

EDUCATION BUREAU CIRCULAR MEMORANDUM NO. 30/2017

From: Secretary for Education
To: Heads of Government, Aided (including special schools with primary section adopting the ordinary school curriculum) and Direct Subsidy Scheme Primary Schools

Ref. : EDB(LE)/P&R/MISC/41

Date: 17 March 2017

Grant Scheme on Promoting Effective English Language Learning in Primary Schools

Summary

The purpose of this circular memorandum is to (a) inform government, aided (including special schools with primary section adopting the ordinary school curriculum) primary schools and those under the Direct Subsidy Scheme about the Grant Scheme on Promoting Effective English Language Learning in Primary Schools, and (b) to invite these schools to apply for the Grant.

Background

2. The Education Bureau (EDB) launched the English Enhancement Grant Scheme for Primary Schools (the EEGS) in 2009 with support from the Language Fund (LF) to provide each eligible primary school with a time-limited grant for developing school-based English enhancement measures to strengthen the learning and teaching of English Language, and to achieve sustainable effects upon its completion in August 2014. According to the review findings of the EEGS, primary schools were facilitated to implement school-based initiatives for strengthening the learning and teaching of English Language with the support of additional resources.

3. Taking into account the new directions of the English Language Curriculum and the changing educational needs of students under “Ongoing Renewal of the School Curriculum – Focusing, Deepening and Sustaining” as well as riding on the experience of the EEGS, the Standing Committee on Language Education and Research (SCOLAR) accepted the recommendation of EDB to launch the Grant Scheme on Promoting Effective English Language Learning in Primary Schools (the PEEGS) in the 2017/18 school year through the use of the LF with a view to further promoting effective English language learning in primary schools.

The Scheme

Objectives

4. The Grant is to help schools develop their school-based English enhancement measures to further promote effective English language learning for enhancing the smooth transition between different key stages of English learning (Kindergarten to Primary 1, Primary 3 to Primary 4 and Primary 6 to Secondary 1) in tandem with incremental changes emerged from pedagogical and curriculum development. In taking forward school-based curriculum initiatives targeting at areas set out in paragraph 7, the measures should aim to achieve sustainable effects after completion of the Scheme.

Eligibility

5. All government, aided (including special schools with primary section adopting the ordinary school curriculum) or Direct Subsidy Scheme primary schools may apply.

Usage of the Grant

6. The Grant should be used to **enhance the capacity of schools for further strengthening the learning and teaching of English Language** and to **achieve sustainable effects after completion of the Scheme**. Given the different school contexts, individual schools are expected to take a **school-based approach** in formulating school-based curriculum initiatives to meet their own needs.

7. When formulating the plans, schools should develop their school-based curriculum initiatives targeting at the following areas –

- (a) ***enrich the English language environment in schools*** through conducting more English language activities/developing more quality English language learning resources for students; and/or
- (b) ***take forward the major area(s) of the updated English Language Curriculum (Primary) under “Ongoing Renewal of the School Curriculum – Focusing, Deepening and Sustaining”*** through promoting reading or literacy across the curriculum, enhancing e-learning, catering for learner diversity with equal emphasis on more able and less able students and/or strengthening assessment literacy.

8. To implement school-based curriculum initiatives, schools may use the grant for –

(a) *Purchasing learning and teaching resources*

To take forward the major area(s) of the updated English Language Curriculum (Primary) under “Ongoing Renewal of the School Curriculum – Focusing, Deepening and Sustaining”, schools may need to purchase learning and teaching resources such as e-learning materials and books. Schools should set out how the newly purchased resources would facilitate the implementation of the major area(s) of the updated English Language Curriculum with sustainable impacts. ***The Grant should not be used merely for adding stock in the library.***

(b) *Employing full-time or part-time teachers/teaching assistants*

To employ teachers/teaching assistants¹ who are proficient in English to –

- (i) help provide students with more opportunities to use English in authentic context;
- (ii) assist or work in collaboration with existing English language teachers in implementing school-based curriculum initiatives; and/or
- (iii) release some existing English language teachers from part of their normal teaching/non-teaching duties for developing school-based English Language curriculum and learning/teaching resources that could be re-used by the schools, participating in professional development programmes², as well as organising co-curricular activities to arouse students’ interests in English Language.

The Grant is not meant for reducing the workload of existing English language teachers in general. When preparing their proposals, schools should –

- (i) consider how existing English language teachers can be empowered by the extra manpower to promote effective English language learning and sustain the impacts of the above-mentioned activities when the funding is no longer available;
- (ii) clearly specify teachers’ duties after they have been released from their

¹ In employing contract teachers with the provision under the Scheme, schools should refer to Education Bureau Circular No. 9/2016 on “Optimising the Use of Teaching Manpower Resources”. In this regard, teaching assistants who are ancillary staff should **only** be deployed to assist in designing and preparing teaching aids, coordinating and/or leading activities, rendering clerical support, providing individual or remedial group support after school, etc.

² Teachers may attend the Professional Development Programmes (PDPs) and/or apply for school-based support services, such as, the support offered by Native-speaking English Teacher Section and Professional Development Schools Scheme.

normal teaching/non-teaching duties, for example, participation in co-planning and co-teaching; and/or

- (iii) consider how teachers may benefit from the professional development programmes which should have specific foci relating to the enhancement measures adopted/to be developed as well as how other teachers may learn from the experiences of these teachers through experience sharing, etc.

(c) ***Procuring services for conducting English language activities***

To enrich the English language environment in schools, school may consider procuring professional services for conducting English language activities for students, such as drama, choral speaking to cater for learning diversity, and/or co-curricular activities for students to promote reading or literacy across curriculum. ***The Grant should not be used for hiring services for conducting activities for students without the participation and professional development of teachers.***

9. Schools are encouraged to take a holistic approach in deploying the grant to implement effective and sustainable new school-based curriculum initiatives or to continue implementing the initiatives which have already been launched previously and tie in with the parameters set out in paragraph 7 above. In submitting such applications, schools should also provide an evaluation of the effectiveness and impacts of the existing initiatives. With regard to the new initiatives to be implemented, schools should set out outcome-based quantitative measurable targets to be achieved in terms of the overall impact on students' English language learning (for example, listening and speaking, reading and writing). Students' achievements can be reflected in student work, school-based assessment and Territory-wide System Assessment. Other examples of outcome-based indicators may include students' wider use of English in daily communication, students' achievements in school and inter-school English activities, such as English Week and Speech Festival. Besides, schools may combine this grant with other existing grants (for example, the Capacity Enhancement Grant), provided that the usage should remain within the parameters of the Scheme. Schools are required to submit separate report(s), as applicable, to account for the expenditure of other existing grants as well as the grant under the Scheme.

10. The Grant should not be used for purchasing hardware (for example, items such as furniture, audio-visual equipment, computers); granting fringe benefits to staff; carrying out alteration/addition/renovation works and procuring services or materials to drill students in preparation for assessment.

Grant Allocation

11. The amount of grant per school should be no more than \$350,000. The actual amount of grant for each school would depend on individual schools' proposals and implementation strategies. Schools are expected to expend the grant within one to two school years. Normally, the earmarked fund will be disbursed annually to schools according to the projected cash flow requirements. Schools have to return the unused fund after completion of their school-based projects.

Application

12. The Scheme is open to applications from eligible primary schools in the 2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 school years respectively. Quota on the number of applicant schools (that is, 125 schools³) would be set for each round. Respective schedules are set out in the table below.

Round	Submission of proformas on Allocation of Quota	Allocation of Quota	Deadline for submission of proposals	Schedule for implementing the initiatives
1	late Apr 2017	May 2017	early Jul 2017	2017/18 school year (second term) – 2019/20 school year (first term)
2	early Nov 2017	late Nov 2017	end Jan 2018	2018/19 school year – 2019/20 school year
3	early Nov 2018	late Nov 2018	end Jan 2019	2019/20 school year – 2020/21 school year
4	early Nov 2019	late Nov 2019	end Jan 2020	2020/21 school year – 2021/22 school year

13. Schools planning to take forward the enhancement measures in the relevant school year are invited to complete and submit the proforma on *Allocation of Quotas for taking forward the English Language School-based Curriculum Initiatives in the relevant school year* to the EDB within the specified dates. Schools with allocated quotas to develop their

³ If the number of completed proformas on *Allocation of Quotas for taking forward the English Language School-based Curriculum Initiatives* in the relevant school year received from schools exceeds the quota of 125 set for each round, those schools that are not allocated quotas would be given the priority to submit their proposals in the next round and are not required to submit the reply proformas anymore. Should there be unfilled quota in the relevant round, the remaining quota will be equally distributed in the subsequent round(s).

school-based curriculum initiatives in the relevant round should complete the application form, together with an implementation plan which sets out: (a) present state of play; (b) measure(s) taken through the grant from the EEGS, if any; (c) proposed measures and implementation details; (d) targets to be attained (preferably measurable) and expected sustainable outcome(s); (e) budget and projected cash flow; (f) implementation timetable; as well as (g) method(s) of quality assurance and evaluation. The application form and template on drawing up the school-based implementation plan can be downloaded at the SCOLAR website (<http://www.language-education.com/eng/index.asp>).

Vetting of Applications

14. A panel comprising language education experts and representatives from the EDB will assess the appropriateness and feasibility of the school-based curriculum initiatives proposed and recommend revision to the proposal if necessary. Schools will not be asked to present their proposals to the vetting panel. Schools that apply in the first round of application will be informed of the results by November of this year while those applying in subsequent rounds will be informed of their application results by May of the year the latest.

Accountability of Schools

15. Upon approval, each primary school has to enter into a “performance contract” with the Government. The contract sets out the terms and conditions of allocation of the Grant, including the relevant administrative, financial and reporting arrangements. Besides, schools should comply with the requirements specified in the Codes of Aid, the relevant letters, circulars and guidelines issued by the EDB from time to time. Some important points to note for hiring outside services and staff appointment can be downloaded at the SCOLAR website (<http://www.language-education.com/eng/index.asp>).

16. Under the spirit of school-based management, schools are required to include the implementation plan in their school development plans, report the progress and evaluation in the annual school reports according to the targets set. Once approved, major changes to the proposal (including the timetable and content) should require prior approval of the EDB.

17. Schools are also required to submit to the EDB a final report, which should include the financial statement and their evaluation of the initiatives, within three months after completion of the project. If the implementation process takes two years, schools are required to submit a progress report within three months after the first year of

implementation. Schools will be advised of the areas to be covered in the progress and final report. Schools may submit their school annual report as their progress or final report if it covers all the areas required.

Timing of Application

18. Schools may consider when to apply and implement the school-based curriculum initiatives within the timeframe set out in paragraph 12 above. Schools that wish to implement the school-based curriculum initiatives in the relevant school year should complete and return the proforma on *Allocation of Application Quotas for taking forward the English Language School-based Curriculum Initiatives* within the specified period. **Please note that only the completed proformas received within the specified period will be processed.**

Briefing Sessions

19. To enhance schools' understanding of the Scheme and the usage of the Grant, three identical briefing sessions will be conducted. Schools are invited to nominate a maximum of three representatives to attend any one of the briefing sessions and enroll through the Training Calendar System (TCS).

Date	Time	Content	Venue
30 March 2017 (Thursday)	3:15p.m. – 5:00p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Administrative Arrangements of the Scheme ❖ Usage of the Grant – Do's & Don'ts 	Lecture Theatre, 4/F, West Block, Education Bureau Kowloon Tong Education Services Centre
3 April 2017 (Monday)			School Hall, CCC Kei Chun Primary School
6 April 2017 (Thursday)			School Hall, Sham Shui Po Government Primary School

Enquiries

20. For enquiries, please contact the Language Education and SCOLAR Section at 3527 0182 or 3527 0180. Soft copies of the proforma on *Allocation of Application Quotas for taking forward the English Language School-based Curriculum Initiatives*,

application form and template on school-based implementation plan, reference notes on completing the school-implementation plan as well as points to note for hiring outside services and staff appointment can be downloaded at the SCOLAR website (<http://www.language-education.com/eng/index.asp>).

(Ms Jenny CHAN)
for Secretary for Education

c.c. Head of Sections – for information