

Guidelines on
Extra-curricular Activities in Schools

Education Bureau

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PREFACE

Extra-curricular activities (ECA) are activities that take place outside regular class teaching and yet are related to student learning. As such, they fall within the scope of the school curriculum.

ECA take care of the students' different developmental needs such as their sense of moral values and attitudes, skills and creativity. Through their participation in ECA, students can learn to communicate, to co-operate with other people and in addition to enrich their life experience. If students are given the opportunities to organise ECA, they will gain first-hand experience of programme planning and leadership, thus enabling themselves to discover and develop their potential.

This set of guidelines has included basic concepts related to the planning and organisation of activities. It is hoped that both Primary and Secondary schools may make reference to the guidelines with a view to implementing their ECA programmes efficiently. In view of the differences in schools' settings and the fact that students' maturity varies at primary and secondary levels, schools are advised to draw on their own experience and professional knowledge to best realise their goals.

Chapter One

Functions

ECA should have the following functions:

1. reinforcing classroom learning and allowing students to put their knowledge and skills into practice;
2. facilitating the teaching of certain skills and the inculcation of certain values which may present difficulties in a formal classroom setting;
3. promoting students' personal development by broadening their interests, developing their potential and providing opportunities for character formation and leadership training;
4. promoting students' social development by offering opportunities for the broadening of their social experiences, the practice of social skills and the internationalisation of moral and social values; and
5. making school life more challenging and interesting.

(Reference: "School Management Initiative (SMI) Manual on School Administration" 1992 Education Department)

Chapter Two

Responsibilities of ECA Co-ordinators and Advisors

2.1 General duties of ECA Co-ordinators

In the prevailing school system, there is the established post of 'ECA Co-ordinator'. He/she is responsible for organising the ECA of the school, helping to arrange and to coordinate inter-school activities and major school functions. He/she participates in the setting up of goals, directions and policies for the implementation of ECA. The ECA co-ordinator also guides students towards proper concepts and encourages them to participate in the activities. As part of the middle management in school, the ECA Co-ordinator is accountable to the school principal in carrying out the following tasks.

2.1.1 Manpower planning

The ECA co-ordinator is responsible for recruiting the necessary personnel for the implementation of ECA. He/she should understand the strengths, interests and abilities of his/her fellow colleagues with a view to suggesting to the school principal the distribution of work for ECA. He/she should also pay attention to the performance of the teachers-in-charge with a view to providing them with assistance and encouragement. The school may set up an ECA committee in this regard to help the ECA Co-ordinator with his/her work.

2.1.2 Activity planning

The ECA co-ordinator is responsible for drawing up a yearly plan for ECA in school. He/she needs to coordinate both intra-mural and extra-mural activities, bearing in mind the time schedule and the arrangement of facilities. It is important to ensure that students enjoy a well-balanced school life through their participation in ECA. The yearly plan is normally planned during the summer vacation. When school starts, the ECA Co-ordinator should consult other teachers-in-charge of the activities, fine tune the yearly plan, work out the timetable and ensure that it is

implemented. Nonetheless he/she should be flexible and be alert to any need for adjustment as and when required. At the planning stage, the ECA co-ordinator should avoid jamming the activities too closely together, so as not to pressurise teachers and students.

2.1.3 Use of resources

The ECA co-ordinator should give suggestions to the school principal regarding the utilisation of finances, the allocation of resources and the equipment needed for the running of ECA. Administratively, the school principal may authorise the ECA co-ordinator to plan the financial budget, to control the expenses of various activities or to assist in administering the ECA fund.

2.1.4 Training and support

The ECA co-ordinator is responsible for promoting the ECA of the school. He/she should participate in setting up school clubs and in promoting new activity plans. In the course of an activity, he/she is required to acquaint himself/herself with the operation in order to assist in problem-solving and to ensure achieving the pre-set objectives. He/she should pay particular attention to safety measures and remind teachers/staff to abide by the safety guidelines. The ECA Co-ordinator should organise leadership training courses to prepare students to guide activities in order to provide the teachers-in-charge with effective assistance.

2.1.5 Evaluation and appraisal

The ECA Co-ordinator should design an evaluation and appraisal system for the proper assessment of various activities, school clubs, staff and student performance. This will help improve the planning of future activities. On the basis of such evaluation, the ECA Co-ordinator should submit a report to the school principal at the end of the school year.

The points mentioned above are the general duties of an ECA Co-ordinator. The school is free to make adjustments in the light of its own circumstances. Furthermore, the ECA Co-ordinator should exercise his/her professional

knowledge and administrative skills to lead fellow colleagues in achieving the goals set by school.

2.2 Duties of ECA Advisors

The school principal can appoint teachers as ECA advisors (teachers-in-charge) according to the school's needs and each teacher's talents and interests, to guide one or more clubs and activity groups. The ECA advisor, being the frontline leader of activities, is responsible for the various duties listed below.

2.2.1 Organisation

The ECA advisor is responsible for planning the relevant activities, recruiting members and helping to establish an executive committee for each club. He/she should, as far as possible, make suggestions to the executive committee in matters relating to the nature of activities, arranging meetings and preparing financial budgets.

2.2.2 Participation

The ECA advisor should participate in the meetings of school clubs and activity groups to give support. He/she should ensure that the activity goals are achieved and provide suggestions to the executive committee for more effective implementation of the activities. The ECA advisor's participation can raise the morale as well as build up a sense of belonging amongst the club members.

2.2.3 Monitoring

In the course of an activity, the ECA advisor should make sure that the members play their respective roles and attend to safety measures to protect the participants. He/she should pay particular attention to the handling of monetary matters and make sure that the records are complete and in good order. The ECA advisor should also remind members to conduct regular stock-taking for all assets and facilities in order to safeguard the proper use of finances and resources.

2.2.4 Appraisal

The ECA advisor is responsible for compiling a list of committee members, keeping a record of their participation and appraising their performance. If the club has participated in intra-mural or extra-mural competitions during the school year, the advisor should register the results and awards with a view to reporting to the school principal or the ECA co-ordinator at the close of the academic year.

2.2.5 Record

The ECA advisor should, at the end of the activities, file a report that may include the theme of the activities, the content of the meetings, the list of participating organisers, members and students, a summary of income and expenses, and the feedback from the participants.

The above-mentioned duties fall into the general responsibilities of an ECA advisor. However, the points listed are not exhaustive, since the duties of an ECA advisor are by nature wide-ranging and complex. The school is advised to make adjustments according to its own circumstances. As long as the advisor is devoted and flexible, students will undoubtedly benefit from their participation in ECA.

Chapter Three

Implementation of ECA in Schools

3.1 Setting goals

Since ECA are part of the curriculum to promote life-wide learning, they can be seen as a means of accomplishing the goals of education. It follows that before carrying out ECA, we should set up distinct goals according to the environment of the individual schools and the needs of students. These goals should include aspects related to intellectual, physical, social and personality development. After the establishment of the goals, appropriate activities should be selected, with due consideration paid to the format and content which will enable the participants to best achieve these goals.

Evidently, not only do ECA fulfil the developmental goals of students, they also contribute to the growth of the curriculum, school and teachers. These are important means to promote cross-curricular activities in civic education and moral education, to foster the relationship between teachers and students, and to create a harmonious school climate.

3.2 Manning ECA

Following the setting of the goals, format and content of the activity, suitable personnel should be enlisted to plan and carry out the work. These include ECA advisors, teachers, students, alumni, voluntary helpers from local community, as well as parents and other staff in school (see 4.2). The ECA Co-ordinator should serve as a link among the different parties. It is most important of all to train the students to organise activities. Not only does this help the activity to continue for a longer period, it also develops the students' leadership ability, which remains one of the ECA goals.

3.3 The scheme of activities

This does not simply involve devising activities and following up with the recruitment of participants. It also represents a stage in school development that should take into account students' interests and orientations in order to achieve the goals of education.

3.4 Establishment of various clubs and groups

In relation to the set goals of ECA, we can either organise a one-off function or achieve the goals through the establishment of regular clubs or groups. In general, ECA clubs can be categorised into five types, namely, academic, sports, art, interest and social services. Depending on the situation of the individual school, the school itself may set up a balanced number of clubs. With respect to its developmental stage, each club may devise its own activity plan, recruitment method, frequency of meetings and activity content. Each club may also, according to its own needs, discuss with the ECA Co-ordinator how to institute the management of club membership (such as admission standard, membership subscription and withdrawal), the establishment of committee members, subscription fee ,etc..

3.5 Planning and running activities

Whether or not an activity can be run smoothly depends firstly on a comprehensive plan. The plan includes distribution of work, timetabling, budgeting and programmes. After completing the job of planning, it is necessary to keep the students informed of the activity via proper channels. There are several common ways, such as bulletins, posters, banners, public announcements, newsletters and personal contacts. In the course of carrying out an activity, attention and counselling should be given to the students as appropriate.

3.6 Arrangement of an encouraging awards scheme

One of the important aspects in the implementation of ECA is to make them self-rewarding for the participants. To achieve this objective, students should first of all be encouraged to take part in ECA and to gain experience from the process. Once students have been stimulated to try out the activities, they should be further motivated to do so by various means. An awards scheme is one of the best motivators.

According to the nature of each activity, awards can comprise praise, certificates, merit points, etc.

3.7 Problem-solving

Problems seem to be inevitable in the course of carrying out an activity. If one is equipped with problem-solving skills and ready with contingency plans, the chance of a problem and any unexpected consequences is no doubt minimised. In general, problems can be classified as due to poor students' attitude, inadequate contacts, communication problems, and poor time management. These problems could in fact be reduced, if not avoided, by looking into the students' needs, working out detailed plans and ensuring close communication among all the parties involved, before planning an activity. In the long run, ECA should start a snowball effect by raising the professionalism of advisors, increasing in-service training for teachers, strengthening the support of both school and parents, and creating a harmonious school climate. It is also the ECA Adviser's responsibility to strike a proper balance, to ensure effective monitoring and to attend to needs for counselling.

3.8 Feedback, evaluation and improvement

It will not be possible to evaluate unless goals are established (Annex I). Once set, the success of each activity depends on the appreciation of its goals. It is essential to know why a goal cannot be reached. If an activity is run within a long period of time, one may use formative evaluation to examine the planning and implementation of the activity quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative measures include attendance records and activity records, whereas qualitative measures include various kinds of feedback, like chatting and observations. Other measures, such as whether the plan is followed, participants' responses and a mid-year review can also be considered. There should be a summative evaluation for each ECA at the end of the school year. The target group may include any of the following: participants, observers, planners, advisors and non-participants. The purpose of the evaluation is to further improve the activity in the long run. Any significant information about the conduct of an activity may be retained in a data bank for ECA; the keeping of such information, will also facilitate long term planning.

3.9 Retention and utilisation of records

Records must be kept for all activities to serve as future reference. The school should also keep for each student an activity record, listing in detail the activities the student has joined as well as his/her performance. These records will be useful in writing student references and recommendations. The ECA Co-ordinator can thus make use of these reports to assess the feasibility of new activities or to have his/her attention drawn to areas requiring notice.

Chapter Four

Management of Resources

4.1 Financial resources

4.1.1 Grants available in the Education Bureau for the use of ECA

4.1.1.1 For aided schools, there are two main sources for ECA:

4.1.1.1.1 School and class grant

According to the Code of Aid, there are recurrent school and class grants given to schools to meet administration expenses. The Education Bureau reviews the grants annually to ensure that schools receive sufficient funds to cover their operating costs.

Items of school administration expenses can be charged under the School Grant or the Class Grant. Expenses for ECA are categorised under the Class Grant. However, the school and class grants are given to schools in a block vote that enables them to exercise discretion in the use of funds. Schools are advised to balance their items of expenses as well as having their own finance strategies.

4.1.1.1.2 Subscriptions (Tong Fai)

Aided schools, in accordance with the Code of Aid, can charge students studying at Form 4 level or above an amount of subscription subject to the approval of the Director of Education.

Subscriptions received can be used to pay for expenses related to *educational purposes and other school needs*. They can be used to pay for expenses in excess of the standard provision, expenses for non-standard items, maintenance

costs for non-operational school premises, and expenses for hiring instructors for cultural activities.

Generally speaking, school and class grants are sufficient to cover the daily administration expenses of the school. In case of a deficit, schools can use the Tong Fai or General Funds to make up the deficit. This also applies to ECA expenses which can be charged under the School and Class Grant.

4.1.1.2 Government schools

ECA funds of Government schools are provided by the Government for students from Primary One to Secondary Three. However, students studying in Secondary Four to Six have to pay their own expenses per annum.

All the ECA funds are deposited into the Expended Subject and Curriculum Block Grant bank account where expenses for activities will be drawn.

4.1.1.3 For ECA in Caput schools, there are two main sources:

4.1.1.3.1 Application of extra-charges

Caput schools are required to submit to the Education Bureau a proposed budget for the next academic year of their school, which includes ECA expenses among others. The Education Bureau, after vetting the proposal, will calculate the school's operating expenses in respect of each student and provide funds as appropriate.

4.1.1.4 Subscriptions

The principle is similar to that of aided schools.

4.1.2 Other financial sources

Schools can consider the following solutions in order to finance ECA:

- to collect subscriptions from club members and group members

- to charge participants a suitable fee for taking part in the activities
- to accept external donations or sponsorships

4.1.3 Use and monitoring of ECA funds

4.1.3.1 Principles in using ECA funds for major school functions

Major school functions may include sports meetings, swimming galas, school picnics, training camps, professional training courses, competitions and contests, open days, etc. Please refer to 4.1.1 for the source of funding, which are pertinent points to consider in the use of funds:

- The meanings and goals of the activity (function)
- The nature and mode of the activity
- Cost effectiveness of organising the activity.
- Number of people to be involved in the activity
- The impact of the activity

Because of the unique nature of each activity, much careful consideration needs to be given to the allocation of funds. We must have a good understanding of the goals of the activity before vetting and setting priorities for the allocation of funds. This will no doubt ensure cost effectiveness in addition to better utilisation of the funds.

4.1.4 Supervising the use of ECA funds; An Example

Supervising the use of ECA funds aims to help to train students in the management and utilisation of resources. Moreover, in the course of supervision, the school can better understand the financial needs of various clubs and thus can allocate its resources as appropriate. This act can help to promote ECA in addition to ensuring a proper use of the school funds. One method of supervision is to set up a centralised ECA fund management

system (simply called a centralised account). This centralised account is a joint account set up in the bank. Withdrawals must be signed by both account holders. The person who is in charge of this centralised account (account-holder-in-charge) should set up ledgers for all ECA clubs and groups, recording their income and expenses in details. For Government schools, one of the account holders may be the ECA Co-ordinator and the other may be either the treasurer of the student union or the clerk who is in charge of the ledgers of the accounts in school. Nevertheless, for Aided schools, one of the account holders must be the school supervisor and the other can be a registered manager. For Aided Schools, the transactions of ECA would be recorded under either School and Class Grant or School's funds depending on the source of funds. In using schools' funds, aided schools are suggested to maintain a subsidiary ledger for each activity under Subscriptions/General Funds account such that the position of each activity could be observed and allocation of resources could be made accordingly.

There are advantages in establishing a centralised account, and these include:

- The school can deposit all clubs' incomes into the bank for earning interest.
- The account-holder-in-charge can issue petty cash to the clubs when necessary.
- At the end of the school year, ledgers of the clubs should tally with those kept by the account-holder-in-charge.
- Any surplus of funds can be either carried forward to the next academic year or returned to the club subscribers, in accordance with the clubs' decisions. This also serves as useful indicator for the club to decide its membership fees or budget for the coming year.
- A centralised account reduces the inconvenience caused by the departure of a club treasurer or advisor.

- The school can better understand the needs of each ECA club. This enables it to make appropriate allocations of resources for the good of its clubs and, furthermore, to help evaluate the suitability of fund allocations.

4.1.5 Application for reimbursement of ECA funds.

All reimbursement claims of ECA funds should meet the criteria set by the clubs. To claim a reimbursement, one should submit a claim form to the account-holder-in-charge with the receipts of purchases endorsed by the ECA advisor and the club treasurer. This claim form can be collected from the general office or the student union.

4.1.6 Financial report

The club treasurer is responsible for keeping a record of its resources and a ledger. The treasurer should submit a financial report at each committee meeting. At the Annual General Meeting, the yearly financial report has to be adopted so that all members learn about their club's financial position and resources.

4.1.7 Conclusion

Besides ensuring an effective use of ECA resources, proper management can cultivate in students and teachers the right attitude to financial management. Each individual will remain cautious when using school resources, which results in the best educational effectiveness.

4.2 Human resources

There should be no shortage of human resources in school. Yet to effectively implement ECA, demanding skills are required. The ECA Co-ordinator needs to mobilise various parties, including teachers, staff, students, social workers and professional instructors, and to tactfully assign their duties with a view to deriving maximum benefits from valuable human resources.

4.2.1 Establishing the ECA committee

The school can set up an ECA committee headed by the ECA Co-ordinator. The composition of the committee depends on the needs of the individual school and may comprise the deputy school head and subject panel heads, with a view to their supplying professional input for the development of ECA.

4.2.2 Leadership training in school

Leadership training for students in secondary school is of considerable importance. Not only can it strengthen the promotion of ECA in schools, but it also helps to prepare the youngsters for society. With sound planning and suitable training, leaders will be trained up for the school.

4.2.3 Help from voluntary sectors

Many similarities exist between school activities and youth services. If the school authority collaborates with the voluntary sectors, resources can be saved. Most social workers in the youth services of the voluntary sector have received professional training and can assist schools in organising activities suited to the students' developmental needs.

4.2.4 Hiring of professionals and instructors with special skills

The school can, according to its own needs, hire part-time staff (professionals) to help run activities such as ball games, gymnastics, track and field events, drama, dance, and musical instrument playing. However, the school should explain to them their roles and liabilities.

4.3 Venue resources

4.3.1 Use of school venues

At the beginning of each school year, the ECA Co-ordinator should consult the school executive committee and teachers concerned to set up a timetable for use of school venues. To best utilise resources, consideration can be given to using classrooms for activities requiring comparatively less space than others. For example, the rehearsal of activities such as drama, singing or

choral speaking can take place in other special rooms instead of the school hall. It follows that the school hall will not be needed until the final stage, hence making it available for the use of other activities.

4.3.2 Use of community centres and public facilities

Community centres and sports grounds are seldom used by the public during school hours. Schools can make use of these facilities with good concession rates.

Country parks, parks, swimming pools, beaches and camp sites are also available for school use. Relevant information can be obtained from the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department.

4.4 Equipment

4.4.1 Purchase of equipment

The school should purchase appropriate equipment for the effective running of ECA. When selecting items of equipment, the school should pay special attention to their safety devices and their durability. If necessary, the school may consult related Sections, such as the Physical Education Section and the Art Education Section of the Curriculum Development Institute of the Education Bureau.

4.4.2 Hiring of equipment

Owing to space and resource constraints, schools are advised not to purchase and store equipment unless absolutely necessary. Examples may include floodlights and special sound systems, props, backdrops and costumes. If necessary, schools can either hire or borrow these items from the relevant authority.

4.4.3 Self-made equipment

Schools may encourage teachers and students to make equipment themselves. If the minor staff in school are good at carpentry, metal work etc., they may be enlisted to give assistance.

Chapter Five

Matters Requiring Attention in Organising ECA

5.1 Detailed planning

Teachers should plan carefully when organising ECA. They should let the participants know about the nature and content of the activities. For activities that are held outside school, teachers should be familiarised with the details of the event, the route to the venue, the venue itself and the safety facilities provided. In particular, they should prepare a contingency plan with possibilities well anticipated.

5.2 Notifying parents

The school should inform parents of the details of organised ECA. Special attention should be paid to outdoor activities for which school should ask in writing for the parental consent of the participants. Letters to parents should state the date of the activity, time, venue and teachers-in-charge, etc. Teachers must confirm the agreement of parents and collect the notes duly signed indicating their consent. After the activity, these notes on parental consent should be kept for a period of time for record purpose.

5.3 Notifying the police

When organising outdoor activities for students, the school should notify the police in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Education Bureau. This is a safety precaution that the school must take to protect the students and the school itself in the event of an accident. To facilitate teachers in their work, the school may consider designing standard forms for reporting to the police.

5.4 Safety precautions

The school should ensure that all ECAs are conducted safely. For ECA held in school, the school should arrange for sufficient teachers to be on duty to invigilate the activity. Teachers-in-charge should also make

reference to the safety guidelines in special rooms and laboratories to ensure that all facilities are safe for use. Facilities, equipment and safety devices should be constantly checked to ensure proper working conditions and to avoid accidents. Teachers-in-charge should also be cautious in conducting outdoor activities and adhere to the “Guidelines on Outdoor Activities” published by the Education Bureau. In the case of activities requiring special attention, teachers should be reminded to follow the safety measures closely.

5.5 Handling of accidents

In the case of an accident, teachers-in-charge should take good care of the victim to prevent further mishap. (For example, he/she must be sent to hospital if injured). They should also notify the school and parents in the first instance, report to them the condition of the student and what have been done so far to relieve the parents from unnecessary worries. It is advisable that teachers-in-charge should carry with them on outings (e.g. picnics, residential camps, visits) a telephone list of parents (including office & home) and teachers on duty for emergency use.

5.6 Responsibility and legal problems

The school and teachers assume a parental role to take care of their students, as a parent should normally do. The Education Bureau has arranged for all Aided Schools and Caput Schools a Block Insurance Policy. For details of the Block Insurance Policy, please refer to the following website of the Education Bureau:

<http://www.edb.gov.hk/index.aspx?nodeID=242&langno=1>

In the case of Government schools, the responsibility will be borne by the Government.

Evaluation of
Extra-curricular Activities (ECA)

1. Aims of ECA evaluation

- 1.1 To ascertain the values of ECA
- 1.2 To improve the quality and the implementation of ECA
- 1.3 To examine the ability and achievement of the ECA facilitators
- 1.4 To assess the attitude and contribution of the participants

2. Scope of ECA evaluation

ECA are part of the school curriculum and its planning includes research, experimentation, innovation and evaluation. We may assess ECA in three aspects, namely, design, implementation and analysis.

3. Item of ECA evaluation

3.1. Design of ECA

- 3.1.1 Purpose of the design
- 3.1.2 Educational objectives
- 3.1.3 Appropriateness of the activities
- 3.1.4 Effectiveness of the ECA and its anticipated effects
- 3.1.5 Marketing of ECA

3.2. Implementation of ECA

- 3.2.1 Activity plans and programmes
- 3.2.2 Types of activities
- 3.2.3 Number of participants involved
- 3.2.4 Cost-effectiveness
- 3.2.5 Effectiveness of the programme/activity

3.3. Analysis of personnel involved

- 3.3.1 Organisers' analysis
- 3.3.2 Facilitators' analysis
- 3.3.3 Advisors' analysis
- 3.3.4 Participants' analysis
- 3.3.5 Observers/spectators' analysis
- 3.3.6 Parents' analysis

4. Points of concern in evaluating ECA

In assessing the success and effectiveness of an ECA, we need to consider the objectives of the ECA, the activity culture of the school, the ability of the students, the capacity of the ECA advisors and the availability of the resources. There is no hard and fast rule for the evaluation. However, the evaluation should comprise the following objectives:

- 4.1 To provide a channel for feedback
- 4.2 To make the personnel involved in ECA realise the importance of the ECA improvement
- 4.3 To improve the effectiveness of ECA and its educational value
- 4.4 To make the ECA organisers and facilitators realise that they are the leaders of the ECA
- 4.5 The evaluation results could gain support from school management for future ECA programmes

Origin of the Guidelines on Extra-curricular Activities
in Schools

1. Acknowledgements

The Education Department would like to thank members of the *Working Group on the Guidelines on Extra-curricular Activities in Schools* for their valuable contributions. The following members of the Hong Kong Extra-curricular Activities Co-ordinators' Association, and representatives from the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors were invited by the Director of Education to serve on the Working Group on an ad personam basis:

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2. Aims

The overall aims of education of Hong Kong have been outlined in a booklet called "School Education in Hong Kong: A Statement of Aims" published in 1993 by the Education and Manpower Branch, Government Secretariat, Hong Kong Government. Since ECA are part of the school curriculum, the aims listed in the booklet can also be considered for ECA. There are a total of fifteen aims, which are as follows:

2.1 Access to basic education

Every child should attend school full-time for at least nine years, and should have access to a school place in the public sector throughout the period of compulsory education.

2.2 Access to post-compulsory education

Beyond the ninth year, there should be enough full-time school places in the public sector to meet demand from the community for well educated citizens, and demand from students willing and able to benefit from further study.

2.3 Costs to parents

A school place free of tuition fees should be available to every child during compulsory education. After Secondary 3, students should meet a reasonable proportion of the cost of their education. Fee remission and assistance schemes should ensure equal access regardless of family circumstances.

2.4 Variety of approaches

The Government should encourage a variety of approaches to meeting the aims of school education, and should ensure a suitable level of resources to support each approach.

2.5 Parental choice

As far as possible, parents should be able to choose the type of education best suited to their children, and should have adequate information on which to make informed choices.

2.6 General aim: individual viewpoint

Every school should help all its students, whatever their level of ability, and including those with special educational needs, to develop their potential as fully as possible in both academic and non-academic directions.

2.7 General aim: community viewpoint

School education should aim to meet the community's need for people who can contribute to Hong Kong's social and economic development.

2.8 Learning skills: literacy and numeracy

Schools should help students to build a strong foundation of literacy and numeracy.

2.9 Learning skills: thinking and reasoning

Schools should help students to think logically, independently and creatively; to make rational decisions; to solve problems independently and in cooperation with others; and to cope with stress and change.

2.10 Learning skills: acquiring knowledge

Schools should help students learn how to acquire a better understanding of their world (including society and its history, the natural world, science and technology), and encourage in them a desire to develop their understanding further after they leave school.

2.11 Practical and technical skills

Schools should introduce their students to a range of practical and technical skills, and help them develop abilities and attitudes which will be useful in further study, work and life.

2.12 Social, political and civic awareness

Schools should help students to become aware of Hong Kong as a society; to develop a sense of civic duty, responsibility to the family and service to the community; and to exercise tolerance in interacting with others.

2.13 Personal and ethical qualities

Schools, in partnership with parents and others, should contribute to the personal growth of their students, by helping them develop a sense of morality and prepare for the physical, emotional and mental transition to adulthood.

2.14 Physical development

Schools should help their students to develop health awareness, good physical co-ordination and a disposition to engage in physical activity.

2.15 Aesthetic and cultural development

Schools should help their students to develop their creativity and aesthetic awareness, and should stimulate appreciation of the achievements of the local culture and other cultures.

The first five aims mentioned relate to educational opportunity, whereas the remaining ten aims relate to the educational process and its outcomes. It is essential for schools to achieve these goals, which ECA can help to accomplish.