

## Aim of Remedial teaching.

The objective of remedial teaching is to give additional help to pupils who, for one reason or another, have fallen behind the rest of the class in the subjects of Urdu, English, Science, Social Science and Mathematics. Children with learning difficulties have the same psychological needs and characteristics as other children. Some of them, however, may be less able to organize their perceptions or to comprehend abstract ideas and concepts. Some may have poor memory, poor level of motivation, short span of attention in work situations or associated behavioural problems. Above all, owing to encounters of failure they tend to have low expectations of themselves and, having rarely distinguished themselves at school, also have low aspirations.

It must also be noted that most of the learning difficulties pupils in remedial classes encounter may not be within the child, but are relative to the context where the learning is taking place, such as the family background of the child, the physical and learning environment of the school, and the pupils' peer groups. Once we understand this, we will begin to view our pupils from a different perspective and try to accept their learning difficulties as a transient and soluble problem. We will begin to see our pupils as children who can be taught and helped to overcome their learning difficulties.

It is essential for a remedial teacher to understand thoroughly the strengths and weaknesses of their pupils so that appropriate teaching approaches can be adopted to meet their individual needs. Although these pupils are low academic achievers, they are not necessarily limited in abilities or that their attainment will remain permanently low. With proper remedial help, the use of stimulating teaching strategies, and closer supervision and more individual attention, these pupils' interest in learning will be aroused and they would make better progress.

The ultimate aim of remedial teaching is to help pupils who have fallen behind to learn to the best of their ability and to bring them back into the mainstream classes as far as possible.

### Characteristics of Learning among Pupils with Learning Weakness /Difficulties

01. Pupils under IRTP (Intensive Remedial Teaching Programme) usually have one or more than one of the following learning Weakness/difficulties:

- ° poor memory
- ° short attention span and are easily distracted by other things
- ° relatively poor comprehensive power
- ° lack of learning motivation
- ° lack of self-confidence and relatively low self-expectation
- ° weak in problem-solving power

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- fail to grasp information effectively and mix things up easily
- have difficulty in understanding new/abstract concepts
- fail to transfer knowledge to the related learning areas appropriately
- need more time to complete assignments or tasks

02 Apart from various learning difficulties, pupils may have different abilities and styles of learning. Some are better in visual learning while others are more competent in audio learning. Certain pupils have to learn through sense of touch or practical experiences. Remedial teachers, therefore, should design diversified teaching activities and adopt various teaching methods to help students develop their potential and remove the bottlenecks/obstacles in learning.

## Objectives of Remedial Teaching

- 03 Each pupil is different in terms of learning ability, academic standards, classroom learning and academic performance, and each has his own in learning. The aim of IRTP is to provide learning support to pupils who lag far behind their counterparts in school performance. By adapting school curricula and teaching strategies, teachers can provide learning activities and practical experiences to students according to their abilities and needs. They can also design individualized educational programmes with intensive remedial support to help pupils consolidate their basic knowledge in different subjects, master the learning methods, strengthen their confidence and enhance the effectiveness of learning.
04. Throughout the teaching process, teachers should provide systematic training to develop pupils' generic skills, including interpersonal relationship, communication, problem-solving, self-management, self-learning, independent thinking, creativity and the use of information technology. Such training can lay the foundation for pupils' life-long learning, help them develop positive attitudes and values, as well as prepare them for future studies and career.

## Principles of Helping Pupils with Learning Difficulties

05 Teaching preparation

Before preparing for their lessons, remedial teachers should identify pupils' diverse learning needs as soon as possible so that they may design appropriate teaching plans to facilitate pupils' effective learning.

06 Devise various learning activities

Since pupils have different characteristics in learning, teachers must devise different learning activities with the same teaching objective to develop pupils' varied abilities and skills in problem solving. It is more effective for teachers to adopt a series of relevant and simple teaching activities than assigning one long teaching activity since pupils may acquire the required knowledge and skills through diversified activities.

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## 07 Design meaningful learning situations

Remedial teachers should specifically design meaningful learning situations, language environments (especially for English subject), games or activities so as to provide personal learning experiences for pupils and stimulate their interest and initiative in learning.

## 08 Teaching approaches

Teachers should give concrete examples before proceeding to abstract concepts by way of simple and easy steps at a pace in line with the learning abilities of students. Teachers may teach new concepts from different perspectives by various approaches so that pupils can grasp the ideas through meaningful and repeated illustrations. Teachers should encourage pupils' active participation by more frequent use of teaching aids, games and activities. They can also make use of information technology and all the teaching resources available to help pupils understand the main points.

## 09 Provide clear instructions

Pupils with learning difficulties are less competent in understanding written language. Therefore, remedial teachers should give pupils short and clear instructions to avoid confusion. They must explain clearly the arrangement of each learning activity. If necessary, they may ask pupils to repeat the steps of activities so that every pupil may understand the instructions.

## 10 Summarize the main points

At the course of teaching, teachers should always sum up the main points in teaching and write the key phrases on the board to enhance pupils' audio and visual memories. Teachers can guide their pupils to link up the knowledge they learn from class with their life experiences so as to enhance the effectiveness of learning. Besides, guiding pupils to repeat the main points in verbal or written form is also an effective way of learning.

## 11 Enhance learning interest and motivation

Suffering from frequent frustrations in their work, pupils with learning difficulties may gradually lose their interest in learning. Therefore, teachers should adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils. With less pupils in the IRTP, teachers can design interesting activities coupled with reward scheme to stimulate pupils' interest. It is most important to help pupils overcome their learning difficulties so that they may gain a sense of achievement and recover their confidence and interest in learning.

## 12 Encourage pupils' active participation in class activities

Pupils with learning difficulties usually lack self-confidence and are more passive in class. They seldom ask questions or express their views. Remedial teachers should patiently encourage active participation in class. Pleasurable learning experiences may help enhance pupils' interest in learning.

## 13 Focus on the learning process

Teaching should not only focus on the transmission of knowledge. It is also

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important to see that pupils are benefited from the entire learning process. Teachers should provide ample opportunities in class for pupils to practise and think what they have learnt, and allow them to solve problems by different means. Teachers should also carefully observe the performances of pupils and give them appropriate assistance, feedback and encouragement so as to help them acquire the learning skills, solve their problems and understand their own capability, thus enhancing self-confidence and improving their learning skills.

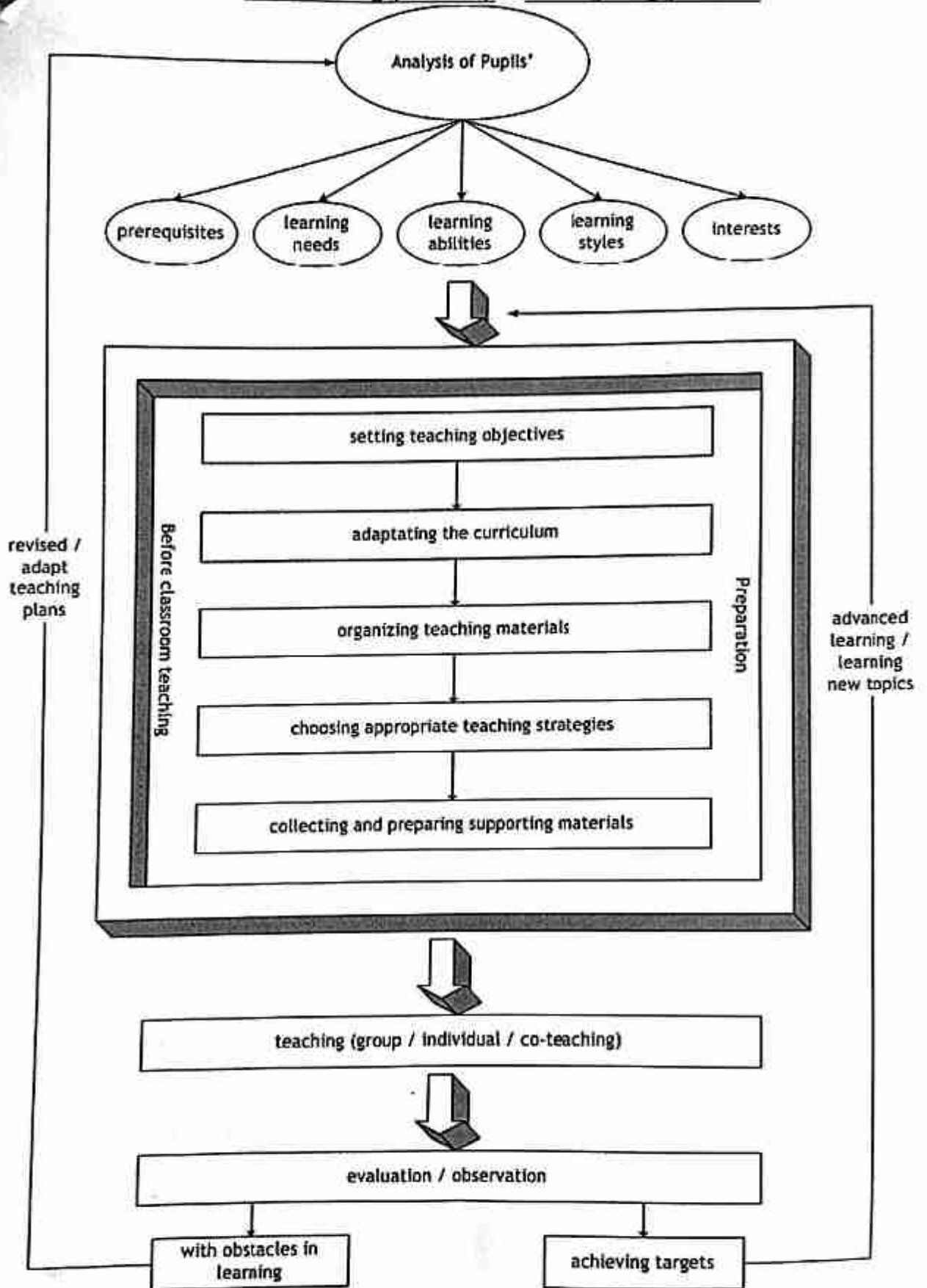
### 14 Show concern for the performances of individual pupils

Pupils may encounter different problems in their studies, therefore, teachers should carefully observe the learning process of individual pupils in class. Whenever necessary, they should provide individualized remedial teaching before and after class, during recess or lunchtime, so that they can remove their learning obstacles as soon as possible. When marking assignments, teachers should take note of the common errors of pupils and deliver the correct concepts and knowledge to them promptly.

## The Process of Remedial Teaching

- 1 The flowchart below may serve as a reference for teachers in the delivery of collaborative teaching or individual teaching:

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## **Curriculum Adaptation**

01. Remedial teachers should adapt the curriculum to accommodate the learning characteristics and abilities of pupils. They should set some teaching objectives which are easy to achieve to ensure that pupils may acquire the knowledge as desired after the completion of each module.
02. Teaching should not be directed by textbooks which should not be taken as the school curriculum. There is no need to cover all the contents in the textbooks as well. Schools can classify the teaching content into core and non-core learning aspects according to the teaching objectives and pupils abilities. Core learning aspects require in-depth studies and application whereas materials in the non-core or advanced learning aspects may be streamlined or appropriately selected for teaching.
03. Teachers are encouraged to adopt recommendations on cross-curricular teaching by linking up related teaching areas flexibly so that more time can be spared for effective activities and learning.
04. Teachers should make good use of all teaching materials. For example, they may select and use the materials in textbooks to meet the teaching objectives, or compile their own supplementary teaching materials. They may also design materials of different standards. Materials from the internet, newspapers, magazines and references provided by the Education Department may help teachers design interesting and enjoyable activities to enhance pupils' effectiveness of learning.

## **Homework Policies**

01. Schools should formulate clear policies on homework which should be reviewed regularly. The assignments should be targeted at the teaching objectives and serve the purposes of learning. Exercise books available in the market should only serve as a reference. Schools should choose these exercise books carefully and make appropriate adjustments to the category, quantity and quality of homework.
02. Teachers should take note of the following points when designing homework for pupils:
  - i. the homework should have clear objectives and can accommodate the level and needs of pupils;
  - ii. the form and contents of homework should be of a great variety so as to develop pupils' creativity, self-learning and collaborative skills;
  - iii. the homework should match the content taught in class;
  - iv. teachers should give simple and clear instruction;
  - v. assign appropriate amount of homework each day;

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- vi. ineffective and mechanical drills should be avoided; and
- vii. teachers should make good use of the homework as a tool for evaluation and feedback to enhance the motivation and effectiveness of learning.

## Formulation of Teaching Plans

01. When formulating teaching plans, teachers are advised to take the following two aspects into consideration:

On the one hand, teachers should formulate practical teaching objectives that meet the learning characteristics and weaknesses of pupils so as to foster a sense of achievement. On the other hand, teachers should decide whether the learning items should be taught in details or in brief. Moreover, the items should be classified into different levels and taught through small and simplified steps to facilitate comprehension as well as to strengthen pupils' confidence in learning.

02 With reference to the common difficulties encountered by pupils, teachers should set down the main points for remedial teaching and make adjustments promptly according to the performance of students.

03 Teachers should make a brief record of the learning aspects, teaching objectives/aims, key learning points, activities, use of teaching aids and evaluations for future reference.

04 Teachers may deliver the teaching content by means of modules, themes, learning aspects or teaching items and work out the teaching plans accordingly.

05 Post-lesson reviews should focus on the teaching process and pupils' performance, with specific and critical evaluations made. Examples of main points for review are as follows:

- i. the common difficulties of pupils;
- ii. the effectiveness of teaching strategies and class activities to help pupils understand the teaching contents, grasp the main points and apply what they have learned; and
- iii. issues of concern (e.g. basic knowledge that requires enrichment, the need to break down or re-arrange teaching steps, etc.)

## Teaching Activities, Aids and Supporting Materials

01 Teachers should design appropriate learning activities in line with the focus of teaching. On the basis of low starting point, small steps, diversified activities and instant feedback, teachers should encourage pupils to participate actively during the learning process to help master the skills and methods of collaborative learning. Diversified teaching activities such as situational teaching, competitions, collation of information, discussion, oral reporting, games, topical research, production of graphs/figures/models, role

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play, recording, visit and experiments may help pupils enhance their interest in learning, stimulate their thinking and reinforce the effectiveness of teaching.

- 02 Teachers should exercise their discretion in the appropriate use of teaching aids. Appropriate teaching aids not only help to enhance pupils' interest in learning, but will also consolidate the knowledge they learned, thus achieving the objective of teaching. Common teaching aids are concrete objects, figures, models, word cards, number cards and audio-visual equipments such as tape recorder, headset, wire free induction loop system and multimedia teaching aids, etc. When designing and using teaching aids, teachers should first consider their practical use and assess whether the aim of remedial teaching can be attained.
- 03 The design and organization of teaching materials should be pupil-oriented. They should be selected and collated systematically to serve the purpose. Teaching materials provided by the Education Department or other academic institutions may also serve as a reference for teachers (A list of references can be found at Appendix 10).

## The Setting of Learning Environment

- 01 Well-designed learning environment helps to maintain pupils' attention and interest in learning and facilitates the achievement of teaching aims. In this way, it is more easy to achieve the aim of teaching. The teaching environment should be designed to support remedial teaching and group activities. Seat arrangements of pupils should be flexible to meet the specific teaching purposes of each learning activity. For example, teachers and pupils may form of circle when holding discussions; and the two pupils or group members involved may sit together during peer group or small group learning.
- 02 Teachers should prepare a rich, pleasant and comfortable learning environment for pupils. For example, they may set up a self-learning corner, book corner, toy corner, science corner, prize corner or stationery/learning resources corner, etc. to enkindle pupils' interest in learning. An example of classroom setting is shown at Appendix 9.
- 03 Teachers may display the teaching materials of the week or the learning outcomes or products of pupils at prominent places to stimulate their motivation in learning.

## Remedial Teaching Strategies

### 01 Individualized Educational Programme (IEP)

Geared to the learning needs of individual pupils, the Individualized Educational Programme aims to reinforce the foundation of learning, help pupils overcome their learning difficulties and develop their potentials.

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Individualized Educational Programme should include short-term and long-term teaching objectives, learning steps, activities and reviews to ensure that the programme is implemented effectively. Teaching can be done in small groups or for individual. If necessary, remedial teachers, other teachers, student guidance officers/teachers, parents and pupils alike are to participate in designing the programme. Remedial teachers hold meetings regularly to evaluate the effectiveness of work and gather opinions for refinement.

## 02 Peer Support Programme

Remedial teachers may train up pupils who perform better in a certain subject to become 'little teachers' and who will be responsible for helping schoolmates with learning difficulties in group teaching and self-study sessions as well as outside class. Peer support programme helps pupils reinforce their knowledge, and develop their communication and cooperation skills as well as good interpersonal relationship. To enhance the effectiveness of the programme, remedial teachers must provide training to the pupils concerned beforehand and make regular reviews on its effectiveness. Generally speaking, this programme is more suitable for pupils of higher grades.

## 03 Reward Scheme

The reward scheme has positive effect in enhancing pupils' motivation. It aims at guiding pupils to set their own objectives and plans, and positively reinforcing their good performance. No matter what reward is provided, the most important thing is to help pupils cultivate an interest in learning and gain a sense of satisfaction and achievement during the learning process. When designing the rewards offered, remedial teachers should take note of the following:

- i. set clear and specific targets (for example: requirement on the score of dictation and number of assignments submitted);
- ii. set achievable objectives;
- iii. give diversified rewards (including verbal commendation) or prizes to accommodate pupils' interest; give rewards instantly;
- iv. review and revise the reward scheme regularly; and
- v. invite parents to help children improve their work.

## 04 Handling pupils' behaviour problems

Remedial teachers should observe the following when dealing with the behaviour problems of pupils:

- i. always observe the performance of pupils in class and their behaviour in groups;
- ii. establish close relationship with pupils, develop mutual trust and listen carefully to what they say;
- iii. help pupils understand the effect of their behaviour on the other as well as their own selves;

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- iv. keep in close contact with parents to find out the cause of pupils' behaviour problems;
- v. help pupils build up self-confidence and a healthy self-image;
- vi. give positive reinforcement to pupils' good behaviour, and do not pay undue attention to their misbehaviour;
- vii. do not try to change all the deviant behaviour of pupils at once. Teachers should list out the problems and set the priorities with an aim to improve one or two of them at a time;
- viii. refer the cases to Student Guidance Officers/Teachers for follow-up action if the behaviour problems of pupils continue or become serious. If necessary, student guidance officers/teachers may refer the case to the Psychological Services Section of the Education Department for individual assessment and remedial services.

### **Development of Generic Skills**

- 01 Remedial teachers should help pupils develop good learning habits and attitudes, such as complete the assignments tidily, keep their promise and be responsible and disciplined. A constructive attitude is the foundation for life-long self-learning and it helps enhance pupils' learning effectiveness.
- 02 Pupils should be helped to master basic self-learning skills and abilities. For example, teachers may teach them how to set appropriate learning objectives and priorities, time management, note-taking, reading skills and examination taking skills, etc.
- 03 Remedial teachers can also make use of information technology to motivate and teach pupils to learn according to their own pace, help them cultivate the habit of self-learning, so that they will benefit from such training for their whole life.
- 04 Pupils can be taught to solve problems by different methods, tools or by drawing insight from their past experiences. For example, teachers can teach them the use of dictionaries, as well as the skills of seeking and handling information obtained from the school and public libraries. These are ways to develop students' flexibility, creativity and independent thinking.
- 05 Teachers should train pupils to establish good interpersonal relationship so as to facilitate effective communication and collaboration as well as to enhance the team spirit of students.

### **Assessment and Record on Learning**

- 01 Assessment plays a very important role in teaching and learning. By means of assessment, remedial teachers can know the learning progress as well as strengths and weaknesses of pupils; hence, they may design different teaching activities accordingly to help pupils learn in an effective manner. Besides, it is also a means to measure the discrepancy between IRTP pupils and ordinary pupils so that teachers may decide whether it is desirable for

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the pupil(s) concerned to withdraw from IRTP.

02 The two most common assessment methods are listed as follows for teachers' reference:

## i. Formative Assessment

Teachers can understand and assess the learning abilities of pupils from their daily class work and homework as well as individual or group projects, such as model making, drawing, information collection, measuring activities and the way they relate daily events to the topics they learnt in class, so that they can revise the teaching content accordingly.

## ii. Summative Assessment

With reference to the progress of teaching, teachers may assess the performance of students by means of examinations/tests. The examination/test papers must cover all the main points in teaching where the levels of difficulty meet the pupils' abilities. The weighting of questions and marks should be balanced. Different types of questions should be included.

03 Schools may have different forms and weightings of assessment.

04 Remedial teachers should keep a detailed personal record for each pupil under IRTP. They should assess the progress of pupils regularly and systemically. A comprehensive record provides information on the learning progress of pupils and serve as a reference.

05 Teachers should pay attention to the response of pupils during classroom learning and make a record in the "Evaluation" column of the teaching plan (Appendix 7) to facilitate follow-up actions or changes in teaching strategies. In addition, teachers should make reference to the teaching objectives in evaluating the effectiveness of teaching, and revise their teaching plans according to the learning needs.

## Liaison with Parents

01 In order to help pupils with learning difficulties, schools must liaise closely with parents. Apart from providing guidance on homework to their children, parents also handle pupils' problems either by the same way or similar ways in line with the requirements of the school and their schoolwork.

02 Some parents may have unrealistic expectation of their children's performance. In such cases, remedial teachers have to explain to the parents about the characteristics and abilities of pupils so that they may help their children to learn in a pleasurable manner. On the contrary, some parents' expectation may be too low. Teachers must then keep in contact with parents to help them understand their children and to provide appropriate guidance to develop the pupils' potentials.

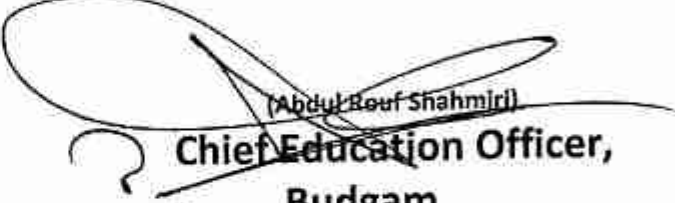
  
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### **Co-ordination with Other Teachers and Professionals**

- 01 Remedial teachers must keep in close contact with other teachers. They are encouraged to discuss or share their experiences with others to find out ways to improve pupils' learning and behaviour. For example, they may discuss on the teaching plans, learning progress of pupils, test and examination questions, pupils' problem behaviour and partial or total withdrawal of pupils from IRTP.
- 02 Remedial teachers should also liaise with other related professionals to seek for professional support with a view to helping pupils solve their problems.

  
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