

Chapter 2 Roles and Responsibilities of School Managers

What are the roles and functions of school managers in school management?

Policy-Making

- Formulate school development strategies with the aim to attain the school vision and education goals and to enhance learning effectiveness
- Draw up policies and priorities for development projects
- Plan and manage school resources
- Ensure that the mission of the school is carried out

Management

- Personnel Management
 - Staff appointment, promotion and dismissal
 - Staff performance management and professional development
 - Establishing effective communication channels and handling complaints
- Financial Management
 - Approving school development plan, annual school plan and school budget
 - Managing government and non-government funds properly to ensure the appropriate use of resources
- Curriculum
 - Ensuring curriculum design is in line with government education policies
 - Ensuring provision of a coherent, flexible, broad and balanced curriculum that is in line with the aims of education in Hong Kong

- Setting the direction for long-term development of the school, and giving teachers sufficient flexibility and authority to implement specific duties and plans involved in the day-to-day operation of the school
- Reviewing school plans and budgets to see if they are in line with the overall education goals and school policies, and making appropriate adjustment when necessary
- Building up relevant network with outside bodies and securing community resources to enhance teaching effectiveness
- Promoting education for the students of the school and leading the school to strive for excellence and continuous improvement

What are the responsibilities of school managers in school management?

- Be accountable to the EDB, the SSB and the public for school performance.
- Ensuring the school's decision-making and management are in compliance with the relevant ordinances, regulations and rules, including the Education Ordinance, the Education Regulations, the Code of Aid, the Employment Ordinance, the Sex Discrimination Ordinance and the Prevention of Bribery Ordinance.

Quiz

- 2 Which of the following are not the responsibilities of school managers? (You may choose more than one item.)
- Checking students' assignments
 - Deciding on the school's medium of instruction
 - Preparing the implementation details of school projects for the coming school year
 - Drawing up the assessment criteria for staff promotion
 - Compiling various school plans



I. Personnel Management

As the employer of all staff members of the school, the management committee of the school has to formulate personnel policies. Personnel management covers different areas of staff matters:

Areas

Staff appointment, promotion and succession planning

Disciplinary action and termination of service

Performance management

Responsibilities of school managers

- Setting criteria and procedures for staff selection
 - Observing the minimum entry requirements for the relevant staff as stipulated in the Code of Aid, and issuing letters of appointment and entering into agreement on the terms of contract with the staff concerned
 - Defining clearly the functional duties of promotion posts, and informing the staff accordingly
 - Ensuring an open, fair and transparent selection system
 - Reviewing regularly the assessment criteria and selection procedures
 - Preparing succession plans of teaching staff to meet the needs arising from school development and the implementation of education initiatives
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- Formulating a set of open, fair and formal procedures for handling termination of employment
 - Handling the matters in accordance with the Education Ordinance, the Education Regulations, the Code of Aid, the Employment Ordinance and other laws of Hong Kong as well as circulars issued by EMB from time to time
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- Establishing an appropriate staff appraisal system
 - Evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the staff and formulating staff professional development policies

Areas

Performance management

Professional development

Communication channels

Responsibilities of school managers

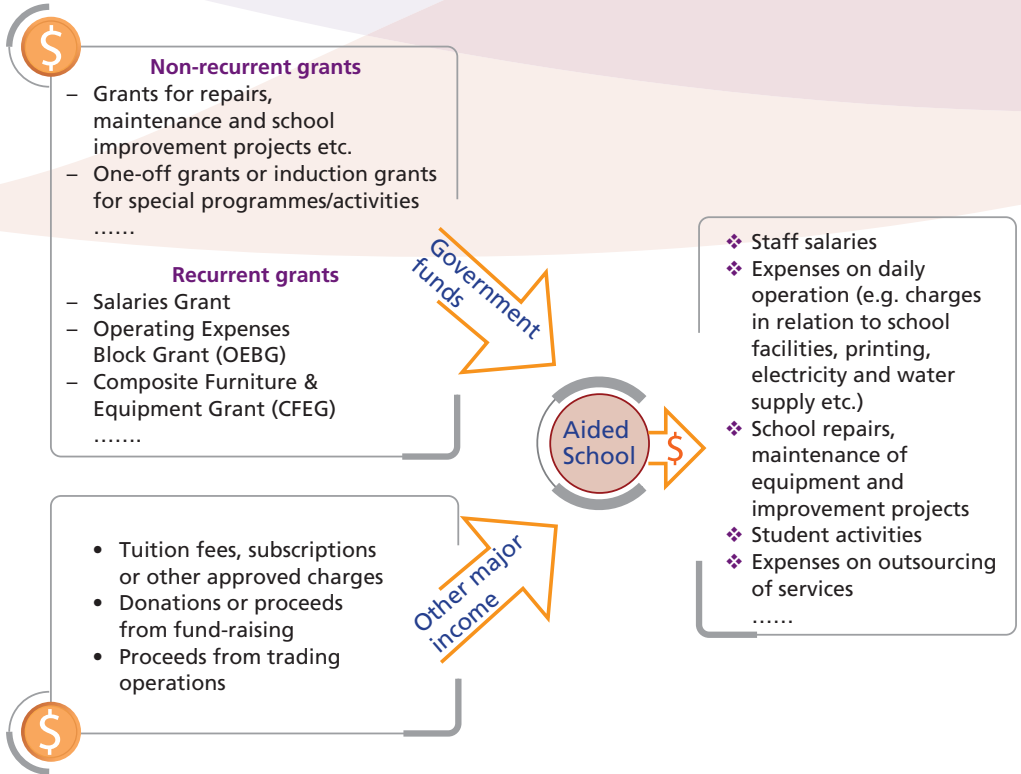
- Reviewing regularly the content and format of the appraisal mechanism to ensure the assessment truly reflects staff performance
 - Promoting a self-learning culture for self-improvement and pursuit of excellence
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- Discussing with teachers the arrangements for their professional development (The Advisory Committee on Teacher Education and Qualifications proposed that teachers should engage in not less than 150 hours of continuing professional development activities in a 3-year cycle)
 - Formulating teacher professional development policies that take into account individual needs of the teachers, the direction of school development and the learning interests of the students
 - Ensuring that all teachers are given equal opportunities for professional development
 - Creating an environment conducive to learning and providing support and resources for staff professional development
 - Promoting a culture of professional development and developing a life-long learning attitude within the school
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- Establishing effective communication channels, strengthening the sense of belonging among staff and building up a collaborative school culture
- Developing a set of rational, fair and impartial policies and procedures to handle complaints from staff as well as from people outside the school

II. Financial Management

Income and Expenditure of Aided Schools

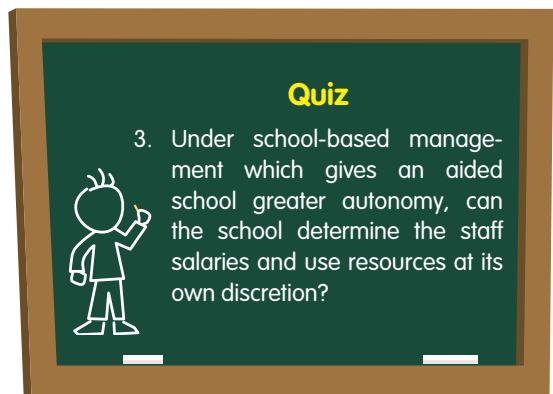


Basic Elements of Financial Management



Financial Management Duties of School Managers

- Understanding the limitations and financial flexibility of the school; setting goals and formulating appropriate financial management strategies after considering factors such as school resources, background and needs of their students etc.
- Approving school budgets.
- Reviewing school income and expenditure regularly to ensure that resource deployment is in line with the school development plan and caters for the needs of the students.
- Ensuring that school income is handled and used in accordance with the requirements of the Education Ordinance, the Code of Aid and relevant EMB circulars as well as other relevant regulations and rules.
- Formulating financial management criteria and procedures (e.g. procedures for handling income and expenditure, procurement and quotation as well as rules on acceptance of advantages etc.) according to the relevant laws and regulations to avoid conflict of interest and the misuse of government resources.
- Putting in place adequate budgetary controls and a good accounting and reporting system to monitor the financial situation; and if necessary, reprioritising development projects after assessing their actual expenditure.
- Appointing an accountant as auditor to audit school accounts.
- Reporting to the EDB and key stakeholders the use of school funds.



Useful Hints

- ◆ Managers are required to declare any pecuniary or other personal interests that may conflict with their duties as school managers.

Useful Hints

- ◆ Any profit arising from business undertaking inside the school shall be used for the purpose directly benefiting the students of the school.

III. Curriculum Reform – Reflecting on Strengths and Getting Ready for Action

As globalization brings about changes in society, environment, culture, politics, and moral values, students in Hong Kong need to continuously update their knowledge and enhance their personal quality to face a future of opportunities and challenges. Schools in Hong Kong should provide students with a curriculum that facilitates whole-person development. The school curriculum should help students learn how to learn through exposure to different learning experiences instead of just memorizing what they have been taught. Teaching no longer focuses on the process of transmission of knowledge, students should be given more chances for self-learning and construction of knowledge so that they will know how to learn, acquire basic competency and widen their horizon of learning. School education should help students with different learning abilities to develop their potential, and encourage them to sustain life-long learning to meet future challenges.

Aims of Education for the 21st Century

“To enable every person to attain all-round development in the domains of ethics, intellect, physique, social skills and aesthetics according to his/her own attributes so that he/she is capable of life-long learning, critical and exploratory thinking, innovating and adapting to change; filled with self-confidence and a team spirit; willing to put forward continuing effort for the prosperity, progress, freedom and democracy of their society, and contribute to the future well-being of the nation and the world at large.”

Extracted from *Reform Proposals for the Education System in Hong Kong*, Education Commission, 2000

Overall Aims of the School Curriculum

“The school curriculum should provide all students with essential life-long learning experiences for whole-person development in the domains of ethics, intellect, physical development, social skills and aesthetics, according to individual potential, so that all students can become active, responsible and contributing members of society, the nation and the world.

The school curriculum should help students to learn how to learn through cultivating positive values, attitudes, and a commitment to life-long learning, and through developing generic skills to acquire and construct knowledge. These qualities are essential for whole-person development to cope with challenges of the 21st Century.

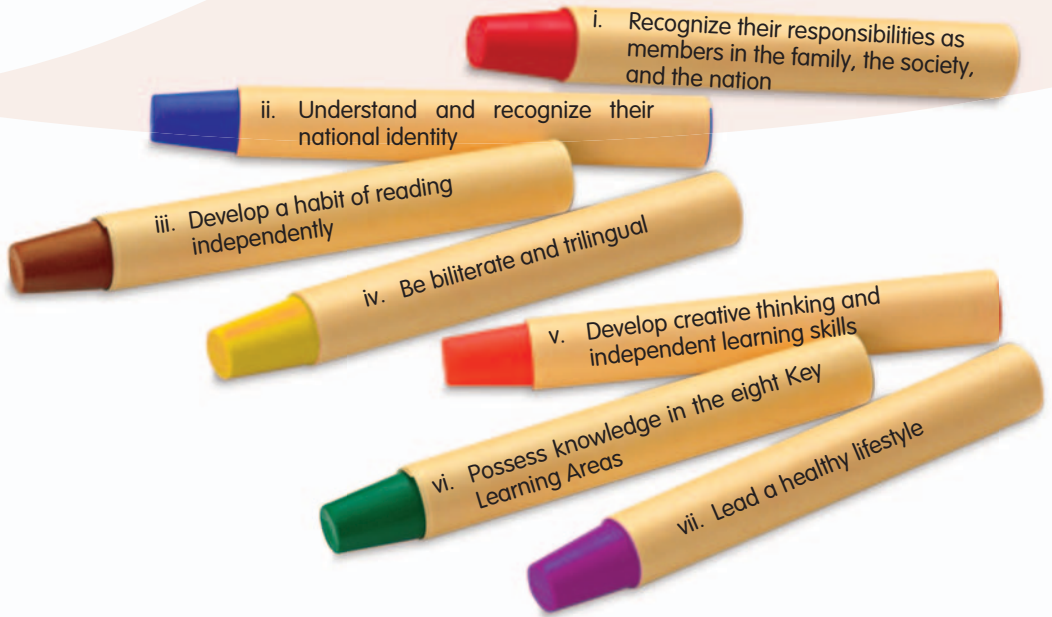
A quality curriculum for the 21st Century should therefore set the directions for teaching and learning through a coherent and flexible framework which can be adapted to changes and the different needs of students and schools.”

Extracted from *Learning to Learn – The Way Forward in Curriculum Development*, Curriculum Development Council, 2001

School managers are responsible for the important task of monitoring the development and effectiveness of the school curriculum. Hence, they should have a good understanding of the present position and the future development of the school curriculum.

Seven Learning Goals

The Curriculum Development Council (CDC) set out in the *Basic Education Curriculum Guide* in 2002 the seven learning goals that students should be able to achieve in ten years' time as follows:



Five Essential Learning Experiences and Curriculum Framework

The term “curriculum” is defined as the set of total learning experiences through which students learn. All students should be entitled to the following five essential learning experiences for whole-person development:

- Moral and civic education
- Intellectual development
- Community service
- Physical and aesthetic development
- Career-related experiences (for junior secondary students)

The Curriculum Framework has three interconnected components: (i) Key Learning Areas (KLAs), (ii) Generic Skills and (iii) Values and Attitudes.

Knowledge in Key Learning Areas

A Key Learning Area (KLA) links up fundamental and connected concepts within major fields of knowledge. A KLA provides a context for the development and application of generic skills, positive values and attitudes through the appropriate use of learning and teaching activities and strategies. It also serves as a context for the construction of new knowledge and the development of understanding.

Generic Skills

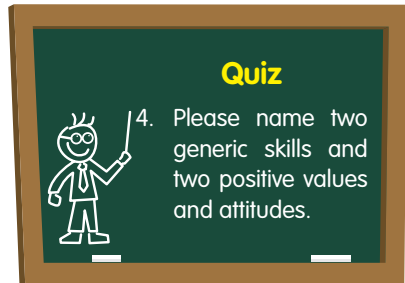
Generic skills are developed through learning and teaching in the context of different subjects or KLAs.

Values and Attitudes

Positive values and attitudes can be fostered through moral and civic education and also across KLAs in appropriate themes, and through appropriate learning and teaching strategies.

The following four key tasks should be used as entry points or means to help students to learn how to learn:

- Moral and civic education
- Reading to learn
- Project learning
- Information technology for interactive learning



School-based Curriculum

- The concept of “one-size fits all” does not work for curriculum development. Each school has its unique characteristics of teachers, students and ecological context, requiring different content and processes of change.

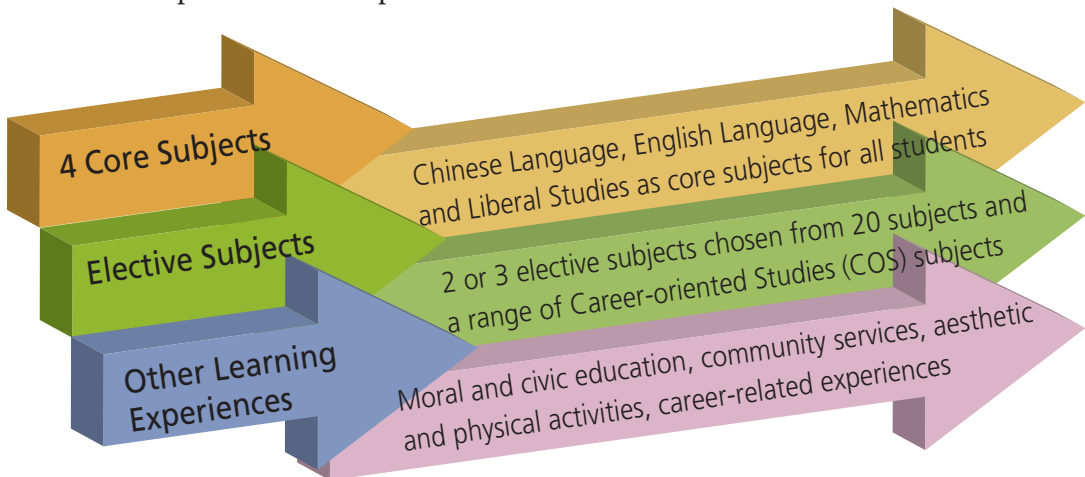
- In developing a school-based curriculum, schools may take into account their own characteristics and needs and adapt the central curriculum so as to help their students to achieve the learning targets and aims of education. Measures may include readjusting learning targets, varying the organization of contents, optional studies, and adopting different learning, teaching and assessment strategies. Schools, nevertheless, have to fulfill certain CDC requirements such as learning time, learning targets and essential contents.
- A school-based curriculum is therefore the outcome of a balance between guidance from CDC and the autonomy of the school and teachers.

New Academic Structure for Senior Secondary Education and Higher Education (3+3+4)

[new SS1 level to be implemented in the 2009/10 school year]

Main Features:

- To provide a “3+3” secondary education structure, so that all students benefit from six years of secondary education.
- To replace the current two high-stake open examinations by one public examination.
- To introduce a new senior secondary curriculum framework which comprises three components:

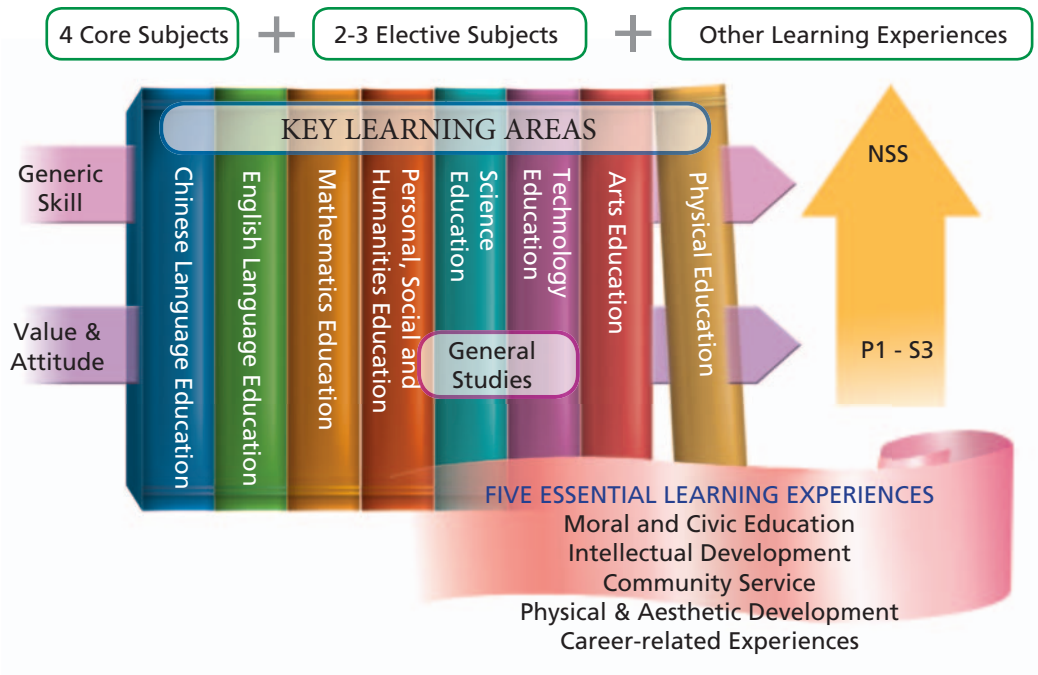


- Through a 4-year undergraduate programme, the higher education institutions will be in a better position to provide a balanced education to their students that allows for a broader knowledge base to support specialized learning.

Continuity of Curriculum Reform across Basic Education (Primary 1 to Secondary 3) and New Senior Secondary Education

The New Senior Secondary curriculum is an extension of the basic education curriculum. It promotes students' learning to learn capabilities, offers a broad and balanced curriculum in eight KLAS, and provides opportunities for cross-curricular learning. The new curriculum also gives students sufficient exposure to other learning experiences in moral, civic, physical and aesthetic areas. This helps students to develop positive values and prepare students for further learning and work.

New Senior Secondary and Basic Education Curriculum Framework



Responsibilities of School Managers in Curriculum Development

- Getting a basic understanding of the curriculum development in Hong Kong
- Setting the direction for the development of a school-based curriculum that suits the conditions of the school and the students on one hand, and meeting the overall aims of education and the objectives of the school curriculum on the other
- Monitoring the progress of school curriculum development and assessing its effectiveness
- Examining the existing projects and their outcomes, and making proper use of financial and manpower resources to improve learning effectiveness
- Approving financial budgets that tie in with the needs of long-term curriculum development
- Supporting professional development of teachers and helping them to assume leadership in respect of curriculum development and teaching
- Reviewing school policies (including school timetable and assessment policy) to ensure that they are in line with the broad direction of curriculum development
- Securing outside resources and support for implementing life-wide learning to enrich students' learning experiences
- Creating an environment conducive to the promotion of a learning culture in schools

Useful Hints

- ◆ Under the “3 + 3 + 4” academic structure, schools may opt to offer career-oriented studies subjects to meet students' abilities and interests.