



▲Left to right: Ms ROSS, Hester Hayin, Ms TSANG Siu-sing, Ms IP Lai-fan, Fanny

# Developing good habits of learning and self-learning skills

## Teaching Philosophy

We believe it is essential for students to acquire the "Reading to Learn and Learning to Read" skills. We aim to turn them into independent learners who are able to develop good habits of learning and self-learning skills. Catering for students' diverse learning needs is an important part of our teaching because we want to nurture students' interest and confidence in learning English.

### Teachers presented with the Certificate of Merit

Ms TSANG Siu-sing   Ms IP Lai-fan, Fanny  
Ms ROSS, Hester Hayin

### School

Shak Chung Shan Memorial  
Catholic Primary School

### Subjects taught

English Language (P1-6)



### Interview with the Teachers

#### I am a teacher and also a learner

"Being an English teacher has been my dream from a young age because I can always learn on the job," said Ms Ip Lai-fan, Fanny. She has been teaching for over 30 years, and is now the English Panel of the School. "While I am teaching, I am learning how to teach well. It is my biggest satisfaction to know that my methods are effective in enhancing students' English proficiency," said Ms Ip humbly and sincerely. She believes that academic results cannot reflect students' ability in full. She does not judge a student's potential merely from their academic results.



▲ Students actively practise reading skills



◀ Students playing fun games on "World Reading Day"

#### Reading to learn, learning to read

To help the school promote a rich reading culture in English, Ms Ip visited some New Zealand schools a few years ago. Students there read books freely and joyfully. Ms Ip also realised that they focused more on speaking and had strong phonic skills. She believes that her students in Hong Kong can be trained to do the same.

After returning from New Zealand, she worked with Ms Ross, Hester Hayin and Ms Tsang Siu-sing to develop the Library Curriculum, the Phonics Curriculum as well as the innovative phonics teaching method, "Chunk, Check, Cheer", which trains students to try to pronounce words confidently and independently. They revamped the library lessons and put a strong emphasis on teaching levelled reading in ability groups.



▲ Students doing reciprocal teaching in a library lesson

Ms Ross, teaching more able students in the Library Reading Class, was delighted to see that her students enjoyed phonics and the challenging reciprocal teaching. Motivating students to make deeper meaning from reading and developing high order thinking skills is her goal to boost students' independent reading ability.

#### Sushi with love

Primary students are adorable and dynamic learners. Ms Ip taught her students a sushi recipe and asked them to try and make sushi with their parents during the weekend. She told them that sushi was her favourite food. "As I walked into the classroom the following Monday, I found that students had placed their sushi delicacies all over their desks with labels like 'Jelly Sushi' and 'Candy Sushi'! These little angels are so sweet and heartwarming. They are the drive to keep me going."

#### Fuelling passion in the teaching mission

Others might wonder whether these new teaching methods succeed all the time? "To us, failure is only a process of achieving success," said Ms. Tsang, who embraces "being persistent" and "never giving up" as her mottos. Given a free and supportive school environment, the teachers can give full play to their passion, strength, creativity and wisdom and become high flyers in their teaching.





## Teachers' Sharing

### Promoting self-learning in the Blended Learning e-Curriculum

The school-based "Better English Curriculum" at our school aims to nurture independent learners who can develop good habits of learning and self-learning skills. A blended teaching and learning approach is adopted in our e-Curriculum which is closely linked with the Phonics Curriculum and Library Reading Curriculum. We facilitate students' self-learning with our Better English Textbooks and e-textbooks, which include differentiated learning materials to cater for learner diversity. In our English e-learning classroom, students enjoy face-to-face learning with the support of the teacher, while taking advantage of the flexibility and rich resources that the e-learning platform provides. We provide students with ample opportunities to work in groups to help them develop collaborative learning skills and enhance their oral fluency. There are many possibilities for extended and independent learning as students can access the e-learning resources at their own pace. Students enjoy reading e-readers, learning with peers on the e-learning platform, while tracking their own progress on the e-smart online assessment platform. Students also look forward to joining campus or outdoor activities like QR Code Treasure Hunt, English Day, Science Fair, Super Detectives Science outing and RTHK sharing. Taking an active role in their learning, students' motivation is increased and their self-learning skills enhanced.

### Developing phonics skills to support reading

We believe that a contextualised systematic phonics curriculum contributes hugely to students' vocabulary, oral fluency and success in reading. With this in mind, we provide our students with the building blocks and foundation skills to help them learn to read and speak English through our Phonics Curriculum that progresses from P1 to P6. We use the "Chunk, Check, Cheer" strategy to teach students skills in phonemic awareness, letter-sound recognition and decoding, high frequency word recognition and, in particular, fluency building. This strategy becomes a habit of learning for our students in phonics and in the library



▲ Students presenting their group writing on the e-learning platform lessons. Our self-developed Phonics Apps, Magic Chunking Bee, supports students' phonics learning in school and at home. Students build up their phonics skills and the confidence they gain has a profound impact on developing themselves as independent readers.

### Fostering independent reading

We strongly believe that reading opens the door to knowledge and learning. We develop theme-based reading materials and provide students with a large collection of levelled e-books on our learning platform. In our library lessons, we teach the reading skills corresponding to students' reading levels and instill the love for reading. Students are exposed to levelled fiction and non-fiction texts that match their reading abilities. Their reading and oral communications skills are fostered in activities such as World Reading Day, Spellathon and Auntie and Uncle English activities. It is evident that they have developed good reading skills and a passion for reading.

We believe that developing students the good habits of learning and self-learning skills helps them overcome challenges and difficulties in learning English. This ability and attitude can go beyond classroom into their daily life.

◀ Let's chunk, check, cheer together!

▼ Open the "four-door leaflet" to develop students' thinking power in reading





### Assessment Summary

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#### *Nurturing independent learners in the English language classrooms*

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▲ Ability grouping in a library reading lesson

The awarded teachers are committed English language teachers well versed in e-learning, gifted education and learning pedagogies. They have developed a school-based "Better English Curriculum" incorporating the Blended Learning e-Curriculum, Phonics Curriculum and Library Reading Curriculum. Pedagogies such as blended learning, reciprocal teaching and self-learning are incorporated into their daily teaching. They provide e-learning opportunities for students to widen their exposure to authentic learning materials and multimodal media. They succeed in catering for learner diversity, enhancing students' English proficiency, and nurturing them into independent learners.

The blended teaching and learning approach allows students to take an active role in their learning through using self-learning skills or tools such as mind-mapping, phonics chunking, note-taking and self-assessments. The teachers engage students in the integrative use of language skills to develop proficiency and encourage self-expression. Extended and independent learning opportunities are provided to students who could access the materials outside the classroom and use the e-resources at their own pace. Such practices help cater for individual differences and encourage students to work collaboratively in the e-learning activities. Students are taught the phonics skills which facilitate them to read independently. An innovative learning tool "Chunk, Check, Cheer" helps students identify meaningful phonics chunks in unfamiliar words. They learn to self-check and are motivated to celebrate their success. The teachers also develop an interactive Phonics Apps, "Magic Chunking Bee", to support, complement and consolidate the teaching and learning of phonics.

In promoting reading development, the teachers put students into three different ability groups according to their results in regular pre- and post- reading tests. Students' progress is tracked in the formative assessments throughout KS1 to allow for the reshuffling of

the ability groups. The teachers identify less able students for early intervention or more able students for further enrichment. They teach reading skills explicitly in stages, progressing from guided reading to buddy reading, then moving on to independent reading using levelled texts corresponding to students' ability. Emergent readers are taught phonological awareness; early fluent readers are supported to become independent in comprehending the text and in self-learning with levelled tasks; fluent readers are challenged to use higher-order thinking skills in the "four-door leaflet", which promotes predicting, questioning, clarifying and summarising skills. A reading to learn culture is cultivated at the school.

Serving as role models in curriculum development, e-learning and subject pedagogies, the teachers successfully enhance a culture of professional sharing and provide support to colleagues to meet the development needs in English Language education of the school. They are passionate and enthusiastic learners playing leaders' roles in supporting a number of primary schools as a Professional Development School in their school-based e-learning English curriculum development.

#### Ways to Obtain Information on the Teaching Practice

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<http://www.scs.edu.hk>

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