



04 THE INTERPRETATION OF TREASURING

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Some photos are provided by the interviewees



OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE IN ASPECTS OF WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH

- SCHOOL CULTURE AND ETHOS
- SCHOOL PREMISES AND RESOURCES MANAGEMENT
- MANAGEMENT LEVEL MONITORING AND EVALUATION
- LEARNING AND TEACHING

Promoting environmental protection at schools is often “student-focused”, but when it comes to resource consumption in a school campus, how can we let students be the only responsible ones? Headmaster of Chung Sing School, Mr. Wong Yuk Lun, understood it well. Ten years ago, he has already reviewed the consumption of paper in school and persuaded teachers to use less indentation and line spacing when setting examination papers. With the whole school approach also in place, the consumption of paper has declined by 30%. The outcome is very encouraging. However, Mr. Wong believed educating students to protect the environment should not be limited to using less paper or saving electricity but also to treasure what we have, including family. “Sustainable development means treasuring. It’s an attribute of personal growth.”

Just like other schools that values environmental education, Chung Sing School has taken different measures to reduce waste and to save energy. These includes turning on the air conditioning only when temperature is over 25.5 degree Celsius; turning off all lights for 15 minutes during break time; using only half piece of the tissues each time in classrooms. In terms of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), school has installed a food waste processor. They have also built an aquaponics system and have been promoting horticulture in campus. In terms of learning and teaching, the school has been developing interdisciplinary environmental education. Students have a lot of learning opportunities through participating in outdoor visits organised by WWF to learn about environmental conservation and recycling. All these measures taken in Chung Sing School are worth referencing. In addition, it is also the headmaster’s hope that teachers can contribute to the movement in their daily teaching.

USING LESS INDENTATION AND LINE SPACING WHEN SETTING EXAMINATION PAPER

“Take setting worksheets as an example, when I first saw colleagues using a lot of line spacing on a single page, I thought if they used less indentation and spacing, there could be one page instead of two.” Mr. Wong is very specific with details. Not long did the school take measures to remind teachers to use less indentation and line spacing when setting exam papers, exercises, school announcements and internal documents, and to use as least paper as possible.

Nevertheless, Mr. Wong knew that successful management does not rely on authority. It is also not feasible to convince teachers by only telling them the good of environmental protection. He believed teachers needed to consider the reality too. “We have to associate the ideal with the reality, if I only focus on the prospects, they wouldn’t feel the imminent need to act, but if I put it in terms of school resources, such as budget control for daily expenses and electricity. They know we will all suffer if we overspend.” Teachers recognised headmaster’s good intentions and have been very supportive and are already accustomed to the measures. For the past 10 years, the consumption of paper at school has declined by 30%.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IS MORE THAN TREASURING RESOURCES

Although Wong has developed his own view during the twenty years of being the headmaster, what he valued more is the meaning behind promoting environmental education and how students could attain personal growth throughout the process. “We used to call it environmental protection, now we call it sustainable development. The words are different but they all refer to ‘treasuring’. It’s not only about treasuring water, energy or paper, but also relationships with families and friends. There can be different interpretations,” said Wong.

Children nowadays are living an abundant life. They might not know what treasuring really means. On one hand, Mr. Wong wished students to attain personal growth throughout the process. On the other hand, he thought it is a way to engage parents into the conversation of environmental protection. “If we want to promote environmental education to a community-level especially to parents, it helps them to understand the concept if we speak their language and put it this way.”

TEACHERS GOING THROUGH THE EXPLORING STAGE

Senior teacher, Ms. Kwok Wing Yee, nodded in agreement with Mr. Wong’s comments. She is responsible for promoting environmental education, designing interdisciplinary curriculum, organising workshops and extra-curricular activities in school. As Mr. Wong said, promoting environmental protection is like facing challenges after challenges. He might have convinced the teachers but there was no referencing from predecessors. Hence, Ms. Kwok started exploring on her own years ago. She began looking for information on Internet and took reference of activities from other schools. She would take pictures of community activities she saw on street, collect ideas pieces by pieces to enrich her own experience.

Luckily, Chung Sing School has become partner school of the One Planet Education Programme by WWF a few years ago. Ms. Kwok could make use of the teaching packages provided by WWF and planned her teaching easily. Yet, it was the professional development training for teachers by WWF that she found most helpful as she could learn about latest and reliable information of environmental issues as well as the local and global pace of environmental education. She described the training had given her confidence and it is exceptionally great for her as a teacher to gain from the programme.

