

Excellence Indicators for Teaching Practices in Pre-primary Education

Foreword

The *Excellence Indicators for Teaching Practices in Pre-primary Education* are compiled for use as reference in assessing nominations for the Chief Executive's Award for Teaching Excellence (ATE) (2008-2009).

In drafting the indicators, we have consulted a number of references, the major ones of which include *Towards a Learning Profession: The Teacher Competencies Framework and the Continuing Professional Development of Teachers* (Advisory Committee on Teacher Education and Qualifications, 2003), *Guide to the Pre-primary Curriculum* (Curriculum Development Council, 2006), *Performance Indicators for Hong Kong Schools* (Quality Assurance Division, Education Bureau, 2008), and *Performance Indicators (Pre-primary Institutions)* (Quality Assurance Division, Education Department/Education and Manpower Bureau, 2001-2003). The indicators have been formulated and structured in a way that reflects the complexities of teachers' work and the diverse nature of teachers' competencies.

For the purposes of the ATE, teaching excellence means teaching practices that are:

- (a) **innovative** with **proven effectiveness** in arousing young children's **motivation in Pre-primary Education** and/or in helping young children to **achieve the desired learning outcomes** ; or
creatively adapted from exemplary teaching practices from elsewhere to **suit the local (i.e. school-based and/or student-based) context** with proven effectiveness in enhancing students' learning outcomes;
- (b) based on a coherent conceptual framework, showing reflective practices;
- (c) inspiring and can be shared with colleagues to improve the quality of education; and
- (d) **instrumental in achieving the learning targets** of Pre-primary Education, i.e. nurturing students' creative, holistic and individual development of students through arousing their curiosity and enhancing joyful learning experiences.

The indicators fall within four domains, namely, **(1) Professional Competence, (2) Student Development, (3) Professionalism and Commitment to the Community** and **(4) School Development**. The first two domains focus on recognising teaching excellence and the other two on fostering teachers' professional development. Since the ATE does not aim to identify all-round teachers who excel in all domains, the Indicators only serve to evidence, rather than constitute a rigid model of, teaching excellence in Pre-primary Education.

The Indicators are more than an assessment tool. They also indicate the qualities of an accomplished teacher in Pre-primary Education. We hope that, by highlighting these qualities, we can motivate teachers to achieve professional excellence.

Recipients of the Award must possess the essential qualities of a professional teacher such as professionalism and loving concern for students. Instead of assessing a nominee according to discrete areas of teaching practices, we will adopt a holistic approach informed by professional knowledge and judgment. However, since the primary focus of the ATE is on learning and teaching, the exemplary and effective teaching practices we are looking for must also be inspiring and sharable.

Group nominations will be assessed according to the effectiveness of teamwork as measured by the contribution of each group member, interactions among group members, and how the concerted efforts of group members have contributed to the described outcomes.

Assessment Panel on Pre-primary Education
Chief Executive's Award for Teaching Excellence 2008-2009
November 2008

Excellence Indicators for Teaching Practices in Pre-primary Education

1. Professional Competence Domain

| Area | Performance Indicator | Evidence of Excellence |
|------------|--|---|
| Curriculum | 1.1 Curriculum Design and Organisation | <p>The teacher is able:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to plan and design a comprehensive and balanced school-based curriculum according to the needs, abilities, interests and experiences of young children, with a view to achieving the four developmental objectives of “Physical Development”, “Cognitive and Language Development”, “Affective and Social Development” and “Aesthetic Development”; • to plan balanced and diversified whole class or small group activities, which consist of both active and quiet components, for young children according to their needs, abilities, interests and experiences; • to adopt a child-oriented approach, which takes into account the developmental characteristics of young children of different ages, in designing a curriculum that features play-based learning and integrated, open and flexible learning modes, in order to provide diversified learning experiences for young children in a natural and pleasant environment, in which they may pursue holistic development through various activities and hands-on experiences; • by choosing topics that are related to young children’s everyday life activities and interests, and by using an integrated approach of teaching through the six learning areas of “Physical Fitness and Health”, “Language”, “Early Mathematics”, “Science and Technology”, “Self and Society” and “Arts”, to achieve the developmental objectives for young children, to help them construct knowledge, to provide them with the context and opportunities to develop and apply basic skills, and to cultivate positive values and attitudes; |

| Area | Performance Indicator | Evidence of Excellence |
|------|---------------------------|--|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to adapt the curriculum according to the individual differences of young children, such as adjusting or refining schemes of work, and designing activities which can cater for the needs of young children of different abilities. |
| | 1.2 Curriculum Management | <p>The teacher is able:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to work closely with colleagues to adapt and improve the central curriculum, with a view to enhancing young children’s learning outcomes; • to review and evaluate the arrangement and effectiveness of learning activities, and to suggest improvements to curriculum with adequate follow-ups, so as to provide the best edu-care services to young children; • to create a healthy and safe learning environment that suits the developmental needs of young children; class routines and the use of activities areas are well defined to enable children to concentrate on their learning to develop their self management skills and good living habits; • to prepare adequate and appropriate teaching resources, and to make use of diversified play equipment, and parent or community resources to support curriculum implementation; • to create a learning environment that is conducive to the development of creativity among young children. |

| Area | Performance Indicator | Evidence of Excellence |
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| Teaching | 1.3 Strategies and Skills | <p>The teacher is able:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to adopt a child-oriented approach in setting learning objectives and designing a scheme of work that is clear and can cater to the developmental needs and abilities of young children; to foster the self management skills and self-confidence through the provision of individual, group and class learning opportunities and various free-choice activities; and to demonstrate that these activities are arranged in an orderly manner, with appropriate allocation of time to and a good balance between the quiet and active elements; • to use teaching strategies flexibly to cater for individual differences in young children, to help them develop various basic skills through various learning activities, and to adjust teaching strategies as appropriate to fully unleash their potential; • to design games that are interesting and can stimulate cognitive thinking, to collect diversified teaching materials and toys to create an inviting environment for young children to explore, try-outs and practice freely therein, and to guide children to learn effectively through their sensory perception and personal experience, with a view to fostering their creativity and aesthetic sense and arousing their interest in learning; • to conduct explanations and demonstrations in a vivid, clear, systematic and appealing that caters to the power of comprehension and needs of young children; and to help them understand the learning contents by asking open-ended questions and giving simple instructions; • to talk to young children in a friendly and polite manner and encourage them to talk about their experiences, opinions and feelings, in order to establish an intimate teacher-student relationship; and to encourage, comfort and praise the children in talking to them so that they feel respected and accepted, with a view to creating a friendly, relaxed and pleasurable learning atmosphere; • to work out clear classroom rules with young children, monitor their compliance with such rules, praise good conduct and promptly deal with poor behaviour; to attentively observe the activities arranged and |

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| | | <p>appropriately and timely guidance to misbehaving children; and to help the children understand the importance of mutual co-operation and observance of rules, as well as develop good habits of everyday life;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to properly communicate with the parents of young children, with whose support and cooperation the children will be able to learn in a more coherent manner and develop good habits effectively. |
| | <p>1.4 Professional Knowledge and Attitude</p> | <p>The teacher is able:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to interact with young children in a caring, supportive and open-minded manner, and to patiently listen to, respect and accept their ideas and feelings in order to adjust the teaching strategies accordingly; having regard for their limitations, to encourage young children in a positive manner to help them build self-confidence; • to become a role model for young children, setting an example in speech, in behaviour, in attitudes and values, etc., to foster their whole-person development; • to keep in close contact with parents to exchange information on their children’s family and school life, and to handle parents’ concerns prudently and tactfully, so that both teachers and parents can join hands to help young children develop good habits and attitudes, as well as foster their sense of cooperation and compliance with rules; • having the awareness of, abilities for and positive attitudes towards life-long learning, to attach high importance to and engage themselves actively in professional development, so as to continuously improve the standard of pre-primary education services through self-reflection. |

| Area | Performance Indicator | Evidence of Excellence |
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| Performance Assessment | 1.5 Assessment Planning and Use of Information | <p>The teacher is able:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • having regard for the curriculum goals, to flexibly employ formative and summative assessment methods in assessing young children’s physical and mental development as well as learning; • to objectively analyse and evaluate children’s learning progress with reference to information from various sources (e.g. observation, record, assignments and parents’ feedback); and to use the information obtained to review the learning and teaching strategies and improve the curriculum development of the kindergarten; • to help and guide young children to review and reflect upon what they have learnt and how they have grown, with a view to consolidating their learning; and to ascertain the relevance and appropriateness of the curriculum and the learning activities through their feedback; • to maintain effective communication with parents to enhance their understanding of their children’s learning and development in order to fully explore their potentials, and to make sure that children with special education needs can receive suitable and proper guidance and services as early as possible. |

2. Student Development Domain

| Area | Performance Indicator | Evidence of Excellence |
|---------------------|------------------------|--|
| Student Development | 2.1 Attitude | <p>The teacher is able:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to arouse young children’s curiosity and motivation in learning, so that they may happily learn on their own initiative and with concentration through play and activities; • to help young children enjoy the pleasure of social life, so that they may actively exchange ideas with, seriously learn from and heartily appreciate their classmates, as well as demonstrate good habits and self management skills; • to guide young children to accept their performance and maintain a positive self-image; to encourage them in learning to talk to other people on their own initiative, express their ideas with confidence, and strive hard to overcome difficulties with persistence; • to lead young children to internalise the concepts of life-wide learning, life-long learning and whole-person development; to foster integrity and character in young children, developing their national identity, sense of responsibility, independence, self-esteem, respect for others, perseverance etc.; • to maintain a harmonious and trusting relationship with students. |
| | 2.2 Knowledge & Skills | <p>The teacher is able:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to help young children develop their motor and sensory abilities, with a view to enhancing their ability of adaptation; to help young children improve their physiques and enhance their sensory abilities, motor skills, willpower, self-confidence and courage; • to help young children acquire language skills, so that they can properly express their ideas and needs, as well as share their experiences with others in speech and in writing; specifically, to adopt a composite approach to language learning which provides the necessary learning experiences in helping young children acquire the four basic language abilities of listening, speaking, reading and writing, as well as develop an |

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| | | <p>interest in and the habit of reading;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to help young children apply simple preliminary mathematical concepts in their daily life; to help young children acquire thinking and problem solving skills through observation, analysis and discussion, with a view to arousing their interest and instilling in them a positive attitude in learning mathematics, as well as develop their communication and basic reasoning skills; • to actively provide young children with hands-on experiences with different objects, so that they may understand how science and technology is closely related to our daily life, and have some basic knowledge of science and technology through observation, enquiry and making assumptions in an open and objective manner, thereby gaining an understanding of the relationship between man and nature; • to actively help young children understand their strengths and abilities, as well as the feelings and needs of other people, so as to develop their self-confidence and independence; to help children understand their relationship with the society and learn to care for and protect the environment, and to teach them to appreciate the culture and history of the community so that they may develop their national identity; • to lead young children to engage in learning, explorative and creative activities by making use of appropriate methods and a wide spectrum of learning resources, in order to develop their sense of aesthetics, imagination, creativity and communication skills; and to expose young children to various cultures and develop their art appreciation abilities; • to guide young children to develop generic skills, in particular collaboration skills, communication skills and creativity, through various learning activities and experiences. |

3. Professionalism and Commitment to the Community Domain

| Area | Performance Indicator | Evidence of Excellence |
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| Professionalism and Commitment to the Community | Contribution towards the Profession and the Community | <p>The teacher is able:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to fully grasp the rationale of pre-primary education and the theories of child development, and to keep in view the current trends of early education in order to maintain a good standard of relevant knowledge and skills; reflect always on his/her performance to raise professionalism; • to actively provide support to the teaching profession and the community, such as contributing to professional sharing activities, sharing good teaching practices and participating in community or voluntary services; • to produce exemplary teaching materials; • to provide support to the professional development of novice teachers, such as taking up mentorship; • to foster a collegial sharing culture in school by providing professional advice and support to other teachers; • to pursue continuous self-development and professional enhancement; • to actively share with parents information about early childhood education and its development through home-school activities. |

4. School Development Domain

| Area | Performance Indicator | Evidence of Excellence |
|--------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| School Development | Contribution to School Development | <p>The teacher is able:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to play a leading role in the design, implementation and review of school-based activities for various dimensions of pre-primary education; • to inspire peers and colleagues to collaborate on the improvement of learning and teaching; • to foster a culture of collaboration and sharing among colleagues and stakeholders so that the school may develop into a professional learning community; • to work with colleagues, students and parents, with a view to channelling their efforts into continuous school improvement and maintaining a good public image of the school; • by setting an example and sharing his or her experiences, to promote the school vision and mission among colleagues and stakeholders who can then put them into action for the continuous development of the school; and to realize the essence of the school culture and ethos through a variety of effective channels; • to be aware of any factor that may affect young children’s learning and put forth suggestions on remedies in a timely manner for the school to follow up, with a view to enhancing school development. |

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