

# CHINA

## Students' Participation in Class and School Management

*Li Jingxia & Jiang Shuqing*

### **Frame of Reference**

As a developing country in the world, China signed the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* in 1990, and ratified it in 1992. The Chinese government has been focusing on the children's rights, such as the right to education, to participation, to life and so on according to the CRC. Inner Mongolia autonomous region, located in the north and northeast of China is a national minority area taking Mongolians as the main body.

All children in China aged 6-7 are asked to go to school to receive the free 9-year compulsory education and the actual entrance rate for school aged children has reached over 96 percent in Inner Mongolia. In recent years, the new curriculum aimed at changing teaching content and methodology from teacher-centered class to student-centered class is being promoted by the government. Our region has been carrying out the education reform. As for students' participation, individuality and creativity, the reform provides open spaces and opportunities for implementing CRC; meanwhile CRC will assist the success of New Curriculum Reform.

Though teaching reform has begun for several years, schools in Inner Mongolia, due to its slow progress in economic development, remain quite conventional.

Some teachers teach by teaching experience, and they are used to the role of teaching, so it is hard for them to change teaching attitude and methods in a short time. What's more, some teachers have no sense of research and have little research ability. They are puzzled when given the opportunity to do the research individually. They tend to give blind speeches and stick to their own teaching plans, paying little atten-

tion to students' thoughts and thinking process. It is necessary to provide students with more opportunities to participate actively in class activities.

Schools stress on marks required in College Entrance Examination and are weak in school management. Some arrangements seem rather fixed or impractical. Besides, most concentration is put on intellectual performances of students. There is much left to be done about improving students' attitudes towards their studies, arousing their interest, training their strong will in overcoming difficulties during learning process and developing creative and originative thinking in solving problems.

Students concentrate most of their attention on gaining high marks in exams, in hope of entering a key university and getting away from the less developed hometown. They ignore their personal development in sports, arts, singing, acting and so on. Their everyday life seems to be dull, only studying from morning to night.

Most parents focus more on students' study than on other qualities such as personality, self-confidence, individuality and so on which we think are more important in students' development. They hope their children can have a bright future by working hard and entering famous universities. Therefore, they often urge children, usually the only child in the family, to work hard on subjects, regardless of children's feelings or interests. They even argue with or scold their children for not trying their best to study.

In class, some students still prefer studying alone, seldom discussing or co-operating with their classmates in an efficient way. They are just lost on how to help or work together with each other effectively.

The head teacher is burdened with keeping the order of the whole class (on average 50 students), while each student just cares about their own business, paying little attention to the class management. It seems that it is teachers' duty to maintain the discipline and hygiene of the whole class. Students' only work is to study.

### **Purpose**

Our project is aimed at motivating the students to participate actively in school and class management as well as their studying. Through our efforts, students can have a different and better situation of studying or learning in classroom. Child rights in the classroom through participation can be developed. Students learning attitude is active and voluntary. There are more respect between teachers and students in class. The students have more freedom and learn in a friendly environment.

## **Methodology**

Our team has been working with this common purpose and the same methodologies in 2 groups/locations: in Affiliated Middle School of Chifeng University (group A) and in Ningcheng Senior Middle School, Inner Mongolia, China (group B).

### **Group A**

*Location:* Affiliated Middle School of Chifeng University, Inner Mongolia

#### **Phase 1**

After coming back from Lund, LI Jingxia began to carry out the plan and chose class 1 grade 1 of Affiliated Middle School of Chifeng University as the experimental class. There are 45 students in that class, 31 boys and 14 girls, the average age is 12--13. More than half of their parents are rural workers, 20 students parents' are vegetable labours nearby.

#### ***Activities with teachers***

A seminar with the head master and teachers of the experimental class was hold to get to know the current situation of the students and their families, as well as the teaching method and their knowledge on CRC.

From the discussion we realized that the teachers have little knowledge about CRC. Only several of the teachers, less than a half, have had the awareness of children's rights, like no punishment in class and encouraging the students to study actively. Unfortunately, most of the teachers, with or without the awareness of children's rights, do not know how to change the current situation and show their respects on the right of child in classes and the school.

After we explained the CRC, especially the items related to us school teachers and educators, they all showed great interest and expressed that it is valuable and meaningful to make some changes based on CRC.

The discussion was very energetic and passionate. The teachers said that the teaching and learning method they adopted is the conventional method in China which is regarded as the passive teaching and learning method. In class, teachers stand in front of the classroom, facing the students to give his\her lectures whilst all the students will stare at the teachers, take the notes and try their best to remember the content after class. Large amount of homework and examinations are used to check how much of the knowledge the students have appreciated. These teaching methods not only lead the students to be sick of study, but also lead the teachers to passive

working attitude. The teachers have to do a large amount of works besides preparing and giving lectures, such as checking the homework, designing and correcting the exam papers. Furthermore, teachers are always disappointed for the efforts were in vain or with unsatisfied effect. Some of the students copy other's homework or cheat in the examinations. In that case, the teachers cannot make the accurate judgment of the standard of the students. The students never asked questions in class, so the teachers are not able to know whether the students have any difficulties on their studying or not. As a consequence, teachers and students are losing their enthusiasm and interest.

The teachers also listed the difficulties in reforming the teaching and learning method.

Firstly, the old teaching method is extremely hard to change because it was carried out for a too long time that everyone--not only the teachers but also the students -- are used to it.

Secondly, the students in this class are the students who have less self-discipline. The teachers worried that it is riding with a loose rein if the students are given too much freedom. No punishment may also lead the students to be emboldened to do the bad things.

Besides, allowing students to express their opinion freely may mess up the teaching plan which is under the control of local education authority.

Although we were facing many difficulties, the teachers were very supportive and eager to have an experiment in teaching reform in their class with our guiding.

We hold another meeting to discuss the solutions in details. We decided to divide the students into several groups and sit around the table. After presenting the key points of each lesson, teachers will ask the students do discuss with each other what they are learning. Then, one or more students in each group can speak for the whole group on their difficulties and understanding of the knowledge they learned. The students should elect a head of each group who takes charge of the organization and discipline of the discussion.

#### ***Activities with students***

We had classes with the students and chatted with them after class. We found, just like the teachers told, more than the majority of them were behaving good, some of the students participated in the class. Instead of listening to the lectures carefully, those students whispered to others or disturbed others by taking the stationary or pulling the hair or poking at others and so on. We also saw students eating snacks

while lectures were given. When teacher asked the students to answer the questions, most of students could give the reply immediately, but a few of them were very shy and halting when answering.

After class, we asked the students why they didn't pay attention to the teachers speaking. We guessed that they must have appreciated the key points of the courses. However, they told us they do not wholly understand the points and they were not able to tell the reason either. They said they just could not help doing so because they were boring in class and do not know what to do.

### ***Activities with the parents and students***

We hold a student's-parents meeting which invited all the students, parents and the class teacher. Some of the parents failed to attend it as they are rural workers.

Most parents and students know nothing about CRC. We indirectly asked some questions about CRC such as the right of privacy, right to development, right to rest, right to free speech, etc. We found that many of the children's rights are highly respected, such as right to development, right to rest, nevertheless the parents and teachers didn't do good enough on supporting children's interest and view. Punishment was often used when children made mistakes or was undisciplined.

After the conversation, we asked them to do a survey about CRC at home and bring it back by the students on the other day (due to the absence of some parents). There were two sets of questionnaires with questions of the same objective but different description handed out respectively to parents and children. The questions were designed neutrally and indirectly so that we could receive true mind and real facts.

### ***Survey***

There were 44 valid questionnaires in each set. The subjects of the first set of questionnaire were parents who are mainly around 40 years old with the education background of middle school or high school. The subjects of another set of questionnaire were students in this class who are around 12-13. The number of the boys is twice of the girls. The questionnaire consisted of 10 multiple-choice questions regarding the attitude of parents and students on children living and studying at home. We aimed to discover the true mind on children's rights and real facts of their family environment.

The majority (84%) of the students will communicate with the parents but would like to keep a little secret. 55% of the parents will peep at their child's diaries, letters or short messages when they think the children still keeping part of the truth after communication. 41% of the parents state that they will never read children's diary without permission.

Chinese people prefer boys to girls in ancient times. This traditional idea lasted for thousands of years and also exists nowadays, especially by people of rural area. We were happy to see that both parents and children consider that the boys and girls are treated equally in their family.

When parents think they blamed the children wrongly, 34% of them said they will certainly apologize to their children, and 55% of them will make an apology according to the situation. For children's part, most of them (67%) state that they will talk to the parents calmly when parents are wrong.

The answer to whether the children should obey their parents completely is nearly the same from both parents and children. Most of them consider that children could have their own opinion and not to obey the parents completely.

In recent years, children are forced to attend kinds of training classes to learn instrument, painting, and calligraphy or something. One of the reasons for parents to do so is that they want their children to realize their own unfulfilled wish. Fortunately, most of the parents indicate that the children are free to choose their own dream. What moved us a lot was the answer from the children. 84% of the children express that they would like to help their parents to make their dreams come true although their own dreams may be different from their parents.

As to the children's hobbies other than studying, 55% of the parents will support if the hobbies are worth to be supported or able to afford. 30% of them will completely support the children's hobbies and 16% think children should put full energy into studying and they do not support any other hobbies. Children's feedbacks on their parent's behaviour are almost the same. The percentages of the three choices are 50%, 32% and 18%.

When children have their own opinion, the respond of the majority of parents is to respect and take it seriously 44% will respect all of the suggestions raised by children while as well as 48% will take children's idea seriously in most cases. This fact is admitted by children that the data shows the percentages of the children who chose these two choices are both 43%.

About children's right to rest, the figure is interesting. 11% of the parents give the children full freedom of managing their time, nonetheless no child choose to play as much as they can. Half of the rest of parents and children regard the period after finishing homework is the free time. Another half of parents and children think children should concentrate more effort on academic studying and reduce the time to play as much as possible.

About punishment when children did wrong, the largest amount (54%) of parents said they never punish the children but to talk to them followed by 41% of the parents who will punish children as the case is serious. Another 14% will punish the children by all means. Children's' respond is a little different from the parents'. The biggest amount (48%) said their parents will punish them when they made big mistakes. 39% of the children said their parents never punish them, whereas the statistics of this choice stated by parents is 54% as mentioned above. From the ways of punishment we asked children to list, beating and physical punishment still exists.

### **Results of phase 1**

From the survey and conversations with teachers, students and parents, we made following conclusions: Teachers are aware of the importance of children's rights and are trying to change the current situation. They are going to give the students more freedom and respect in class and school. They are also tending to encourage students to learn actively and voluntarily. Students are willing to work hard and not to disappoint the teachers and parents. They want to learn in a harmonious environment and receive the patient and efficient guide at school and home. Parents also realized children's rights should be respected. Parents' responsibility is not only feeding the children and paying their tuition fee, but also helping them to cultivate the wholesome personality so that the children should be raised up in a healthy and inspiring family environment.

### **Discussion and reflections of phase 1**

In taking these consciousnesses into implement, we are facing some problems. Many of the students in this class are not well disciplined. If freedom is given and teachers and parents are restricted by "no punishment", what should we do to keep them away from bad habits? As adult, especially the parents who are doing the heavy physical work, it is hard for them to control the temper when seeing the children's poor performances. Parenting education needs to be addressed. Teachers are used to the conventional teacher-centred methods in which the class is easier to control. In the new group-discussing method, it is hard to solve the problems like when to start a discussion, how to manage and stop the discussion, how to get the efficient result from the discussion and how to avoid students chatting about the matters which are irrelevant to the topic.

### **Phase 2**

Ms LI brought back the new idea from the guidance of our mentor Per and after communicating with other change agents in Uganda. Before the beginning of the

new semester, LI Jingxia held the meetings with leaders and teachers of class 1, grade 1 in Affiliated Middle School of Chifeng University. We planned to change the conventional educating mode into Effective Teaching Mode and adopt the Group Cooperative Learning method in class.

### **Instruction of Group Cooperative learning method in the junior experimental class:**

#### *Before class*

Students are asked to do the preview before class. In this section, they should do the evaluation after reading, preview notes, preview homework, complete the “sheet of leading questions” and try to evaluate the questions on the sheet.

#### *In class*

The students are the main body of the learning and the teacher became the tutor. The huge change of the roles in learning provides enough rights for students in learning and can greatly motivate their learning initiative for everybody is encouraged to do the presentation on the stage to present your understanding of the knowledge or information from the text as a teacher. In this section, they are also asked to complete two sheets—“question-raising” and “question-practicing”.

#### *After class*

Students should do the review after class. They should rethink and summarize the knowledge learned in the new unit and write them down; evaluation of the reviewing is also needed.

#### *What should teachers do?*

Teachers should convert the attitude from a teacher to a tutor, a guide, or a “captain”. Before class, teachers should give a full-scale evaluation of the new knowledge module and the students; design the teaching plan, three sheets (“leading questions”, “question-raising” and “question-practicing”). In class, teachers will record the class performances of the students when they are doing the presentation and then, focusing on the problems, explain and conclude the key points and make more efforts on the slower students. After class, teachers are also required to do a review on the students’ performance and the achievement of the learning and teaching, check whether the result is as well as they planned.

### *Class meeting for the establishment of learning groups*

All the students in the class formed 6 study groups which contained about 8 students in each group. Everyone in the group holds a post of the “head of the subject” according to his/her interests and strong points. The responsibility of the head is to supervise the group members on their discipline in class and help them on their studying of the certain subject. A group leader is elected for each group.

The class meeting was hosted by a boy and girl without disturbing or instructing by teachers or other adults. In the meeting, each group went to the stage with the leading of the group leader and took an oath. Each of them introduced themselves and their post in the group. They told everyone how they would perform in the group cooperative learning and what responsibility he/she would take as a head. The students said that they would work hard on their own study, meanwhile, try their best to help others, particularly on the subject he/she is charge of. They also announced that they would be responsible to their duty of being a head. Then, the leader of the group announced the name of the group. A type of plant, like bamboo, cactus and sunflowers which represents the spirit of the group was held in the leader’s hands. After that, all the members in the group sang the group song together—also represented their spirit and wish. A shared vision and slogan were also shouted out together by the members.

### *Class meeting for discussing the problems found in group cooperative learning and the solutions*

After a period of implementing the group cooperative learning, we found it is really a good way for the students. Yet, of course, there are several problems found in the process of adopting the new learning mode. We asked the students to discuss and conclude the problems they found and write them down as well as their opinions on solutions.

The problems can be summarized as follows:

Cheating; Poor class discipline; how to deal with the group members who chat in class; someone have snacks in class; as the rule of presentation of rotation, everybody are given the equal rights to do the presentation. But only certain students will do or can do well in it; how to encourage the students who is dull and negative to be active and participate voluntarily; how to correctly use the books with answers of the exercises and so on.

Most of the children's suggestions of solving these were worth to be taken seriously. All of the students indicate that cheating is absolutely wrong. They should not cheat and should stop others to cheat. They also presents that cheating is not only due to the bad habits but may also due to the cheaters are not able to work out the exercises. In that case, helping them on their study and making clear of the difficulties on their study is the essential solution. Many students said that a reward and punishment rule should be made to prevent the students from bad habits and poor class performances and encourage the students to take part in the class and independent study by a reasonable reward. As to the using of the answer book, they think students should firstly learn by themselves, preview the text and think actively, ask questions and try to find the answers themselves. Then, if there are still some difficulties or incomprehension, they can open the answer books to see what the correct answer is and why they didn't understand.

## **Results of phase 2**

By adopting the group cooperative learning method, the positivity of learning of the students is greatly aroused. From the names of the learning groups, like "miracle", "sun of tomorrow", "elite team" and so on, we can see their vitality, enthusiasm and determination.

From the class meetings, especially in the problem founding meeting, we were excited and moved because we found that these children in teens are no longer the little children we thought. They can solve the problems logically. Their solutions are given clearly and most of them are reasonable and practical. In this way of studying and class meetings, the students feel more that they are the masters of the class and are more active in class.

Although teachers are required to do much more work and are burdened much more responsibilities than before, they are happy to be in the new teaching method and are delighted when seeing the changes of the learning attitude of the students.

## **Discussion and reflections of phase 2**

The difficulties found in the new method are not completely solved and the new ones may be come out in the days after. Some of the teachers are still feeling it is hard to control the atmosphere in class and keep the regular timetable of syllabus.

### **Further Implementation of CRC in Chifeng University**

MA Jingxin, a participator of this project who helped LI Jingxia in activities in Affiliated Middle School of Chifeng University, found that the group cooperative learning method is not only a good method for children but also suitable for the adults at universities in learning English.

Ms MA is a teacher in Foreign Languages School, Chifeng University who is teaching English major students on integrated English. This course is a basic course for English major students in their first two years to improve their language capacity from all aspects. When she was doing the research in the Affiliated Middle School of Chifeng University, she found the group cooperative learning method can bring active learning atmosphere and raise learning enthusiasm. What's more, this method can help students to learn from each other and help each other. She believes this method can also be used in college classes and did a lot of experiments in her class.

There are 37 students in her class with the age around 18. She asked the students to sit in groups of about 6 students and made sure each one can clearly hear each other in the same group. The method made very good effect on learning pronunciation, writing, and class discussion. When teaching pronunciation, she would first demonstrate the correct way and go around to every group, ask students to do the practice, point out the mistakes they made and ask the students who can pronounce well to help others to correct the mistakes. When teaching writing, she would ask the students to exchange the compositions and correct the mistakes in pencils of other colours. Good sentences are also required to be picked out. In this way, students can learn from others' composition and know how to express in different ways, how to make perfect sentences and what problems may occur in their own writing and be aware of how to avoid the similar mistakes. As for class discussion, it is out of doubt that sitting in groups is much better than sitting in a row and face to the blackboard. The problem is as same as we found in middle school class that you cannot make sure that everyone will participate actively and learn efficiently.

Anyhow, group cooperative learning method is a good method worth to be extended to all levels of education. Listened to Per's advice, MA will continue doing the experiment and apply this new method on more aspects of her teaching and propose other teachers at the university to accept and implement it.

## **Way forward**

We will keep going with the effective teaching system and group cooperative learning mode. The problems in teaching and learning should be found and dealt with in time. Further experiment will be conducted both in middle schools and universities. We will try to find opportunities to communicate and discuss with teachers and educators in other schools and cities, exchange the information and experience and endeavour to promote the new teaching and learning system. We believe that the future of the New Curriculum and new teaching and learning system is bright. Children's rights will be respected indeed in school life.

## **Group B**

*Location:* Ningcheng Senior Middle School, Inner Mongolia

### **Phase 1**

In 2010, Ms Jiang Shuqing, the second Chinese change agents in batch 12, went to Lund University in Sweden and received the training on CRC. When she returned to her school, she reported - according to the project plan which was made in Lund - to the principal and the teachers and advised the school to study and publicize CRC. Later, her school administrated the study and publicity of CRC in combination with the actual management of her school. Her principal said, "The most important thing to implement CRC is to change the notions and take action." Her school created favourable environment for the students' happy growth. So far, a lot of work has been done with the support of her principal.

### ***The student-centred education***

The student-centred education is deepened and the students' development is promoted. The student-centred education is an education to create a teaching environment of democracy, harmony, and stress-free and put the students in the main position and make the most of selectivity, initiative and creativity of both teachers and students to promote the students' all-round development. The student-cantered education is implemented in many aspects:

1. The student-centered teaching. The aim is to advocate and promote the change of teaching and learning, to encourage and support the independent study, cooperation study and exploration study and strive to push the process of classroom instruction to common development and joyful life to teachers and students.

2. Student-centered sports and arts. Her school carries out active independent choices and self innovation activity (students choose sports and arts events : basketball, ping-pong, track and field, badminton, football, dancing, musical instruments and so on, and the students can effectively build themselves up.

### *Sports and arts festivals*

With the better understanding and implement of CRC, students enjoyed more and more opportunities to design their own study and individual development. Those students who are good at sports or arts found the sports meeting this year more exciting, which was renamed “the sport-and-art festivals” and held on September 28th-30th. They no longer sat there still to act as just audience watching on. They were able to find various ways to enjoy themselves in the festival. The most important, the festival was planned, organised, judged, and awarded totally by students themselves, without being interfered by teachers.

### *Singing, Speeches & textbooks plays contests*

Those who are talented in singing, giving speeches and acting also benefit from the implement of CRC. Contests are held in a row in Ningcheng Senior Middle School, namely, English Songs Contest, Chinese Speeches Contest, English Textbook Plays Contest and Chinese Textbook Plays. They are really a feast for eyes and ears, and teachers were delighted to find their students so talented. “The Necklace” by Senior One, “Merchant of Venice” by Senior Two, and “Teahouse” by Senior Two proved rather popular.

### *Student-centered management.*

The school advocates and encourages “democratic class management and independent daily affairs.” Sport-and-art festival is managed totally by students themselves. By implementing student-centred education, the students’ rights of participation and development are asserted/preserved and their all-round development is promoted. According to CRC, class discipline is required in effective teaching. Students need appropriate discipline at different levels. With senior students teachers must be stricter than junior students. After the term began, the first class meeting was held and made rules for the class by themselves, which, undoubtedly, can help teachers manage the class easily.

### *Staff meeting*

After listening to Ms Jiang’s report, the principal held a staff meeting, at which all the teachers in the school learned about the rights of children in education in general and are advised to improve the relationship between teachers and students by being more patient with students and providing students with a more democratic learning

environment. Two months later, Ms Jiang made a survey and found that students were able to learn in a more effective way. Ha Lin, an 18-year-old boy in Class One, commented that he enjoyed learning in class this term better than last term, especially in Chinese and English.

### *Accommodation supervising council*

As a result of Ms Jiang's efforts to ensure students' rights in Ningcheng Senior Middle School, the students union has been given more opportunities to supervise daily activities of the school. Apart from monitoring the three exercises---break, eye-protection, mental-health exercises, the members are granted the rights to supervise the quality and prices of dishes in the several dining halls located in the campus. Therefore, students now feel more secure about the food and are ready to put forward suggestions on how to improve the accommodations of their school. Even the parents and communities spoke highly of the modern management and expressed more confidence in Ningcheng Senior School.

### *Parents meeting*

Parents meeting will be held after the Middle Term Examination in November, during which parents are not only informed of the performance of their children but also the importance of dealing with teenagers equally and respecting youngsters and their rights in determining their own study and life. Parents, who used to find it hard to communicate with their son or daughter properly, can gain a lot from CRC, thus can help them solve the problems of generation gaps. They can even advise other parents to change their attitudes towards their own children by making friends with them so as to become more helpful parents.

### *Group work/pair work/daily report*

In her English classes, pair work and group work are often used to make students feel more secure and less anxious. When students work in pairs or groups, they also have more opportunities to speak and practise their English. While they are doing pair work, the teacher will walk around the classroom, listening, instructing and assisting them when necessary. If the students enjoy dealing with their academic challenges, they will find themselves making rapid progress and gaining more confidence in their ability to learn language.

### *Communication*

Mailboxes to principals have been started. Students may write directly to several principals to express their true feelings, thoughts and suggestions about their study and school life without giving their own names.

## Phase 2

After coming back from Uganda, Ms Jiang Shuqing wrote a detailed report and completely reported the program in Lund and Uganda and her views/feelings. It was as long as 9 pages and she handed it to the principal. Her principal read the report carefully and knew that she learned a lot and did a lot. He also promised he would continue to give necessary support.

She had training workshop for all the English teachers to change the attitude and teaching methods. Since then, most of the English teachers often voluntarily visit each other's classes to learn others' advantages and develop themselves. During June 21st to 22nd, mentor Per visited her school and attended several classes. As can be seen in observations and interviews, great changes have taken place. All the teachers showed respect to the students and used the new teaching methods. They were friendly and smiled brightly. The students enjoyed the new ways and participated in class actively. The mentor thought highly of both teachers and students.

In the past, the headmaster forbade the students, especially Senior 3 to hold New Year celebration. But as for 2011 New Year he allowed all grades to celebrate. The teachers thought highly of the decision. Ms Jiang joined one of the classes in the party. The students sang, danced, played crosstalk, ate the cake together and took photos. She was glad to see they relaxed themselves completely. When they came back to school, they devoted themselves to studying.

She selected some main items of Convention on the Rights of the Child and had them printed. Later, the copies each were distributed to the teachers so that teachers can know some detailed contents of the convention. Besides, all the students each got one copy to get a general understanding of their rights of provision, protection, development and participation and so on.

Now the parent's council, which consists of about 12 persons, is set up and the parents can participate in the school management. The parents have been performing their rights.

Her school establishes a multi-help system to ensure the students enjoy the right to receive education. The "Assistance Foundation" helps the students with financial difficulties: some students are granted free tuition and 30 students can have free meals. There is Mental Health office and the major teacher gives Psychological class and guidance to solve the problem of psychological and mental health. Her school has carried out "100 teachers visit 1000 families" activity to learn about the children's real psychology and behaviours in order to help correct the ill behaviour timely. Regular safety education activities are done in her school. For example, regu-

lar earthquake or fire drill is held. Safety education courses are given and after-school instructors are invited to make speeches.

A parent meeting is held to ensure that parents learn about children's rights. Thus parents know how to communicate, direct and act in a wiser way.

Teachers of other subjects more or less change their teaching methods according to CRC principles and show more respect to students' rights. Through these efforts, the convention has received recognition from both teachers and students, and has positive effects on their teaching and studying.

## **Results**

Our project plan is aimed at motivating the students to participate actively in school management as well as class management and English learning. Now we can see that both teachers and students are actors and most of the students are actively involved in the class and school activities. Besides, the teacher tries to instil a love of learning in students and stimulates their interest.

As a result, students find it a pleasure to sit in class, asking questions, discussing or even arguing with their teachers. Students prefer the student-centered class, not merely because it is fun, but because it can make the knowledge permanent. More important, it can develop their creative mind and learning ability. Student-centered classes are more natural and more interesting ways of obtaining knowledge and developing themselves. They not only make learning active and enjoyable, but also enable the students to learn how to find and solve problems themselves.

## **Discussion and reflections**

Students in this period very much like to prove themselves and be independent. So they just hide their opinions and feelings, not open their hearts freely.

The examination-centred environment has a great influence on students. Some students prefer to spend more time on study rather than participate in the activities organized by class and school. They think it is a waste of time doing that.

There are a large number of students in each class (about 50-55), so it is hard for the teachers to supervise every student and give all the students face-to-face instructions.

## **Way forward**

1. Continue to implement some successful activities. Usually they are popular with students, such as sports & arts festival, textbook plays, English song competition, and exploration study. Moreover, we will try to create some

other forms of activities to build the sense of cooperation and self-confidence, for example, Christmas Party.

2. Give the class council more instructions and space in class management. By organizing more activities by themselves, they can experience more pleasure and success and train their abilities. For example, they can design and organize how to celebrate Father's Day, Mother's Day or Teacher's Day to learn to be grateful.
3. Strengthen publicity and education in implementing CRC work and popularize CRC knowledge in society and families as well as in the school.
4. Continue to maintain children's right as usual and help them grow up in a healthy and happy environment.
5. Have training workshops for all the teachers to change the attitude and teaching methods. Teachers' smile and the students' active participation can then be seen in the classes of all subjects.

### **Common conclusions and reflections**

With the help of our mentor Per, Mr SUN Baijun, headmaster and teachers of *Affiliated Middle School of Chifeng University*, as well as leaders and teachers of *Ningcheng Senior Middle School* and all the members and implementers, the project was going very well and smoothly. We have basically completed the initial plan of the project and achieved our goals. In our experimental schools, the awareness of children's rights is deeply influencing the teachers, students and their parents. In class, teachers changed their conventional attitude and turn to a role of a guide, facilitator, supporting helper and friend. The enthusiasm of students was stimulated. They actively participate in learning and school management. Student-centered principle is fully reflected in the progress of our project. Meanwhile, the new system and methods drew much attention from more educators and experts and these methods and attitudes are now trying to be more widely applied in teaching students of various levels and ages in our schools as well as other schools in Chifeng City. We will do our utmost to carry on this work of significance to propaganda the importance of children's rights and promote the education revolution into a larger scale.

*LI Jingxia & JIANG Shuqing*

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