

Quality Education Fund
The Dedicated Funding Programme for Publicly-funded Schools
Part B: Project Proposal

Project Title: Enhancing students' English language learning experience through a problem-based learning approach 以問題導向學習方式加強學生的英語學習歷程	Project Number: 2018/1528 (Revised)
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Name of School: Sai Kung Central Lee Siu Yam Memorial School

Direct Beneficiaries

(a) Sector: Kindergarten Primary Secondary Special School

(b) Beneficiaries: (1) Students: P4 (83) and P5 (63); (2) Teachers: 9

Project Period: 11/2020 to 09/2021

1. Project Needs

1.1	Project Aim(s)	To enrich the existing English language curriculum through series of projects that taps into civic education and global issues. Through the projects led mainly by the Native English Teachers (NET), students are expected to master their own projects, undergo investigations and gain hands-on experience in producing end products. Students are anticipated to have acquired problem-solving skills on top of self-directed learning by the end of the year. E-learning skills are also fostered so that students are trained to be 21 st century learners.
1.2	Innovative element(s)	A creative school-based curriculum will be designed to assist students to investigate social issues such as the endangered animals. Through the guide of the NET and local English teachers, students create their innovative solutions to solve problems and to understand the impacts the problem brings to the world and the people. The project also taps into problem-solving, in which students are expected to solve problems given to them by their own means. This is a new aspect of learning that is to be experimented through this programme.
1.3	Alignment with school-based / students' needs	As one of the few government school that caters for Non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students, Sai Kung Central Lee Siu Yam Memorial School (LSY) has vastly diverse learners, including those whose native language is English, and those whose mother-tongues are of a different language, in addition to local Hong Kong students. Hence, there is a need to construct an alternative curriculum that goes beyond those conventional curricula that is mostly culturally relevant to local people, but a curriculum that can suffice learners disregard of cultures and learning differences. Currently, the textbook adopted by the school are Oxford Ready textbooks. The textbook typically offers an interactive learning experience to learners and students are exposed to texts and grammar items based on a concise piece of text and follow-up exercise. Topics covered in the P4 and P5 curriculum include <i>Relationship, Changes, Happy Days, Food and Drinks, We Love Hong Kong</i> and <i>The Magic of Nature</i> .

Without a doubt, the textbook comprises of the themes commonly found in primary curriculum, disregard of subjects. However, we feel that at Key Stage 2, students should be given an opportunity to be exposed to more pressing and global issues of the world such as the climate emergency. In recent years, the climate change and its impact has been so pressing that more and more countries are recognizing the crisis and acknowledging the shift from climate change to climate emergency. And in November 2019, the Oxford Dictionaries even made the term climate emergency Word of the Year. Yet the terminology climate emergency is rather an umbrella term that incorporates a lot of phenomena and individual global issues. In other words, the topic itself is too broad to fit into the current innovated and pioneered curriculum. Therefore, we explored some issues under this umbrella term that best fit our school context and students.

With the special geographical location of the school (Sai Kung), our students are surrounded with the natural environment every day such as the beautiful ocean and many animals, such as birds, cows and sometimes even snakes. We want our students to live along with and treasure the beautiful environment in the neighborhood and so it seems appropriate that we set the topics that involve these factors. So the topic the students will explore includes “endangered animals” and “plastic”. These two topics link closely to the Sai Kung community, and particularly the plastic problem is one of the major problems found in seas in Hong Kong.

As the everyday schedule is already tight in school, our teachers discussed the possibility of implementing the project during NET lesson, which according to the requirement of the EDB, each class should have some NET lessons. We also discussed the possibility of the implementation with our current EDB employed NET, but unfortunately, the teaching slots are all filled, which creates the necessity of employing another NET to carry out the project.

In our daily English lessons, teachers in general feel that students do not show much initiative and ownership in their own learning, even though the textbook offers interactive learning materials to our learners. As the topics mentioned above are link closely to the local community, our priority is to involve our learners so that they feel ownership in their own learning. We teachers at LSY feel that the best way to raise ownership in students’ learning is to create a condition of which students owns the learning and are able to set pace of their learning.

Some LSY teachers attended an experience sharing session host by a nearby school, Hong Kong Academy in recent years. Through a project learning approach, they demonstrated a successful case of KS2 students showing knowledge about several topics and students manifested incredible ownership towards their unique projects and created learning opportunities themselves, with the assistance of teachers and electronic devices. With our goals in mind, we explored the possibility of adopting a similar approach at our school by allowing students to do their own research project themselves.

In fact, we had similar projects in the past during NET lesson but the learning outcomes were lukewarm. Students did not show a massively in-depth knowledge on the topics they were taught. The vast topic area also meant that students were exposed to a wide range of ideas but were unable to focus on any. Reflecting on the experience, this year, our teachers are enthusiastic about

		<p>taking on a new learning approach – the problem-based learning approach, and to expose students to issues that taps into both the local community and links with climate emergency. Our goals are to allow students to have a degree of freedom to explore the topic according to their own preference, instead of “spoonfeeding” every student the same knowledge disregard of their abilities and interests. Through this pioneering learning approach at our school, we anticipate that students can show in-depth knowledge on an assigned topic that they could refine themselves and that students can show initiation and motivation in their learning.</p> <p>It is therefore imperative that our teachers and students explore new teaching and learning techniques that best fit learners at our school. Upon a successful implementation, the good practice will be shared within members of our school through a seminar with English teachers, which serves as a part of professional development for our teachers also.</p>
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2. Project Feasibility

2.1	Key concept (s) / rationale(s) of the project	<p>The project is run on a problem-based learning approach. In other words, learners are encouraged to investigate real-world problems and to actively undergo investigations to find solutions to the problems. The advantages are multifold. First, this can promote critical thinking skills, knowledge construction and reasoning skills (Albanese and Mitchell, 1993) as students tackle real-world problems. Second, students will be forming their own groups and this can foster collaboration skills. Third, this learning approach encourages life-long learning (Duch et al, 2001).</p> <p>The role of the teachers will therefore be to guide students throughout the learning process. With the guidance of local English teachers and the NET, students conduct investigations with the aid of technology and library books. This is also a key concept of the current project – to foster efficient 21st century learners, and thus students will embark on exploring e-learning through the use of the iPads. Students will learn finding and screening relevant information on the internet and through the process, students will also be stimulated to learn independently.</p> <p>During the process, students are encouraged to find creative solutions to problems. This entails that students do not necessarily come up with identical solutions, but to bring their own understanding of the world to create potentially multi-dimensional solutions.</p>
2.2	Applicant’s readiness or ability/ experience/ conditions/ facilities for project implementation	<p>The school has adopted the project-based learning approach in the previous years and has worked with experienced NETs. There is also a dedicated language room for the purpose.</p> <p>There will be 1 double lesson (approximately 1 hour) per week for each* class in P4 and P5 (7 classes in total) allocated for the project from September to early July.</p> <p>*excluding the SEN class</p>
2.3	Principal’s and teachers’ involvement and their roles	<p><u>Role of the English panel chair (EPC):</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To formulate detailed arrangement of the project activities with Native-English teacher (NET) and local English teachers (LET) involved in the project. 2. To report to the principal on the progress of the activities regularly.

		<p>3. To prepare lessons with teachers and support teachers in selecting suitable teaching resources.</p> <p>4. To meet with the NET to plan and implement the project activities.</p> <p>5. To review the effectiveness of the project activities.</p> <p><u>Role of English teachers:</u></p> <p>1. To participate in regular meetings with other LETs and EPC to review the effectiveness of the project activities.</p> <p>2. To assist with the project activities while the actual lessons would be conducted by the NET.</p> <p>3. To observe the performance of children's learning.</p> <p>4. To review the effectiveness of the project and take up the follow-up work.</p> <p><u>Role of the NET*:</u></p> <p>1.To work collaboratively with the EPC to formulate teaching strategies</p> <p>2.To prepare lessons with the EPC and produce relevant teaching resources and learning materials.</p> <p>3. To implement the project activities according to the project schedule.</p> <p>4. To conduct lessons along with the assistance of LETs and observe the performance of children's learning.</p> <p>5. To meet with EPC to plan and implement the project activities.</p> <p>6. To review the effectiveness of the project and take up the follow-up work.</p> <p>* The NET will be recruited by school and will be stationed in school during work hours, in opposed to the NET hired through learning centres or collaborators.</p>
2.4	Parents' involvement / participation	N/A
2.5	Roles of collaborator(s)	N/A

2.6 Implementation timeline

Implementation period (MM/YYYY)	Project activities
11/2020	Preparation: (1) drafting work plan and procuring teaching materials and references (2) hosting meetings with local teachers and the NET regarding practices, concerns and feasibility of the project – including sharing study materials regarding problem-based learning approach and e-learning trainings. Minor adjustments will be made accordingly.
11/2020	Students will be informed the learning topic (the first term project: endangered animals) They will then start forming groups
11/2020	1 st evaluation (informal) among all teachers involved regarding whether the project is run smoothly.
12/2020	In groups, students will report to the teachers regularly about their findings. Students will also discuss what their final products will be.
1/2020	All teachers to meet and discuss about the final products.
1/2020	In groups, students will be preparing for their final product. The product is a written piece of learning evidence (any text type) reflecting their learning and outlining their solution. Teachers will be preparing for the second term project including drafting work plan and procuring teaching materials and references
2/2021	In groups, students will be finalizing their final products and submitting it by the beginning of the second term. Teachers will be giving feedback to students after reviewing the final products.

2/2021	2 nd evaluation (formal) – a formal evaluation among all teachers involved regarding how the project is run in various classes. Adjustments will therefore be made accordingly during the second term.
2/2021	Students will be informed the learning topic (the second term project: the plastic problem)
2/2021-3/2021	Students will be forming groups. Reflecting on their learning experience in the first term, students will plan their second term investigation project.
3/2021	3 rd evaluation (informal) among all teachers involved regarding on whether the adjusted mode has well-suited the learners.
4/2021	In groups, students will be conducting their investigations while teachers will guide them through the investigations. Students will also discuss what their final products will be.
5/2021	In groups, students will be preparing for their final product.
6/2021	In groups, students will be finalizing their final products and submitting it by the end of the second term.
7/2021	Teachers will be giving feedback to students after reviewing the final products.
7/2021	4 th evaluation (formal) – a formal evaluation among all teachers involved regarding how the project is run and could be re-run next year. Good practices will be discussed and highlighted during the experience-sharing seminar with English teachers in our school.
7/2021	Hosting an experience-sharing seminar with English teachers in our school to encourage innovative elements in teaching and learning.
8/2021-9/2021	Based on the reflection of the project implementation and the experiences gained, the NET and the English panel head will draft and write up a new problem-based learning scheme for the new academic year.
9/2021	The NET and the English panel head will prepare the evaluation paper for the project.

2.7 Details of project activities

a. Student activity

Activity name	Content	Number of sessions and duration	Teachers' involvement and/or hired personnel	Expected learning outcomes
Problem-based learning projects (P.4)	In groups, students will first get used to the environment of self-directed learning. Students will familiarize themselves with the NET and the learning mode. Then, students will be presented with a topic followed by elementary skills required to conduct their own research on an assigned topic. Later, students will be divided into groups and will start investigating on the topic. Each teacher, including the LET, NET and the teacher assistant will be assigned to a different group. With the help of teachers, students will be given close monitoring and clear guidance on how to make progress with their research. Students will refine their research	One double lesson (35min per lesson) per week per class. Students are expected to complete the topic with a final product when the term ends.	Please refer to 2.3, 2.5 and 2.7b NET: The personnel will be teacher to conduct the lessons. a university degree holder and a native speaker in English with either: 1) at least 5 years of experience in teaching English as a foreign	Students will create a unique final product. Through the learning topic that builds up to the final product, Students are expected to acquire the essential research skills. During the process, students are expected to master their own projects, undergo investigations and gain hands-on experience in producing end products. Students are

	direction and to create a unique final product based on their research findings. (For details, refer to Appendix 2.)		language (TEFOL); or 2) has received tertiary level training in (TEFOL)	anticipated to have acquired problem-solving skills, e-learning skills on top of self-directed learning by the end of the year.
Problem-based learning projects (P.5)	In groups, students will conduct their own research on an assigned topic. During the beginning, students will be introduced to the topic. Later, students will be presented advanced e-learning skills required to conduct their own research on an assigned topic. Students are then divided into groups and will start investigating on the topic. Each teacher, including the LET, NET and the teacher assistant will be assigned to a different group. With the help of teachers, students will be given close monitoring and clear guidance on how to make progress with their research. Students will refine their research direction and to create a unique final product based on their research findings. (For details, refer to Appendix 2.)	One double lesson (35min per lesson) per week per class. Students are expected to complete the topic with a final product when the term ends.	Project Assistant: The personnel will assist with preparing materials required for lessons and will also guide students when required. He/She should be a university degree holder and is fluent in spoken English (Native speaker in English preferred.)	Example of final product and learning outcomes: Students create a game that educates people about endangered animals. As a part of the game design, students write up Q&A cards about various endangered animals. Students will also do a brief demonstration on how to play the game.

b. Teacher training

Activity name	Content	Number of sessions and duration	Hired personnel	Expected learning outcomes
An experience sharing seminar (for English teachers only)	Upon a successful implementation, an experience-sharing seminar will be organised for English teachers in our school to encourage innovative elements in teaching and learning. The seminar will include the implementation strategies, difficulties faced and future implementation possibilities and advice.	1 (30 min)	EPC	Teachers are expected to understand innovative teaching and learning approaches.

c. Equipment

	Details of equipment to be procured	Contribution to fulfilment of the project aim(s) and if applicable, the expected utilization rate
1	reference books will be purchased	they should be used in some lessons, and can be used by all English classes

d. Construction works: Not applicable

e. Features of the school-based curriculum to be developed: Not applicable

f. Other activities: Not applicable

2.8 Budget

Total Grant Sought: HK\$ 249,500

Budget Categories	Breakdown for the budget items		Justifications
	Item	Amount (HK\$)	
a. Staff	Employment of part-time NET (NET 1): \$30,165/2 x 10 months x 1.05 (MPF) = \$158,366	\$ 158,366	Salary is calculated from November to August. There will be seven English classes in total. The NET will work on a part-time basis. During work hours, the NET 1 is expected to conduct lessons, evaluate student work, prepare lesson-related materials and meet with EPC and local teachers for formal and informal meetings.
	Employment of part-time Project Assistant (NET preferred): \$14,500/2 x 10 months x 1.05 (MPF) = \$76,125	\$ 76,125	Salary is calculated from November to August. There will be seven English classes in total. He/She will work on a part-time basis. During work hours, the assistant is expected to assist with conducting lessons, help preparing lesson-related materials and meet with EPC and local teachers for formal and informal meetings.
b. Service	Not applicable		
c. Equipment	Reference books	\$3,000	Reference books will be used for students to do investigations.
	Bilingual learners' dictionary	\$2,000	Dictionaries will be purchased to assist in language learning
d. Works	Not applicable		
e. General expenses	Purchasing of teaching and learning materials (including those required to produce the final products)	\$5,009	Including coloured paper, sketchbooks, colouring pencils, markers
	Auditing	\$5,000	
f. Contingency	Not applicable		
Total Grant Sought (HK\$):		\$249,500	

3. Expected Project Outcomes

3.1	Deliverables / outcomes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Others Students will produce final products as evidence of learning based on their investigation interest.
3.2	Positive impact on quality education/ the school's development	Students should become more aware of various social/environmental issues and will have better critical-thinking and problem-solving skills

3.3 Evaluation

A. Student evaluation

1. Teachers' evaluation (individual evaluation)

The NET and LETs will discuss the performance of students during lesson including their group participation, class attentiveness, and individual participation in class. A completed evaluation form will be given to

students and will be signed by the parent.

2. Final product (group evaluation)

Students will be given verbal and written feedback upon the submission of the final product. They will be assessed on how well they have demonstrated their knowledge on their investigations.

3. Self evaluation

Through a simple self-evaluation form, students will reflect on their learning experience and comment on how they have shown effort in the project.

4. Students' performance (lesson observation):

80% of students can manage project on their own and show interest in the projects

B. Staff evaluation

P4 and P5 Local teachers and the English panel chair will evaluate the NET teacher's performance in teaching and managing the learning project as a whole.

C. Project evaluation

There will be an end-of-year written evaluation host by the P4 and P5 local teachers, English panel chair and the NET teacher to evaluate the overall success of the project. This will be written down and submitted as part of the end-of-year-report.

3.4 Sustainability of the project

Upon a successful implementation of the project, the school will use their own means to fund the expenses incurred to continue with the projects including the hiring of the NET.

3.5 Dissemination

Upon a successful implementation and positive outcomes, the department will be open for LSY teachers to work on the promotion of good practice of learning social/environmental issues.

4. Report Submission Deadline

Project Management		Financial Management	
Report type and covering period	Submission Date	Report type and covering period	Submission Date
Progress Report 01/11/2020 - 30/04/2021	31/05/2021	Interim Financial Report 01/11/2020 - 30/04/2021	31/05/2021
Final Project Report 01/11/2020 - 30/09/2021	31/12/2021	Final Financial Report 01/05/2021 - 30/09/2021	31/12/2021

Remarks

We acknowledge that:

1. the funding of the project is one-off. Any recurrent expenditure of the project will be borne by the school.
2. with the QEF Intellectual Property Rights Policy, the copyrights of the deliverables/materials lies with the QEF. Any production, adaptation, distribution, dissemination or making available of the deliverables to the public by the service provider(s) for commercial purposes is strictly prohibited.
3. our school should refer to the EDB Circular Memorandum No.16/2017 on the "Measures for Strengthening the Protection of Students: Appointment Matters of Schools" to make proper arrangement in our appointment procedures for the project staff to safeguard the well-being of students.

Appendix 1: Example learning plan of the project

1. Topic – endangered animals

A study of what endangered animals are and the problems associated with endangered animals.

2. Innovative teaching design

A creative school-based curriculum means that students investigate social issues by their own means. Students will be taught research skills and through the guide of the NET and local English teachers, students create their innovative solutions to solve problems and to understand the impacts the environmental problems bring to the world and the people.

3. Key learning areas

- The project taps into the four skills – speaking, listening, reading and writing. During the projects, students develop project communication skills through discussions with fellow students. They have to maintain effective communication with students in their group and their assigned English teacher so that the project is thoroughly discussed before it is proceeded to the next stage. Through the discussions, speaking and listening skills will be practiced
- Students also need to do the research through readings – including information that they find in the internet or information from books or ebooks.
- During the early phase, students will be given videos and songs relating to endangered animals, and it could enable students to hone their listening skills.
- During the final phase, students will be producing the final product which would inevitably incur a great deal of writing. For example, students who choose to create a game set that educates people about endangered animals will need to write up game cards and instructions about the game. Knowledge on the topic will also be manifested through the game cards.

4. Stages

An outline of the learning stages is listed below.

Activity name	Content	Teachers' involvement and/or hired personnel	Expected learning outcomes
Stage 1— introduction of learning topic	Students will be given the topic “endangered animals” and students will discuss about the topic using their existing knowledge.	NET will produce learning worksheets for students to track their learning.	Students will have an initial idea about what the project is.
Stage 2 – introduction of the core of the problem	Upon an initial understanding of the issue itself, through discussions and presentation of learning materials, students explore the impact of the problem, hence the core of the problem itself.	NET will prepare learning materials for students that help them understand the impact of the problem.	Students will have knowledge about the impact of the problem.
Stage 3 – students focusing on one area of research	By this stage, students will be ready to focus on one area of the problem (based on their own preference) and to do research based on that focused area	NET and LET will help students (in group) to focus on one area	Students will be have more sophisticated knowledge on the chosen area of research.
Stage 4 – introduction of how to do investigations	Students will also be shown how to do investigations on websites. For students who already have knowledge on this (P5 students), they revisit briefly on how to do investigations using online resources and will focus on how to refine investigation.	NET will produce teaching materials regarding the scanning of information.	Students will gain knowledge about how to do their own investigations.
Stage 5 – doing an active	During this stage, with interaction between teachers and students, students	NET and LETs will keep track of each	Students will be gathering some raw

investigation	should gain hands-on experience in doing investigations. They will record their findings on their notebooks either by drawing / jotting note, depending on the ability of the students.	groups status and will guide them through the process.	data that will be useful for the end product.
Stage 6 – producing final product	Students will initially be introduced to a number of available options on how to produce their final product. For example, students can use posters, comics, write stories, etc to reflect on their findings and their solution to the problems. Then, students (in groups) will produce the final products.	NET and LETs will continue to guide each group and give advice before each group come up with their unique solutions to the problems.	Students will be producing end products in groups.
Stage 7 – product presentation and evaluation	Upon completion, students will do a presentation and introduce the final products to the rest of the students in the class. After that, students will do an evaluation on the project.	NET and LETs will give both written and verbal comments on the final products.	Students will be able to do a presentation as a form of producing learning evidence.

Appendix 2: P4 & P5 learning activities

Please note that the difference in the curriculum of P4 and P5 lies in the depth of the topic, rather than in terms of language acquisition. The emphasis of the project is more on **using** English and the acquisition of English through self-directed learning. Of course, a vast amount of vocabulary items will be introduced during the process, but grammar items and drilling will not be the main focus here and will be covered in the general English programme.

	P4	P5
	In groups, students will first get used to the environment of self-directed learning. Students will familiarize themselves with the NET and the learning mode. Then, students will be presented with a topic followed by elementary skills required to conduct their own research on an assigned topic. Later, students will be divided into groups and will start investigating on the topic. Each teacher, including the LET, NET and the teacher assistance will be assigned to a different group. With the help of teachers, students will be given close monitoring and clear guidance on how to make progress with their research. Students will refine their research direction and to create a unique final product based on their research findings.	In groups, students will conduct their own research on an assigned topic. During the beginning, students will be introduced to the topic. Later, students will be presented advanced e-learning skills required to conduct their own research on an assigned topic. Students are then divided into groups and will start investigating on the topic. Each teacher, including the LET, NET and the teacher assistant will be assigned to a different group. With the help of teachers, students will be given close monitoring and clear guidance on how to make progress with their research. Students will refine their research direction and to create a unique final product based on their research findings.
Curriculum:	<u>1st term</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to problem-based learning and self-directed learning • Introduction to endangered animals 	<u>1st term</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to endangered animals • Primary & secondary threats to animals (e.g. the chain reaction caused by one threat to another) • How endangered animals can impact the

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary threats to animals (e.g. deforestation, climate change) <p><u>2nd term</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to plastic (e.g. single-use plastic, kinds of plastic) • Plastic alternatives • Company policies relating to the single-use plastic • How plastic affect the local neighbourhood (e.g. ocean in Sai Kung, landfill in TKO) 	<p>food chain and cause a problem on the whole</p> <p><u>2nd term</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to plastic (e.g. single-use plastic, kinds of plastic) • Plastic alternatives • Company policies relating to the single-use plastic • Global Government policies on single-use plastic • Debatable issues with using plastics (e.g. habits, environmental responsibilities of companies) • How plastic affect the local neighbourhood and the planet
Working mode	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • students will be divided into groups and will investigate the topic with the help of LET and NET 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • students will be divided into groups and will investigate the topic with the help of LET and NET
Skills set: (E-learning / self-directed learning skills)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elementary e-learning skills e.g. introduction to search key words, reading search results • Retrieving information through books • How to use a dictionary and online dictionary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced e-learning skills e.g. refining and manipulating search key words, filtering search results • Presentation PowerPoint presentation creation skills • Presentation skills
Final product	Final product with optional presentation	Final product with compulsory presentation