Focus Inspection Report on the Use of English as the Medium of Instruction under the Fine-tuned MOI Arrangements

# **CCC Kei Long College**

Address of School : 8 Fung Yau Street, South Yuen Long, N.T. Inspection Period : 19-21 May and 6 June 2014

Quality Assurance and School-based Support Division Education Bureau

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#### **Focus Inspection Team**

**Team Coordinator** Ms LAU Suk-ching

Member Mr CHONG Yuk-leung

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## 1. Inspection Methodology

• The focus inspection was conducted on 19-21 May and 6 June 2014 to help the school review the effectiveness of its school-based MOI arrangements for using English to teach content subjects at S1-S3 levels in the 2013/14 school year. A summary of the MOI arrangements is provided below. Given that the first cohort of S1 classes under the MOI arrangements has progressed to S4, classes and content subjects with English as the MOI at this level are also included in the summary.

Level Subject	<b>S1</b>	S2	<b>S</b> 3	<b>S4</b>
Biology	of failur.	Luf Liner	3A-D	4E
Chemistry	1. 1. 1. 1. 1. 1. 1. 1. 1. 1. 1. 1. 1. 1		3A-D	4E
Computer Literacy	1D		3D	13.000
Design & Technology	and the	2D	3D	
Economics				1 group
Home Economics	1D	2D		
Integrated Science	1A-D	2A-D		
Liberal Studies	1D	2D	3D	
Mathematics	1A-D	2A-D	3A-D	4A-E
Music	1D	2D	3D	The base
Physical Education	1D	2D	3D	
Physics			3A-D	4E
Visual Arts	1D	2D	3D	

- The inspection team used the following methods to help the school review the effectiveness of its arrangements for adopting English as the MOI with a focus on Biology, Chemistry<sup>1</sup>, Integrated Science, Mathematics and Physics:
  - Observation of 9 lessons at S1-S4 taught by 9 teachers, including 1 Biology lesson, 1 Physics lesson, 5 Mathematics lessons and 2 Integrated Science lessons;
  - Observation of school activities, including Spelling Bee Competition and inter-group debate competition;

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The panel chair of Chemistry is on maternity leave during the inspection period.

- Meetings and interviews with the Principal, the Vice Principal, Dean of academic affairs, the coordinator of the Language Across the Curriculum (LAC) Committee, panel chairs of the Biology, Integrated Science, Mathematics and Physics subjects, subject teachers concerned and two groups of randomly selected students at S4 level;
- Study of documents and information provided by the school; and
- Study of samples of students' work and assessment papers.
- The inspection findings presented in this report were derived from the corporate judgement of the inspection team based on the information collected through the above methods.

# 2. Planning, Implementation and Evaluation of the School-based MOI Arrangements

- The planning for the school-based MOI arrangements has been participatory and comprehensive. The arrangements, taking into account the students' learning abilities and interests, teachers' capability and readiness, parents' preference as well as schools' support measures, were formulated in 2009/10 school year to enhance the students' exposure to English. The arrangements were discussed at staff meetings and the parents were duly informed of the arrangements in the briefing sessions prior to the decisions being made on implementation. The choice of English as the MOI for Integrated Science and Mathematics at junior secondary levels is a decision made with reference to the students' language needs at senior secondary levels, where there are classes using English as the MOI for these subjects. The plan was discussed in detail by the School Administrative Committee and the Academic Affairs Committee. The MOI Task Group has been formed since 2010 to carry out the school-based MOI arrangements which took effect from September 2010.
- The school has implemented its MOI arrangements smoothly since its commencement in 2010/11 school year. A S1 class is denoted as English class where English is adopted as the MOI in all the content subjects except Chinese History and Religious Education. Furthermore, English is used as the MOI in Integrated Science and Mathematics in the other three S1 classes. An eight-day summer bridging programme with diversified learning activities including subject-based and classroom language learning is suitably offered to pre-S1 students with the aim of helping them adapt to the new school environment and preparing them for their learning through English.
- Appropriate mechanisms have been used to stream and allocate students to the Students with the best results in English in the pre-S1 Hong English class. Kong Attainment Test are allocated to the class as described. Opportunities are provided for other S1 and S2 students to apply for transition to that class if they perform well in English in the examinations. Students' performance in the assessment, assignments, classes, their readiness and learning attitude is also taken into consideration. However, for those students in the English class performing unsatisfactorily in English, their parents would be informed of the possibility of switching to other classes in the next school year. Parents are duly informed of the criteria for admission and re-allocation. At the end of the school year, the students not matching the criteria of the English class would be transferred to other classes in the subsequent year. To help students experience a smooth transfer, class teachers and the counselling team provide them with appropriate counselling services. In addition, a bridging course on schoolbased Liberal Studies is offered to the students being reallocated to the English class to boost their confidence and develop their proficiency in learning through English. In order to enhance students' ability in learning the subjects that English is newly adopted as the MOI, it is advisable to launch a comprehensive bridging programme to cover more subjects other than Liberal Studies.
- The school has set up relevant committees in due order to support the implementation of the MOI arrangements. Besides the MOI Task Group which

oversees the planning, implementation and evaluation of the arrangements, a Language Across Curriculum (LAC) coordinator was suitably assigned in 2010 aiming to provide language support including proofreading and refining the assessment papers and teaching materials for the relevant content subjects using English as the MOI. The LAC Committee comprising Department Heads of English and the relevant content subjects has also been formed since 2012, to be responsible for liaising with the relevant content subject departments to facilitate the launch of LAC activities, as well as to analyse students' assessment results before and after the implementation of arrangements to inform the planning. Α platform is properly established for the teachers concerned to exchange views on activity design and pedagogy, including the use of English as the MOI and the promotion of LAC. A list of vocabulary items of the content subjects is prepared for the English department and the words are aptly audio-taped and uploaded onto the school web to enrich the learning resources for students' use. In addition, a list of sentence patterns of the relevant subjects which students find difficulty applying is also developed by English teachers and taught in English lessons to consolidate students' learning.

- To enhance the teaching effectiveness of content subjects using English as the MOI, teachers are encouraged to participate in relevant courses organised by the EDB and tertiary institutions. To further support the implementation of the MOI arrangements, a series of professional development programmes has been appropriately provided to enrich teachers' proficiency in English as well as teaching strategies. Training courses focusing on awareness of pronunciation errors and classroom language are offered to relevant content subject teachers. A 'Language Across the Curriculum' research programme consisting of a research project entitled 'Development of Language Awareness and Pedagogy of Content Subject Teachers Using English as the MOI' and the LAC workshop as well as the lesson observations has been conducted by scholars from university in recent years. Opportunities are also provided for in-house training and sharing of teaching ideas. School visits are arranged for content subjects teachers for professional sharing and development. To promote professional exchange on the use of English for teaching content subjects, lesson observations in different aspects have been aptly conducted. Besides lesson observations conducted by the Principal, intra-departmental lesson observations of Mathematics and Integrated Science Departments are also conducted by department heads with a focus on effectiveness of using English as the MOI. Moreover, relevant content subject teachers are invited to observe the English lessons of their respective classes where good practices are shared among the teachers.
- Appropriate mechanisms are in place to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the MOI arrangements so as to inform adjustments to curriculum planning, teaching plans and pedagogy. Regular panel meetings are properly conducted to evaluate students' performance in assessments, as well as to review the learning and teaching effectiveness in using English as the MOI. To identify the support needs of the teachers and the students, lesson observation, assignment inspection, teacher and student questionnaire surveys are appropriately conducted.

## 3. Learning and Teaching

#### 3.1 Curriculum and Assessment

- The curricula of Integrated Science and Mathematics in S1-3 are, in general, duly prepared with reference to the Curricula recommended by the Curriculum Development Council (CDC). There is an adequate coverage of essential learning elements, with vertical coherence between junior and senior secondary levels. For Integrated Science, there is curriculum adaptation in terms of trimming and re-sequencing of topics in consideration of students' language ability. The curriculum for S3 Integrated Science has been split into Physics, Chemistry and Biology, whereby some teaching contents of the school-based curricula is adopted from the respective New Senior Secondary curriculum and Assessment Guides of the CDC. The contents adopted are comparatively easier for S3 students. Schemes of work including the essential elements, such as teaching topics and time allocation, are properly set for teachers' reference.
- Efforts have been put by the subject panels concerned in designing LAC curriculum and teaching materials. The subject-specific vocabularies are uploaded onto the school web for students' reference. In collaboration with the Integrated Science panel, the English department prepares sentence pattern booklets for S1 and S2 to facilitate students' learning of science in English. Also, there is a curriculum mapping between S3 English and Biology so that the students can apply the knowledge and vocabulary learnt in Biology lessons and the genres learnt in English lessons to do the writing tasks. These arrangements, which are useful for enhancing students' learning of content subjects in English, could be promoted to other relevant content subjects.
- Various kinds of assignments such as tailor-made worksheets, book reports, newspaper cuttings and project work are given to students. For Integrated Science, booklets with sentence patterns are prepared for S1 and S2 students to help scaffold students' writing and expression of scientific concepts. Marking is, in general, carefully done by the teachers and positive feedback is awarded to students in recognition of their good efforts. For one subject, concrete and specific feedback is given to students and language mistakes are also aptly addressed by the teachers. This good practice, which helps students make further improvement in both subject knowledge and language, could be promoted to other subjects. Students are, in general, able to follow instructions and conscientious in completing their assignments and their work is satisfactory.
- The school assessment policy includes summative assessment and continuous assessment. Some marks are allocated to continuous assessment which includes quizzes, projects, classroom performance, assignments and book reports. The examination paper is appropriately set in terms of coverage, language use and question types. Suitable diagrams are drawn in some assessment papers to facilitate students' understanding. Extra marks are allocated to some challenging questions to cater for the needs of more able students.
- The school has established a clear and appropriate assessment mechanism and various assessment data are used by subject panels to review the learning and

teaching effectiveness. Besides lesson observation, questionnaire survey and assignment inspection, both quantitative and qualitative analysis of students' performance in examinations, are conducted. The passing rates, means and range of marks are properly analysed while the qualitative analysis gives a brief description of students' overall performance. For the individual subjects, indepth evaluation including students' learning difficulties, review of teaching effectiveness and concrete follow-up measures has been conducted. The panel makes good use of the evaluation findings to introduce adjustments to teaching strategies, so as to better address students' learning needs.

#### 3.2 Support Measures

- To enhance the learning and teaching effectiveness of the MOI arrangements, the school has made good use of the resources of the English Enhancement Scheme (EES) and the Refined English Enhancement Scheme (REES) to support the implementation of the school-based MOI arrangements. Additional manpower is employed to create room for the core team teachers to develop school-based LAC learning and teaching materials for the subjects concerned including Mathematics, Integrated Science and Liberal Studies. Teaching assistants are aptly hired to help organise English activities and train English Ambassadors as well as to provide clerical and technical support to the relevant panels. Training courses focusing on awareness of pronunciation errors and classroom language are organised to enhance the proficiency of English of the content subject teachers. Professional training courses are also offered to the teachers concerned to enhance their English proficiency.
- A good range of measures has been put in place to support students' learning in English. An eight-day summer bridging programme is aptly provided for pre-S1 students as the preliminary aids to adapt to the English learning environment. English classroom language is taught and some basic subject-specific terms are introduced. Suitable activities with a strong focus on learning English in a language-rich learning environment are organised where the knowledge and skills necessary for the learning of the subjects concerned are stressed. Furthermore, 'S1 Adaptation Month', after school remedial classes and 'Saturday Class' are arranged to further support S1 to S4 students' learning in content subjects. On the whole, the school and the subject panels concerned have made a lot of effort in terms of language bridging.
- A rich English learning environment is created through a wide range of English activities to promote students' interest and widen their exposure to English. English Ambassadors are trained to talk to their classmates on 'English Speaking Days'. To encourage students to speak more English, stickers are awarded to students as a token of appreciation. LAC Game stalls with rich subject contents are organised to encourage students to put what they have learnt into practice. 'Spelling Bee Competition', 'Read Aloud Buddy Programme' and 'Radio Kei Long' radio programme hosted by students aims to provide more opportunities for students to speak and listen to English. Furthermore, the 'English Week' with various activities including opening ceremonies, performances of the winners of the external competitions such as Speech Festival, Poem Reading

Competition is launched. A project with an outing for S1 and S5 students who are requested to carry out a survey with foreigners during the outing is arranged every year. A follow-up writing task is assessed as a learning outcome. For the more able students, an English enhancement program 'Flying high with English' with various fun and challenging speaking activities such as debate competition is organised to develop their speaking skill as well as boost their interest and confidence in English. Students' participation is encouraging. All these English activities can provide ample opportunities for students to use English in an interesting and subject related context that help to further enhance their English ability and proficiency.

#### 3.3 Classroom Learning and Teaching

- Lessons are, generally, organised with clear learning objectives and focuses that suit students' learning needs. Suitable revision of previous learning occurs in most lessons. Teachers demonstrate adequate proficiency in using English as the MOI and are able to make use of plain English in delivering the lessons. Students are attentive, cooperative and obedient. They are, on the whole, able to follow the instructions given by the teachers. Students are engaged in the learning activities and are able to apply the skills learnt to complete the tasks. When learning activities, such as experiments and investigative tasks are arranged, they are active and eager to participate. However, most lessons are mainly conducted by lecturing and the interaction between students is rather limited. To promote classroom interaction, diversified teaching and learning activities are recommended.
- Teachers are friendly, approachable and supportive that a harmonious learning environment has been created. Classroom routines are well-established and readiness for learning is evident. Some teachers can make use of appropriate teaching aids, such as computer software, diagrams and models, to explain abstract concepts as well as to sustain students' learning motivation. With an awareness of supporting students' language learning needs, teachers, in general, can make use of some strategies to help students acquire subject content. Reading aloud in chorus and breaking down words into syllables are adopted in most lessons to help students master the pronunciation of the subject-specific vocabulary. In addition, key words and concepts are highlighted on the blackboard to enhance students' learning.
- Questioning is frequently used to check students' understanding of the knowledge and concepts taught. The questions asked are simple and straightforward so that the answers required are brief. Students are, generally, willing to answer teachers' questions and are able to respond in short phrases or single words. Prompting, paraphrasing and probing are suitably used in the individual lessons to encourage more elaboration and to stimulate ideas where students are requested to give more responses in English. However, students rarely raise questions on their own initiative so they could be encouraged to participate more actively in class. A wider range of questions, particularly open-ended questions, could be employed to develop the potential of students and boost their confidence in speaking English. The students could be further encouraged to demonstrate their work to fully develop their potential. More

opportunities for students to express ideas and explain their opinions could be given.

• To cater for learner diversity, teachers provide proper individual support for the less able students when they are doing the tasks given. Different examples with progressive level of difficulties are employed in demonstration to suit different students' needs. In order to cater for students' diverse learning needs, more learning and teaching strategies could be explored.

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## 4. Way Forward

The planning for the school-based MOI arrangements has been participatory and comprehensive. The school has implemented its MOI arrangements smoothly since its commencement of the arrangements in 2010/11 school year. Efforts have been put by the subject panels concerned in designing LAC curriculum and teaching materials. A wide range of measures has been put in place to support students' learning needs. A rich English learning environment is created through conducting different English activities to promote students' interest and widen their exposure to English. Teachers demonstrate adequate proficiency in using English as the MOI and are able to make use of plain English in delivering the lessons. Students are, on the whole, able to follow the instructions given by the teachers and complete the learning tasks.

For continuous improvement of its MOI arrangements, the school could direct more effort and attention to the following:

## 4.1 Using diversified teaching and learning activities to promote classroom interaction

• Most lessons are mainly conducted by lecturing and the interaction between students is rather inadequate. To enhance the classroom learning and teaching effectiveness, a greater variety of activities such as games, group discussion and investigative tasks could be employed to promote classroom interaction.

# 4.2 Developing the potential of students and boost their confidence in using English

• Opportunities for students to express ideas and explain their opinions in class are rather limited. To boost students' confidence in using English, students could be further encouraged to express their ideas in English or raise questions on their own initiative. Furthermore, a wider range of questions could be employed so as to fully develop the potential of students, especially those more able students.