



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部教育局
Education Bureau

Government Secretariat, The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
The People's Republic of China

香港添馬添美道2號政府總部東翼5樓506室 特殊教育及幼稚園教育分部
Special Education and Kindergarten Education Division, Room 506, 5/F, East Wing,
Central Government Offices, 2 Tin Mei Avenue, Tamar, HK

本局檔號 Our Ref.: EDB(SE&KG)/13-30/3
來函檔號 Your Ref.: CB4/PS/1/12

電話 Telephone: 3509 8520
傳真 Fax Line: 2119 9061

香港中區
立法會道1號
立法會綜合大樓
立法會教育事務委員會
融合教育小組委員會
(經辦人: 楊少紅女士)

楊女士:

教育事務委員會融合教育小組委員會
2014年5月28日會議跟進事宜

就教育事務委員會融合教育小組委員會於2014年5月28日會議上通過有關在主流學校實施的「手語雙語」共融教育計劃的議案,本局的書面回應見附件。

教育局局長

(覃翠芝



代行)

2014年7月31日

Current Special Education Policy

The Government is adopting a “dual-track” approach in implementing special education. For students with hearing impairment (HI), the Education Bureau (EDB) would, subject to the assessment and recommendation of specialists and parents’ consent, refer students with severe or profound hearing loss or those who cannot construct knowledge because of inadequate speech abilities, that is, those students who may need to use sign language in communication and learning, to special schools for children with HI to receive intensive support services. Other students with HI who can benefit from learning in mainstream schools would attend ordinary schools.

Supporting Students with HI Attending Ordinary Schools

2. To support ordinary schools in catering for students with special educational needs (SEN) (including HI), on top of the regular subvention for ordinary schools, the EDB has been providing schools with additional resources (including the Learning Support Grant (LSG) and the Enhanced Speech Therapy Grant, etc.), professional support and teacher training. Schools should pool and deploy their resources flexibly to provide appropriate support, through the Whole School Approach and the 3-Tier Intervention Model¹, for students according to their needs.

3. The EDB has all along been encouraging teachers to adopt an appropriate mode to teach and to communicate with students with HI according to the students’ abilities and needs. For students with HI who are suitable for attending ordinary schools, with the use of amplification devices, they are in general able to learn and communicate with people orally. Teachers and school-based speech therapists (STs) would help students with HI make use of their residual hearing to enhance their listening and oral communication abilities, and to strengthen their skills in communicating with other people with HI and hearing people. At the same time, with regard to the abilities and needs of students, teachers will use oral language, supplemented with visual strategies, contextual cues, body language, written text and gestures, etc., when teaching and communicating with students.

4. Should the learning and communication problems of students with HI in

¹ Tier-1 support refers to quality teaching in the regular classrooms to provide early support to students with mild or transient learning difficulties. Tier-2 support refers to “add-on” support for students with persistent learning difficulties, such as pull-out or after-school remedial programmes and hire of professional services. Tier-3 support refers to intensive individualized support for students with persistent and severe learning difficulties.

ordinary schools persist after school-based support, the EDB will refer the students to receive the “Enhanced Support Service for HI Students Attending Ordinary Schools” (ESS). Under the ESS commissioned by the EDB, resource teachers (RTs) of the special schools for children with HI will provide after-school support to students with HI to assist them in mastering learning strategies, enhancing literacy abilities, and enriching speech, language and communication skills, in order to enhance their learning and communication effectiveness. The RTs will also pay visits to the home schools of the students to provide remediation to the students and to share their experience and various teaching strategies (including the use of sign language to assist teaching) with teachers, in order to enhance the learning effectiveness of the students with HI and to facilitate their integration into ordinary schools.

5. Students with HI have to face different challenges in the course of learning due to their different hearing problems. As such, schools have to adopt the most appropriate school-based support strategy having regard to the needs of the students. The EDB would offer professional advice in this regard. No matter which mode or level of support the schools will adopt, they need to have comprehensive plans and arrangements, e.g. allocation and utilization of resources, teacher training, curriculum accommodation, etc. Officers of the EDB have been reviewing together with schools on the effectiveness of the implementation of school-based support programmes and the related resources utilization to ensure that the schools arrange appropriate support for the students. In recent years, there are schools which have accumulated with successful experience in assisting students with HI to integrate in learning in ordinary schools.

6. If ordinary schools use sign language to provide support for students in need, schools could utilize the LSG and other school resources to employ teaching assistants (including people with HI or those who know sign language). Having regard to the communication needs of their students with HI, schools could also provide their subject teachers and teaching assistants with opportunities in learning sign language, for example, arranging them to attend sign language courses organized by special schools for children with HI or other social welfare organizations. Schools could also arrange for their hearing students exposure to sign language through extra-curricular activities and interest groups, with arrangements of support from the peers.

7. International researches have been investigating the effectiveness of teaching modes for students with HI for extended number of years. Research results indicated that the development of students with HI is affected by a conglomerate of factors, rather

than solely the support or communication mode. These factors include school-based support, language environment, involvement of parents, school culture, and home-school collaboration, etc. As a matter of fact, overseas and local researches are yet to prove that “sign bilingualism” or “bilingual-bicultural” is the only effective mode in supporting students with HI². As there is no one particular communication / support mode that is suitable for all students with HI, different countries are providing students with HI with different support modes in their respective education systems having regard to their own circumstances. The EDB would continue to keep in view international researches and development in relation to the teaching modes for students with HI, gauge views from stakeholders, and keep collaborating with professional organizations and schools so as to assist teachers in catering for the needs of students with HI more effectively. We also welcome schools’ continued exploration of various effective ways in enhancing the learning effectiveness of students with HI, and sharing with other schools about their experience in supporting students with HI.

² Deaf education scholars Professor Marc Marschark and Professor Patricia Spencer (2009) have conducted a thorough review regarding international researches in educating children with HI. Despite the study of the teaching and communication modes for deaf children / children with HI which had been conducted for nearly 200 years, there was no conclusive result indicating that one particular teaching / communication mode is more effective than the others.

(Reference: *Evidence of best practice models and outcomes in the education of Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing children: An International Review*, The National Council for Special Education, Ireland, 2009. The executive summary of the report can be located from:

<http://www.ncse.ie/uploads/1/NCSEDeafReportExecutiveSummary.pdf>)

Besides, Deaf education scholars Professor Harry Knoors and Professor Marc Marschark (2012) pointed out that there had not been any evidence-based findings to support the effectiveness of the sign bilingual mode. The two scholars had also concluded in the article their position towards the sign bilingual mode, indicating that there was no “one-size-fits-all” communication / support mode for children with HI. Countries should provide different communication / support modes according to the needs of their children with HI.

(Reference: Language planning for the 21st century: Revisiting bilingual language policy for deaf children, *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education*, 2012)

Deaf education scholars Professor Connie Mayer and Professor Greg Leigh (2010) also concluded that the literacy skills / development of children who participated in bilingual deaf programmes were not as positive as expected when bilingual models were implemented.

(Reference: The changing context for sign bilingual education programmes: Issues in language and the development of literacy, *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 2010.)