



Child Development and Assessment Centre 兒童發展及評估中心

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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Support for the continuation of the *Sign Bilingualism and Co-enrolment in Deaf Education Programme*

I am writing with great pleasure in support of the **Sign Bilingualism and Co-enrolment in Deaf Education Programme** (SLCO) developed by the Centre for Sign Linguistics and Deaf Studies, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, directed by Professor Gladys Tang and her team, and supported by The Hong Kong Jockey Club.

As the coordinator, and later the head of the Hearing Impairment Subspecialty Team of Child Assessment Service, Department of Health, I first met Professor Tang many years ago in the Ascertainment Committee meeting hosted by the Audiology Service, Education Bureau. Every year students with hearing impairment were assessed and prepared for promotion to primary school. Child Assessment Service helped out in providing multidisciplinary assessment and reports. Special and difficult students were brought up and discussed in the Ascertainment Committee meeting that composed of various representatives in the field. Professor Tang impressed me by her professional knowledge and enthusiasm in deaf education.

More collaboration was established after our first acquaintance. We send out team members in sitting in Professor Tang's lectures. Professor Tang's team was also invited to give training for staff in the Child Assessment Service and presented in the bi-monthly scientific meeting hosted by the Hong Kong Society of Child Neurology and Developmental Paediatrics. Through these well received inter-changes, we learn more about the theoretical basis and scientific evidence of sign linguistics and its importance in overall development of a student with hearing impairment.

Our relationship not just limited to academic exchange. The Child Assessment Service had the honor to be part of the Territory-wide research in studying the current situation of hearing impaired student in local primary and secondary schools. Moreover, on top of the above research data, we further developed the study on Multi-dimensional profile of primary school students with significant hearing loss, aimed at a closer look on their performance in various developmental aspects and their related factors.

Comment on the usefulness of a programme cannot be made without referring to their outcome. As an Honorary Consultant of the Hong Kong Parent Association for the Hearing Impaired, I can give testimonials on the growth and development of students studying under the SLCO programme. Not just on the rapid acquisition of both signed and verbal languages and reading abilities, but their lovely smiles and self-confidences proved the success of this bilingual education. Parents in this programme always give very positive comments. Without trace of commercial element, they tried every opportunity in introducing their peers about what they have gained from the programme.

In the recent anniversary school performance of KBSJB Primary School, I believed that all audiences were touched by the power of 'inclusive education', not just by the smoothness of four-language performances but the atmosphere of whole school commitment with real inclusion. Deaf education in Hong Kong had a long history but yet students were challenged badly and outcomes were mostly discouraging. The SLCO programme at KBSJB Primary School is a revolutionary exemplar; I saw the light for students and their family with hearing impairment.

It is much delighted to witness the gestation and delivery of the Sign Bilingualism and Co-enrolment in Deaf Education Programme. The programme is deeply deserving of further and continuous support from the Hong Kong Government and other funding bodies. I sincerely hope that the SLCO Programme will continue to thrive to help children and their families with hearing impairment, to bring communities together, and to make Hong Kong a better place for all.

Thank you for your attention. Please do not hesitate to contact me for any further information.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sylvia Doo', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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