children.

- In the 2018/19 school year, about 1 260 NCS students and 140 parents of NCS students participated in the programme.
- Assessment of Future work
- Review of the Summer Bridging Programme is conducted on an annual basis.
- Additional Measures Taken/To Be Taken
- EDB will continue to organise the Summer Bridging Programme.

Promotion of early adaptation

- Services Concerned
- Parents of NCS children are encouraged to send their children to local kindergartens³ for early exposure to an immersed Chinese environment conducive to NCS children's language learning and their smooth progression to mainstream primary schools.

Existing Measures

Kindergarten

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

Others

³ Kindergartens, kindergarten-cum-child care centres and schools with kindergarten classes are referred to as "kindergartens".

- In collaboration with non-governmental organisations, district-based programmes have been conducted since July 2012 for motivating NCS children to learn Chinese through fun activities.
- As regards kindergarten admission, dedicated briefing sessions in English (with interpretation services in major EM languages as necessary) for parents of NCS children are organised annually. In the meantime, we have also organised 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 send their children to local kindergartens for early exposure to an immersed Chinese environment.

Assessment of Future Work

- Curriculum development visits and focus group interviews will continue to be conducted to collect information and good practices on catering for learner diversity, particularly on NCS children’s learning of Chinese, for sharing.

Additional Measures Taken/To Be Taken

- With the implementation of the kindergarten education policy starting from the 2017/18 school year, a grant comparable to the salary of one teacher is provided to kindergartens admitting eight or more NCS students for supporting NCS students. Starting from the 2019/20 school year, a 5-tiered subsidy will be provided for kindergartens joining the kindergarten education scheme according to the number of NCS students admitted. Kindergartens admitting one NCS student will also receive the subsidy and the subsidy for the highest tier will be a double of the current level. Professional development for teachers on support to NCS children in kindergartens is strengthened.

Information for NCS students and their parents

Services Concerned

- The objective 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 abolished the so-called “designated schools” system⁴ 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 the Chinese language. With the implementation of the above-mentioned enhanced support measures, the number of public sector and DSS schools admitting NCS students has gradually increased from about 590 in the 2013/14 school year to about 630 in the 2018/19 school year, which covers about two-thirds of the schools in total. This shows that the new support mode and measures have widened the school choices of parents of NCS students.

Dissemination of information

- The Non-Chinese Speaking Parent Information Package: Your Guide to Education in Hong Kong (Information Package) published in major EM languages has been provided to parents of NCS students through Regional Education Offices, School Places Allocation Section, and Placement and Support Section of EDB, Federations of Parent-Teacher Associations of all districts, Maternal and Child Health Centres of the Department of Health, Home Affairs Enquiry Centres and Support Service Centres for Ethnic Minorities of the Home Affairs Department, and respective consulate generals to strengthen the support for NCS students and their parents.
- All relevant information (including, among others, admission to Primary 1 and Secondary 1, and Household Application for Student Financial Assistance Schemes) published in English and Chinese with translation into

⁴ 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”.

major EM languages has been provided to NCS students and their parents.

- Dedicated briefing sessions with simultaneous interpretation services in major EM languages for parents of NCS students are organised to introduce the support measures (including the implementation of the “Learning Framework”) and disseminate information on admission to the basic levels (i.e. Primary 1 and Secondary 1) of public sector schools.
- Since the 2015/16 school year, the Committee on Home-school Co-operation, has published the English printed version of the School Profiles for distribution to parents of NCS students studying at the Upper Kindergarten and Primary 6 levels via kindergartens and primary schools for their easy access to the information in the School Profiles. To provide parents with more comprehensive information on making school choices, 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 relevant support for NCS students. All public sector schools and DSS schools offering the local curriculum and provided with the additional funding are required to specify that additional support, including after-school support, is provided for their NCS students in learning of the Chinese language. Starting from the 2019/20 school year, schools concerned will provide more details on the relevant support measures in the new column as required by EDB.

Other measures to facilitate communication

- A dedicated webpage is available at <http://www.edb.gov.hk/ncs> to facilitate the understanding of parents of NCS students of the education services available.
- 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.

Assessment
of Future
Work

- EDB will continue optimising the dedicated webpage on education services for NCS students. Relevant information leaflets will also be updated as and when necessary. Besides, EDB will continue encouraging schools to provide more information on their school-based support measures for NCS students in their School Profiles and/or school webpages for the reference of parents of NCS students.

Additional
Measures
Taken/To Be
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Admission to kindergartens

- While student admission in kindergartens continues to be school-based, kindergartens have been reminded that the application forms and relevant information should 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 memorandum to remind schools to create an icon or provide a simple message in English on the homepage of the school website prominently, to let parents know instantly how to obtain the English version of the information when browsing the homepage of the school website. Furthermore, we require kindergartens to provide the link to the English version of the EDB webpage on the school website prominently to help parents of NCS children access the relevant information provided by EDB. Kindergartens are also reminded to take the initiative to inform parents of NCS children that they can use interpretation/translation services as necessary, or they can be accompanied by a Chinese-speaking relative or friend to facilitate communication.
- The Profile of Kindergartens and Kindergarten-cum-Child Care Centres (the Profile) 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 in the Profile

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 cue cards with audio files in major EM languages 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 television announcements) have been translated into major EM languages for reference by parents of NCS children.
- Briefing session on admission to kindergartens was organised for non-governmental organisations serving the EM communities with a view to leveraging on their networks to disseminate information to parents of NCS children. The Equal Opportunities Commission is 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 kindergartens joining the kindergarten education scheme which still have vacancies.
- Templates of kindergartens’ commonly used circulars for parents have been translated into English and major EM languages and uploaded to the EDB webpage to support kindergartens in enhancing their communication with parents of NCS children.

Conclusion

We will update the above measures and include other new measures as and when appropriate.

Enquiries

For further enquiries, please contact SEO(EC) of EDB at 3509 8561.

Education Bureau
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