

A5	Implementation Note for School A (extract)
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The following are the personal reflections and observations of the researcher based on the feedback of key persons and departments during the implementation of the Personal Growth Education (PGE) in School A. First, the following table includes some key information about School A from 2002-2004.

Items	Situation and Status in School A during from 2002-2004
1. History	Over 20 years (combination of AM and PM sessions)
2. Reputation in the district	Good
3. Students' performance	Fair
4. Parents' score	High in the district
5. No. of students	Stable
6. Principal	Authoritarian and strategic, planned and reformed the school with passion, lack of thorough discussions and consultations with the middle managers, seldom offered support to student guidance development.
7. Deputy principals	Insensitive and independent. They were keen to improve the learning atmosphere and developed a comprehensive learning climate with the curriculum coordinator. They responded to crisis quickly. Their leading style is directive and comparatively rigid.
8. Middle Managers	Most are good, creative, mature, independent, and experienced, but not used to collaborating and communicating frankly. Then power struggles accumulated.
9. Teachers	Most of them were good, obedient, and responsive; they worked under high pressure, but still with passion. They were tolerant and critical in some situations. They knew the direction of schools and worked hard to keep their jobs. They got used to the top-down model, and felt uneasy because of the additional workload. Their teaching methods were quite traditional. Some are not skillful at handling and understanding the underlined problems of students.
10. Students	Progressive, good, obedient, and genuine. Most of them were weak in social skills and lower in self-esteem, with poor family backgrounds and inadequate support.
11. Parents	Obedient, frank, and grass-roots level, with low expectations. Not demanding.
12. Curriculum Development	It was chaotic and directionless in 2002-2004.
13. Discipline and Guidance	DM was a tough administrator. Discipline was well developed and guidance was in progress because principal emphasized discipline. DM was tough with passion. D&G team was set up and shared some of the discipline work. Quality of D&G team members varied. The guidance and counselling training for teachers were not adequate. Teachers were not

Items	Situation and Status in School A during from 2002-2004
	clear about SGT's work
14. MCE development	It was being developed with shared responsibility with the middle managers. Lack of overall development plan in value and life education.
15. RS development	Weak (in reforming), underdeveloped.
16. GS development	Busy and independent.
17. Atmosphere and workload	The school faced the crisis of declining birth rate, colleagues were sensitive to this and worked hard. It followed the policies from the EMB seriously, so everything was undergoing and the internal pressure was great. Because of the lack of collaboration and in-depth communication, intangible fragmentation and isolation were obvious. Everyone worked hard but ignored holistic development, which resulted in overlapping and wasting of time and resources.
18. Comment from ESR	It pointed out the problems of internal fragmentation, isolation, programmes overlapping, and lack of policy to accommodate individual differences.
19. Major problems found	Communication and collaboration

The development stages of PGE in School A

Stage I 2001-2002 Introduction and Preparation of PGE

Stage II 2002-2003 PGE Development (Learning Area: Academic Development) and Staff Development (I)

Stage III 2003-2004 PGE Development (Learning Areas: Personal and Social Development) and Staff Development (II)

Stage IV 2004-2005 PGE Development (All Learning Areas) with Revised Strategies

The Observation Summary about the Principals, Middle Managers, and Teachers in Schools A (extract)

Principal

Stage I 2001-2002 Introduction and Preparation of PGE

- The principal's priority for counselling and guidance in school was actually low. I feel that she knew it is as important as discipline; however, she had no idea about what was going on, including the new policy, or about a comprehensive approach or the spirit and rationale of the whole-school approach. Thus, it was difficult for her to accept novel ideas quickly. She had no idea how to set up or restructure the D&G team. After that, it seemed she was forced by sponsoring body, EMB, or ESR; she then found that it was a must to set up the D&G team. However, there was no further input to facilitate the team operation: I (the researcher) did all of it with some help from the DM. I remember that after the team was renamed and restructured, she never attended any meetings to understand our work, difficulties, and the workload. Hence, the D&G team got the least manpower and resources. About PGE, she had no idea how to insert this 'monster' into the regular curriculum. She said to me, "The PGE is your business: if you want to implement this programme, ask other colleagues."

Stage II 2002-2003 PGE Development (Learning Area: Academic Development) and Staff Development (I)

- Starting from 2002-2003, the Comprehensive Student Guidance System (CSGS) and the curriculum reform began at the same time. In our school, we also had our 20th anniversary and other large programmes like Campus TV. Then SARE happened, so the principal's focus shifted to the outlook and packaging of the school. Almost no additional resources were provided for the CSGS. What she emphasized were Campus TV and all kinds of activities related to the 20th anniversary.

Stage III 2003-2004 Staff Development (II) and PGE (Develop 3/4 of the Whole Curriculum)

- Finally, she found that the D&G Team and PGE must be done, so she verbally showed support in the general meetings after the summer holidays in 2003. This was the first time I got verbal support from the principal. However, when I asked for a time slot to prepare the PGE with the team members, she said "No!" because it should not be part of the curriculum reform. This news upset the enthusiastic teachers in the D&G team.

The Deputy Principals

Stage I 2001-2002 Introduction and Preparation of PGE

- Their attitudes towards the PGE were ambiguous: one of them always thought that it was my preference to do it; they had no ideas and did not spend time understanding the new guidance policy. Another one was passive; she just kept silent and observed what would be going on, with no comment or support given.
- In one general meeting, when I started the presentation on new guidance policy and the PGE, they left the conference room for another meeting; I gave them the CD (made by the SGT) for reference. How much they understood about the new guidance and PGE was not known.

Stage II 2002-2003 PGE Development (Learning Area: Academic Development) and Staff Development (I)

- After a period of time, I found out that they did not watch the CD until they were told it was a compulsory policy.

Stage III 2003-2004 Staff Development (II) and PGE (Develop 3/4 of the Whole Curriculum)

- One DP (B) showed interest in the PGE in 2003 to 2004, when she found that some of the topics are coherent with those in RE (she was a new Catholic and felt interested in RE and the PGE). In addition, the Curriculum Coordinator (the deputy panel head of RE) also showed interest in the integration of RE and the PGE.

Curriculum Coordinator (CC)

At the beginning, there was no policy, no long-term development plan (not known by the staff), no regular meetings for panel heads, and no team for curriculum development. Every subject panel head did it all on his or her own. Sharing and communication about curriculum development in School A was almost zero except for Chinese, which was led by the EMB.

Stage I 2001-2002 Introduction and Preparation of PGE

- At the very beginning, I gained the CC's support for the PGE; he preliminarily agreed that the PGE

should be implemented. Then I wrote up the proposal of the implementation strategy and asked for his comment, but got no feedback at all.

Stage II 2002-2003 PGE Development (Learning Area: Academic Development) and Staff Development (I)

- Since 2002, he showed no concern about the PGE, except the Cross-disciplinary Week. He asked me (SGT) to help the project by designing activities with elements of the PGE. Consequently, I designed a special PGE lesson for the Cross-disciplinary Week. The feedback was excellent. However, owing to the poor coordination between the subjects, activities of the project were not closely linked; it also reflected the poor facilitation and communication skills of the CC.

Moral and Civil Education Coordinator / General Studies Panel Head

Stage I 2001-2002 Introduction and Preparation of PGE

- In School A, a middle manager fulfilled the dual role of MCE Coordinator and GS Panel Head. At the very beginning, she was willing to join in and help with the PGE. Then I started to draft the implementation plan and consulted her about her ideas, but she had no ideas for the planning.

Stage II 2002-2003 PGE Development (Learning Area: Academic Development) and Staff Development (I)

- She was helpful about allowing time in the MCE lessons for the PGE. With an appropriate time slot, the PGE could be implemented smoothly.

Stage III 2003-2004 Staff Development (II) and PGE ((Develop 3/4 of the Whole Curriculum)

- At the second stage, 2003 to 2004, I invited her to be involved in the PGE. She then attended a preparation meeting about the PGE, at which the D&G team selected the related lesson plans from the pool of the PGE. However, the apparent coherent topics were rare—just three. At that time, she was not happy about it: she then became passive, giving me no feedback about the lesson plans and no follow-up. One year later, there was still no integration of the PGE and GS. The previous involvement of this panel head was actually vocal rather than practical.

Discipline Master (DM) and the Discipline and Guidance Team

Stage I 2001-2002 Introduction and Preparation of PGE

The Discipline Master was informed about the implementation of the PGE. She had no idea about it, but she supported the new policy because it was directly related to the business of discipline control of the whole school.

Stage II 2002-2003 PGE Development (Learning Area: Academic Development) and Staff Development (I)

- She had supported the implementation and gave her most sincere advice during the whole process. She alerted me about the capabilities of colleagues and the workload they could bear. Most of the time, she advised me.
- She told me what I should do myself.
- She told me what could be tried by the team member and the class teachers.

Stage III 2003-2004 Staff Development (II) and PGE (Develop 3/4 of the Whole Curriculum)

- She advised me of who were capable of being leaders or followers: she was experienced enough to gauge the strengths of the staff.
- She helped me solve some administrative problems during the whole process. I remember that the team members were asked to read the materials of the PGE and then design debriefing questions. All team members finished their job, except one pair, who handed in their job late and then complained about their work being totally corrected by me. Indeed, they did nothing with the assigned work, but my corrections met the requirements. After that, they started to gossip about how I caused chaos about the PGE with the other colleagues, especially those in charge of Moral and Civil Education.
- Among the Discipline and Guidance Team, members who are very willing to help are rare: their mindset stayed in the stage of the Discipline Team and they were preoccupied with jobs like recording, credit taking, punishment, warning, etc. They are quite reluctant to add the guidance job to their other duties such as teacher development, the PGE and counselling of students.
- Luckily and unluckily, a few of my team members showed great interest in the PGE, so they tried their best to restructure the lessons and write the debriefing questions. Others helped in the quality-touching work.

Religious Education

Stage III 2003-2004 Staff Development (II) and PGE (Develop 3/4 of the Whole Curriculum)

- At stage III, the Panel Head was invited to consider the collaboration of RE and the PGE, but she did not intend to discuss the matter with her team members, made no reference to the curriculum, and just told me the number of lessons she thought was all right for the PGE.
- I felt her quick decision was so odd. I tried to sit in on their subject meeting and announced the possibility of the collaboration, but there was no particular feedback at that time. Later on, I found that this leader made things messy in her subject meeting. Very often, decisions were difficult to make.

Teacher training

Stage II 2002-2003 PGE Development (Learning Area: Academic Development) and Staff Development (I)

An NGO was invited to train the teachers by introducing them to what the PGE is and the debriefing skills with live demonstrations and practice. The feedback was good, as all staff enjoyed it so much. At the same time, I showed the relevant teaching materials to them and let them get a general idea about what the PGE is.

Stage III 2003-2004 Staff Development (II) and PGE (Develop 3/4 of the Whole Curriculum)

- At the beginning of this year, I fought for a self-review training workshop (for personal growth purposes) from the principal: the process was harsh and very difficult. Luckily, I got the principal's support and peer help from three other SGTs along with our tutor from the EMB. The whole workshop was mainly designed by me and was refined by my friends. It aimed at introducing the spirit of the PGE and getting all staff to deeply feel the power of the PGE, and to reflect on their lives and personal growth. The workshop was very successful. Although the message of the PGE was not brought out obviously, at least it let the colleagues have chances to share with each other and enhance their

friendships.

- Meanwhile, I found that some colleagues needed to be further followed about their emotions and their lives, and it is also an important target when the PGE is carried out in the classrooms. Teachers must be alert to the performance of different students and give appropriate guidance to the children.

Stage IV 2004-2005 PGE Development (All Learning Areas) with Revised Strategies

Another new programme, UAP started, with ongoing training given to teachers. Moreover, the SGP and the EP helped the class teachers by collaborative teaching. More social workers will be invited in the second semester to help the PGE lessons.

Curriculum design and teacher involvement (refer to the table and the timeline)

Stage I 2001-2002 Introduction and Preparation of PGE

- I tried to find out what was available to help the curriculum design. At that time, appropriate materials were quite limited. The EMB's material is simple, unattractive, and outdated.

Stage II 2002-2003 PGE Development (Learning Area: Academic Development) and Staff Development (I)

- I started to write the curriculum myself.
- Initially, some SGTs wanted set up a team to design the programme together, but the collaboration failed for a lot of reasons. Mainly, some wanted to be school-based, some had other big projects to take on, and some wanted to take, but not give, in the process. After a period of time, because of the heavy workload, we just worked out a framework.
- Another important reason was that more and more teaching materials were produced by different organizations such as *The Happy Classroom* (published by Hong Kong Playground Association), *Growing Express* 成長列車, *Love and Life* 愛與生命 (published by Hong Kong Catholic Education Development Committee), and *生活事件簿* *Life Events* (produced by Baptist Oi Kwan Social Service).
- At this stage, I was designing the Academic Development part, which involves three parts: study skills and learning attitude, school success, and pleasant school life. I was greatly interested in the part of study skills because I found that all teachers, students, and even the parents, were thirsty for these. I believe if they have the right skills, it will enhance their interest and happiness in studying, and further improve other elements like learning attitude, school success, and a pleasant school life. Actually, learning problems cannot be solved by one or two activities; I would rather input more learning and thinking skills training for them.

Stage III 2003-2004 Staff Development (II) and PGE (Develop 3/4 of the Whole Curriculum)

- This year, I tried very hard to produce the school-based curriculum. I also asked my colleagues to read the material. To choose the appropriate activity for the PGE, I asked them to write a lesson plan. This tactic failed although the whole summer holidays were devoted to them. I provided them reference material and CDs for their reference. After the summer holidays, just a few lesson plans had been finished. Even in my small group, they refused to attend the meeting and wanted to delay the work day after day. Worst still, when the principal asked me how the PGE was going, she showed no support but laughed at me: "Nobody was willing to do your work in the summer holidays". I was disappointed for

being teased by the school head.

- Before the second term, I asked the D&G team to select the teaching materials and write questions for debriefing. The principal started to support PGE development at that moment.

Stage IV 2004-2005 PGE Development (All Learning Areas) with Revised Strategies

- Before the summer holiday, the EMB announced another big project, UAP which provides the PGE curriculum for the upper form students (P4-P6), along with a whole series of group counselling, teacher training, and parent education programmes. However, we had spent over the past two years preparing our own PGE.

Teaching and Lesson Observation

Stage II 2002-2003 PGE Development (Learning Area: Academic Development) and Staff Development (I)

- At this stage, I entered the classroom and demonstrated the PGE to the class teachers by using the tutorial lessons. The lesson was taped and made into a VCD to let other class teachers to refer to it and teach their own class in moral and civil lessons.
- With my observations, some teachers ignored the PGE and continued their class events, doing corrections and assignments. Some used only 15 minutes to finish a PGE lesson. Some good teachers prepared the lesson fully. Unfortunately, some did not read the teaching material, some read the lesson plans in front of the students, and made a mess of the activities or ended without conclusion. After the lessons, some students reflected PGE lesson was fun, they learned some skills with teachers and schoolmates. However, one student told me, “The teacher did not know how to teach, so the lesson was boring!”
- Then SARS came and spoiled everything. I used the long “holidays” during SARS to tape the demonstration lessons; just a few teachers borrowed the VCDs. I also put a lot of PGE material in the staff room for teachers’ reference. How much they cared, I did not know.

Stage III 2003-2004 Staff Development (II) and PGE (Develop 3/4 of the Whole Curriculum)

- This year, there were no more demonstrations. I discussed the lesson plan with the level coordinators before the lesson about the design and the activities. The resistance of teachers to PGE was lessened. I simplified the evaluation form, but I taped some of their PGE lessons to share at the final meeting. They were happy to be appreciated.
- The principal became positive about the PGE and helped in the patrolling. This made the teachers behave more seriously about conducting PGE lessons.
- Teachers became mature and familiar with the PGE material; some teachers still muddled through, some taught selectively, and some worked well with the students. It made me think about whether we should select appropriate teachers to teach the PGE. Otherwise, students would not get the maximum benefit from the lessons. Moreover, some young teachers were inexperienced in teaching sensitive topics, like sex. When the students were in high spirits, some found it difficult to control the class.

Some snapshots to note from 2002-2004:

2002-2003

- MCE coordinator: What, is it possible to input the PGE into the timetable? We have had the

personal growth elements in the mass MCE lessons in Hall!

- MCE coordinator (in a quick meeting): Everybody [all middle managers], I have set the topics for MCE this year, please group yourselves and be responsible for the area I designed. If there are no problems, dismissed!
- Teacher X: What stuff is it [PGE lesson plan]? It is deadly complex! Just give us more troubles! Do you know how busy we are to prepare the lessons? Miss Wong!
- CC of School A: I support you about the PGE, as it is important for the children. (vocally)

2003-2004

- Principal A: Everyone, please listen! The PGE is a compulsory policy from the EMB, so we must do it; please follow what Miss Wong arranges for you! [Principal A also patrolled to ensure PGE lessons were taught at the definite time.]
- Principal A: Miss Wong, I am sorry to tell you that what you plan and think is always in advance of others, they are lagging behind you. I hope you understand this.
- Teacher Y: I like your training workshop so much; I feel love from my colleagues.
- Teacher X: Sorry to hear you are going to leave us; thanks for your contribution here. Come back to visit us if you have time.

Summary of the Strategies Used for PGE Development in School A and the Outcomes

Strategy(2002-2005)	Outcomes
Introduction	
Lobby management	Yes (through meetings)
Lobby all staff	Yes (through meetings)
Involvement of different people	
Support from Principal	None and ignored
Support from Deputy Principal	None and kept silent
Support from Discipline Master	Yes and helped lobby all staff and the D&G team members; helped in the preparation stage and also teaching stage.
Support from Discipline and Guidance Team	Showed difficulties in helping with the preparation of the lesson plans, refused to hold the collaborative preparation meeting, but helped select the teaching materials already prepared by the SGT.
Support from Curriculum Coordinator	Verbally concerned and asked SGT to help the Cross-disciplinary Learning Week.
Support from MCE coordinator	Yes and allocated the PGE to the MCE timetable; let all classes take turns having PGE and MCE lessons.
Support from IT department	Yes
Help from NGO	Yes and mainly asked for their help in teacher training.
Help from Educational Psychologist	None

Strategy(2002-2005)	Outcomes
Extra Manpower rendered (such as the PGE team)	Not allowed
Financial Support	None
Teacher Training	It was done by SGT, NGO, EDB, and other SGTs in workshops (pedagogy and person growth), demonstrations with video tapes for reference, and co-teaching.
Curriculum Development	
Pilot stage	Started from Academic Development area of the PGE; however, this got the whole school involved, so the impact was greater.
Curriculum Design	Done by SGT
Selection of teaching materials	Done by D&G group
Modification of lesson plans by teachers	Part of the D&G refused to do it and handed in 'copied' work.
Collaborative planning meeting	Not allowed
Collaborative teaching	Not allowed
Evaluation meetings	Time was not allowed
Evaluation in words and forms	Done
Use of textbooks	It was considered in 2006.
Taught by class teachers	Partly taught by other senior teachers
12 lessons achieved?	Yes before, down to 4-5 lessons in 2005
Student profiles	Not done yet
Involved parent education	Not yet
Integration	
Integration with GS, RE and MCE	Failed
Integration with other subjects	None

Reflection with the experience in School A

- At the booming time of curriculum reform, the success of the PGE was not predicted.
- Principal's support is very important. Otherwise, SGTs should not go ahead with it.
- The support from the EMB was inadequate and unpredictable at the beginning.
- Teaching kits then appeared in the market after 2 to 3 years, which shows the importance of 'Wait! Don't rush!!'
- There was an over-estimation of the enthusiasm, leadership, professional ability, collaboration ability, understanding, and perception toward personal growth of teachers and the recognition of Discipline Master, though WSA for guidance had been implemented for years.
- Guidance and counselling skills of teachers were seriously inadequate.
- More alternatives for implementation of the PGE should be considered in open discussion.
- Curriculum Coordinator was passive and offered no help unexpectedly.