

Towards a Learning Society in Thailand



DEVELOPING 21ST CENTURY SKILLS



Ministry of Education

21ST CENTURY LEARNING NEEDS

The demands of the global knowledge economy and the rapid utilisation of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) across all walks of life have placed new demands on knowledge seekers and education systems. The 21st Century learners will need to be equipped with a portfolio of skills and tools that will enable them to effectively meet and respond flexibly to the needs of the modern world and workplace.

The reorientation of Thailand's education reforms for a learning society have sought to foster new learning outcomes for its learners and knowledge seekers. The aim has been to equip learners with the tools and skills that will enable them to embrace the global workplace whilst also retaining a strong sense of their national identity and values. This has created a focus on developing a new learning culture as well as nurturing the traditional goals of academic knowledge acquisition.

A core part of the transformation of learning for new outcomes and skills development will be the promotion of the student voice in the learning process as well as harnessing the new demands and opportunities presented by ICT for the personalisation of learning.



Quick Facts

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| ◆ In 2006, 23 students were selected from 32,000 students to represent Thailand at the International Science, Chemistry, Mathematics, and Biology Olympiad. Thai students won a total of 21 medals including 7 gold medals, three of which were in Biology. | ◆ There are over 800,000 students in lab schools nationally (16% increase) reflecting the attraction of these schools which are pioneering new ways of teaching and learning. In 2005, 41% of students passed increased in passing the entrance examination to study at Thai universities. |
| ◆ 715 students will be selected for the One District One Scholarship Programme in 2007 to study for undergraduate studies at leading universities nationally and abroad. | ◆ 10% of students in Key Stage 1 (Primary 1-3) have numeracy and literacy problems and strategies for brain based learning and the promotion of thinking skills aim to address this situation. |
| ◆ Between 2007-2011, the Ministry of Education will focus on developing thinking skills for over 2,000,000 students across 2,000 schools. 250 schools will be piloted in the first phase to develop the thinking skills model and in the second phase 1,750 schools will use the model to improve students' thinking. | ◆ The Software and Investment Promotion Agency (SIPA) is responsible for producing 5,000 software engineers and software architects by 2010. To date, it has supported the training and development of 1,000 animators working closely with education providers and the private sector. |

THE 21ST CENTURY THAI LEARNER

The desired attributes for the 21st Century Thai Learner can be distilled into 8 mutually reinforcing characteristics and their development has been led by the Ministry of Education through its teaching and learning reforms. These are highlighted below along with case studies from leading edge initiatives throughout the country in the subsequent pages of this publication.



8. World Awareness - Awareness of the culture and languages of the world will enable students to work effectively in the global economy as well as promote a greater understanding of Thailand around the world.



1. Creativity and Innovation - Fostering student innovation and creativity are seen as essential for Thailand's long term competitiveness in all sectors including science and technology and the development of creative industries.



2. Leadership - Taking responsibility and initiative is seen as a key area for student development. This will enable them to make effective contributions to their local communities and the modern workplace.



7. Thai Values and Morals - Nurturing and developing a strong set of Thai and moral values is important given the threats placed by Globalisation on national language and identity.



3. Teamworking - An ability to work in teams and to adopt different roles and make contributions towards a common goal is a crucial skill for the modern workplace and society.



6. 21st century specialist skills - The modern knowledge economy and the use of ICT's has created new services and industries which require specialist skills and support.



5. Critical and analytical thinking - The development of processes of enquiry and an ability to explore issues and develop solutions are key competencies required in all workplaces and will underpin long-run national research and development.



4. Thinking as skill - Developing thinking as a skill has been a key way to encourage a move away from rote learning and the limitations this has for student development.

CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION

Buddhajakwittaya School is one of the 14 model ICT schools where ICT enabled lessons have helped encourage student creativity through online collaborative projects shaped by student interests. These initiatives have empowered students to develop and plan their ideas and then express them creatively through new multi-media programmes. Such a process has stimulated creativity and its expression through the development of specific ICT skills in animation and graphic design.



Baan Sankamphaeng School is a primary school in Chiang Mai using Constructionist methods in teaching and learning since 1998. Students apply their knowledge via projects (learning by doing). Teachers in the school have adopted a new approach focusing on learning outcomes and listening to the student voice. After the introduction of a set topic students plan their projects and are encouraged to creatively express their ideas with their peers for shared learning.



LEADERSHIP



Ratwitnit Bangkaew School was one of the initial pilot schools in the Dreams and Teams Programme which developed leadership skills amongst M4-M6 students. The programme has involved training students in the organisation of sport festivals for primary age students in their communities. Students have been given responsibility to lead and take on different tasks that include event management, safety, public relations and budget management without the direct assistance of teachers.



Satriwittaya School has focused on student leadership development in their strategic plan. The school provides leadership training for classroom student heads and heads of activities clubs. Representatives from all classes are members of a school parliament some of whom are then elected to a Student Council. The Council proposes ideas to the school's management team as well running a budget for student activity clubs.

THINKING AS A SKILL

Thairath Wittaya 75 School aims to foster learners in becoming more effective thinkers by linking all activities to thinking processes. The school has set curriculum that supports thinking skills development according to the individual learner covering Kindergarten 1 to Prathom 6 levels. Techniques such as Mind Mapping are used with Prathom 2 students. Every week all students have one-hour, non-graded, classes on thinking skills development in line with their interests.



Prathomthammasart School involves thinking skills development in all its activities. Students learn different thinking concepts: basic thinking, clear thinking, and analytical thinking. They will then use the concept of thinking to create work for presentation to their teachers and friends. As a result, students have become more confident and have taken greater pride from their learning. External assessments have deemed the thinking ability of students as excellent.



TEAMWORKING



Sripreuktha School in Bangkok runs an annual three-day teamworking camp for representatives of each class. Outside experts are invited to train students on how to organise activities, games, public speaking and how to work as a team. These students then help lead and participate in teams to undertake school activities throughout the year such as morning assembly, sport days, and ceremonies for special days (e.g. King and Queen's birthday as well as Buddhist holidays).



Chalermprakiat Somdej Phra Srinakarin School in Phuket works closely with its students, parents and local communities to inform learning activities. Every month the Parent's network will have a meeting in school to help support the development of learning and behavioural goals. All resulting activities are undertaken by teams of students. The aim is for students to learn how to seek support from one another, value each other and to work towards a common goal.

ANALYTICAL THINKING AND PROBLEM SOLVING

Wat Nong Moo School in Nakornsawan province is a small primary school with only 80 students and 7 teachers and is the location for a pilot project to develop analytical thinking and problem solving skills through real life case studies of relevance to the local community. For example, the over-use of insecticides in local agriculture were examined through a bio-chemical project. Parents and farmers were invited into school to see alternative approaches to local land-use devised by students.



Anubanphibunwes School is using brain based learning approaches with their students. Teachers observe students' learning behaviour to see how well they learn and then provide the appropriate learning activities for each student. Changes in the teaching and learning approach and culture have enabled teachers to introduce and sustain the interest of students as they have been more motivated and engaged by investigative learning and problem solving processes.



21ST CENTURY SPECIALIST SKILLS



The Software Investment and Promotion Agency (SIPA) has a national mandate for creating a cohort of trained animators and multi-media software developers. Training programmes, student competitions and school partnerships have served to promote the development of specialist skills including animation and multi-media to support the emerging animation sector that serves the mobile software, telecommunications and film industries.



Silpakorn University has integrated specific ICT skills into its undergraduate and postgraduate programmes for architecture students. Students now develop specific ICT skills to complement the traditional academic curriculum in order to better prepare them for the modern workplace. Students learn how to produce computer graphics and animation through ICT enabling them to produce and edit via different forms of multi-media.

THAI VALUES AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Jamathewee School integrates the principle of sufficiency economy into all of their 8 subject groups. They have provided 17 learning parks for their students that include recycling areas, demonstration paddy fields, cattle farms etc. Students choose to work according to their interests whilst appointing a student leader to each group. Students have developed life skills as part of the programme but also an appreciation of the needs and values of their local communities through collaborative working.



Wat Thongyoi School is a leading example of the application of moral learning and sufficiency economy. Implementation has involved changes in school management processes, the school environment, and teaching and learning. Some of the changes have included a school assembly every morning to teach moral behaviour, meditation before lessons, and the involvement of Monks in teaching. All classes participate in the Young Goodness Ambassador Campaign where teachers identify student role models.



WORLD-AWARENESS



Patai Udom-Suksa School is a private school in Bangkok. The school encourages their students to communicate with students from other countries i.e. United States, Australia, New Zealand, UK etc. Every year there are exchange programmes between students in the school and schools abroad. Students have become more confident in communicating with students abroad by using English as well as raising their awareness of different cultures and promoting their own awareness of Thai values and culture.



Rayongwittayakom School participates in the annual Thailand-Singapore Civil Service Exchange Programme. Groups of Singaporean teachers and students come to the school to learn about Thai culture and help in the teaching of Chinese and English language. In return, groups of Thai teachers and students go to Singapore every year as part of the exchange programme. The School is also part of the UNESCO ASEAN SchoolNet and the ALCoB (Thai-Korean) projects providing further opportunities for student exchange.

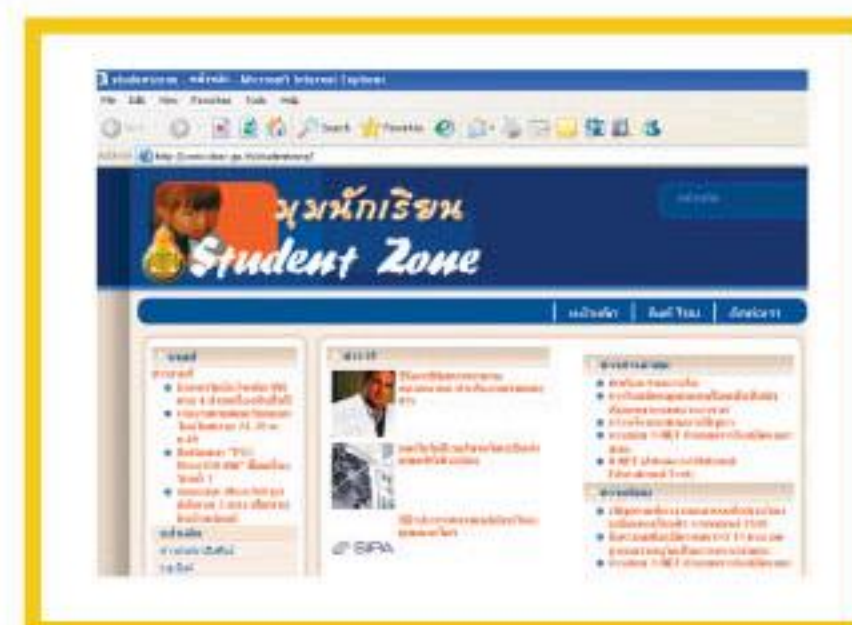
STUDENT DEVELOPMENTS ONLINE



ICT and Animation
<http://www.sipa.or.th>



Student Resources
<http://www.skoolthai.net>



Student Resources
<http://www.obec.go.th/studentzone>



Student Resources
<http://www.eduzones.com>



Student Resources
<http://www.kanzuksa.com>



Student Leadership
<http://dreamsandteams.britishcouncil.or.th>

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In-depth information

Further in-depth detail on the education system can be found inside the excellent "Education in Thailand 2005/2006" booklet produced by the Office of the Education Council available to download from www.onec.go.th.

Contact Details

This publication is one of six publications focusing on Thailand's learning society aspirations. Specific information on the work of the Ministry across the different sectors of education is available at:

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