



# PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS



## Preschool Literacy Profiling Test For K1 - K2 Students 2017

**Free!**

# Does your child have difficulty with reading, spelling or writing?

teh or the?  
saw or was?



Is your child frustrated about school and studying  
or has difficulty understanding text passages?



Is your child having problems with letter formation or sequencing, or learning of sight words? Does he/she have poor handwriting or have trouble following multi-step directions or routines?

### Come for our **FREE** Literacy Profiling Test\*!

The screening will be conducted by our preschool early literacy intervention team. Our professionals will address your concerns about your child's literacy development and share with you help that is available.

**To register, call 6444 5700**

(Office hours: Monday to Friday, 9am - 5:30pm)

Limited slots available! Registration is required.

Screening details:

**Monday, 13 March 2017**

**9:00am - 5:00pm**

**Tampines Learning Centre**

Block 163 Tampines Street 12, #01-257  
Singapore 521163

**Wednesday, 31 May 2017**

**9:00am - 5:00pm**

**Chua Chu Kang Learning Centre**

Block 17 Teck Whye Lane  
#01-167 Singapore 680017

**Wednesday, 22 November 2017**

**9:00am - 5:00pm**

**Bishan Learning Centre**

9 Bishan Place, #06-03  
Bishan Junction 8  
Singapore 579837

*\*This screening test is not meant to serve as a diagnosis for dyslexia but it will give you a picture on the learning needs of your child.*



**DYSLEXIA ASSOCIATION  
OF SINGAPORE**  
HELPING DYSLEXIC PEOPLE ACHIEVE

# Raising Awareness through Outreach

**Fanny Foo**

*Director of Learning Centres and Outreach*

*Dyslexia Association of Singapore*

Raising awareness and removing the stigma of a learning condition are the first objectives of DAS outreach. In 1996, the late Mr Lee Kuan Yew revealed in a press interview that he had mild dyslexia, which in retrospect made him realise the reason the difficulties he had with learning how to speed read. The condition was discovered at a very late age of nearly 60 and by then he had found ways to overcome it. When the news broke in January 1996, thousands of Singaporeans contacted DAS asking for more information on dyslexia or to seek help. By coming forth and announcing his condition, Mr Lee Kuan Yew significantly removed the stigma held by thousands in Singapore.

Based on Ministry of Education (MOE) Education Statistics Digest 2016 (Ministry of Education, 2016a), there were 239,102 primary students and 186,036 secondary students which totalled to 425,138 students. With the international statistics of prevalence of 4-10% for dyslexia (British Dyslexia Association, 2016), we are looking at approximately 17,005 to 42,513 Singaporean students with dyslexia.

As part of a continuous process to remove stigma and to increase awareness, DAS Outreach division aims to reach out to as many parents, educators and organisations working with children to educate them about learning differences.

In raising awareness, Outreach division targets to have the “at risk” child assessed in order for them to access remediation before they leave the mainstream schools.

“By coming forth and announcing his condition, Mr Lee Kuan Yew significantly removed the stigma held by thousands in Singapore.”

DAS currently supports more than 3,500 students on the MOE-aided DAS Literacy Programme (MAP) and other programmes provided by the Specialised Educational Services (SES) division at DAS. However, there are still many more students in Singapore that remain undiagnosed. While Singapore is a developed country known for its excellent infrastructure and forward planning, we still have many parents, educators and the general public relatively unaware of this learning difficulty, this results in a continuous need for DAS outreach and awareness.

DAS Outreach aims to raise awareness through three targeted platforms:

- ◆ Social & Print media
- ◆ Awareness talks
- ◆ Dyslexia screening

The social and print media is managed by the DAS Publicity and Publications team who are responsible for social media, websites and print publications promoting the services and activities of DAS. The awareness talks and screenings are conducted by the DAS Outreach team. The two divisions work closely together to reach out to as many of the target audience as possible. DAS campaigns such as “Embrace Dyslexia” and “Positive Dyslexia” are constantly emphasised in highlighting the positive aspects and embracing its differences to broaden the public’s view and to eradicate stigma.

To raise awareness in educators, around 350 primary and secondary schools (MOE, 2016b) would be sent a letter of invitation for a free awareness talk yearly. The free awareness talk covers topics such as signs and symptoms of dyslexia , its co-occurring morbidities and helpful tips and strategies to use in the classroom. A record number of 94 talks were conducted in 2013, which averaged to 8 talks a month. While talks were done to raise awareness of the condition, the process of identifying children who may be at risk of dyslexia were also undertaken with free screenings done at schools, children’s homes, orphanages and other youth at risk organisations.

In the early years of screening in 2013, the Outreach team would do computerised screening for primary students upon requests from schools. There was a record number of 1,275 students screened in 2013 which could have been due to the schools’ implementation of the pilot School-based Dyslexia Remediation (SDR) where schools wanted to know how many of their students were at risk (Ho, 2015). However, we found that many screenings done by Outreach in schools was missing the parents’ involvement. In 2014, a 3-in-1 model was coined where a talk, dyslexia screening and a concluding session can be arranged in school only if both the parent and child were present.

<b>3-Year Comparative Data on talks, screenings and % referrals for Assessment</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016 (Till June)</b>
Number of Screenings	57	25	14	12
Number of Students Screened	1,275	954	622	445
Number of Awareness Talks	94	79	65	43
Number of Attendees	5,500	5,620	2,603	2,373
Total Referrals Received	805	837	822	422
Referrals via Awareness Talks / Screenings / Teachers	305	397	307	143
% of Referrals via Awareness Talks / Screenings / Teachers	38%	47%	37%	34%

A 2015 survey was done to capture feedback on the awareness of 520 teachers and 30 parents. 94% of teachers and 97% of parents found the talks very useful, informative and relevant. This showed that the talks have had the desired effect of raising awareness in educators and parents alike.

Subsequent years, we took a more targeted approach where we had organised mass screenings on designated days throughout the year. In 2014, we started with four organised mass screenings. By 2015, we had up to eight organised mass screenings which included Preschool, Primary and Secondary students. At each session, we could screen up to 110 students a day. During these sessions, the parents are engaged in an awareness talk on the signs and symptoms of dyslexia and its co-occurring morbidities whilst the child takes a computerised dyslexia screening lasting around 20 minutes. A report from the screening is generated and the screening results about the possibility of dyslexia is explained to the parent as well as the options available for their child.

In the last 3 years, an average of 37% students went on for a full assessment after the computerised screening. This does not take into account those who were considering financial aid for the assessment which could increase the total to more than 50%.

**2015: Number of respondents: 20 teachers**

Survey questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	4 + 5 Responses
	5	4	3	2	1	4 + 5
I have gained a greater understanding of dyslexia and DAS after this presentation.	232	250	37	1		93%
The content of this presentation was relevant and useful to my needs.	213	267	38	1	1	92%
Ideas and concepts were presented clearly to me.	227	260	33			94%
The slides and materials given are helpful and informative.	219	257	43	1		92%
The presenter was knowledgeable about dyslexia.	280	222	18			97%
I would recommend DAS Awareness Talks to others.	220	238	62	1		88%
I am interested in receiving more information on DAS and its services	138	229	153			71%

**2015: No. of respondents: 30 Parents**

Survey questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	4 + 5 Responses
	5	4	3	2	1	4 + 5
I have gained a greater understanding of dyslexia and DAS after this presentation.	12	17	1			97%
The content of this presentation was relevant and useful to my needs.	9	20	1			97%
Ideas and concepts were presented clearly to me.	8	21	1			97%
The slides and materials given are helpful and informative.	11	19				100 %
The presenter was knowledgeable about dyslexia.	15	14	1			97%
I would recommend DAS Awareness Talks to others.	15	14	1			97%
I am interested in receiving more information on DAS and its services	4	23	2		1	90%

Computerised Screening Results	2015	2014	2013
Number of Computerised Screenings	14	21	28
Number of Students Screened	622	954	1275
Very High (Risk of Dyslexia)	140	224	315
High (Risk of Dyslexia)	125	207	225
Moderate (Risk of Dyslexia)	247	332	410
Low (Risk of Dyslexia)	109	191	364

A comparison chart (above) summarising computerised screenings data over three years from 2013 to 2015 showed that the highest number of students reflected in the moderate range. In 2011, an exploratory study undertaken by DAS psychologists led by Gaynor Brookes conducted a study of 127 students, aged from 6 to 12 years 2 months using the Lucid Rapid computerised testing. Following this, these students were put through formal testing. The results indicated that those children found to be at risk of dyslexia using the Lucid Rapid computer screening were likely to be subsequently diagnosed as dyslexic. (Brookes, Ng, Lim, Tan, & Lukito, 2011, p.33).

In line with positive dyslexia, the creation of the Young Achievers Awards (YAA) and the Special Achievement Awards (SAA) came about in 2014. The yearly monetary awards for the YAA and SAA are for them to use for educational purposes such as playing a musical instrument or payment of tuition fees. This award is to recognise their achievements reached outside academia and presented at the yearly graduation ceremony.



The YAA recipients are harnessed as active role models to mentor and inspire the younger students while the SAA's recipients are called upon occasionally to showcase their talent at the various events. The active alumni members mentor youths who are going to Institutes of Higher Learning (IHL) such as polytechnic or Institute of Technical Education to show them the ropes and assist them to settle into their new environment. The DAS Student Alumni have a 5-year plan is to build a pool of active mentors in each IHL for the newcomers to tap on for a buddy system.

With all MOE primary schools in 2016 having the SDR (Ho, 2015) the awareness of dyslexia has improved tremendously over the past 3 to 5 years. From 2013 to 2015, 238 talks have been conducted by Outreach team reaching out to 14,413 participants. These participants have through word of mouth or direct recommendations led to more students going for assessment for their learning difficulty. Preschool talks have been stepped up to ensure early identification when the K2 student transits into Primary 1 (NECTAC, 2011).

In 2014, there were 10 preschool talks to 150 Preschool teachers, in 2014, it increased to 21 talks to 717 teachers and in 2016, as of June, there had been 16 talks to 465 teachers. With a close partnership between MOE and DAS, the potential of identifying a high risk student with dyslexia before they leave the mainstream school system is greater than ever. However, the work of awareness continues as the student population is always moving ahead and new waves of teachers, parents and students need to be enlighten.

## References

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



### **FANNY FOO**

*Director of Learning Centres and Outreach*

*Fanny Foo completed her A Levels at Temasek JC and Higher Diploma by Shatec jointly with Ecole Hoteliere de la SSH Lausanne (Switzerland) and National Productivity Board. It was sponsored by Westin Hotels under Starwood Properties.*

*Fanny started as a management trainee in the hospitality industry. She was one of the 2 pioneers to be sent to Miyako Hotel, Kyoto, Japan, for a 3 months exchange program. As a Conventions Services Manager, she handled the MICE (Meeting, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions) market of up to 3,000 people. Some of the high profile groups she was involved in were: Visit of US President George Bush's and Queen Elizabeth's visit.*

*Fanny was then headhunted to head the PICO office based in Kuala Lumpur. After leaving PICO Malaysia, she headed a trading office under All Beijing (M) Sdn Bhd to do business development, sale and distribution of raw materials from China in Malaysia. In 1998, she was a Sales and Marketing Manager for Great World Serviced Apartments in 1998 and Swissotel Stamford in 2000. Due to family commitments she left her full time job in 2002 and embarked on volunteer work at various organisations.*

*In 2010, Fanny joined DAS as the Centre Manager for Queenstown and Bishan Learning Centres. In 2012, she became the Assistant Director of Learning Centres and Outreach and presently the Director of Learning Centre and Outreach.*

# Fundraising – A Voice for DAS and a Mission to Help Children with Dyslexia

Jacqueline Song

*Head of Fundraising*

*Dyslexia Association of Singapore*

Since the launch of the DAS Specialised Educational Services (SES) in 2014, fundraising has played a critical role in the DAS. This is mainly to ensure that sufficient funds are raised for children from lower income families to attend the various programmes and services offered by SES.

Working in fundraising in a not-for-profit organisation (NPO) like the DAS is a huge challenge. We need to have the confidence, good interpersonal skills with workable strategy and business acumen. Traditionally, fundraising consisted mostly of asking for donations on the street or at people's doors, but new forms of fundraising, such as online fundraising and crowd funding have emerged.

Donors want to be engaged. They want to understand the impact of their donations. Therefore maintaining a relationship, knowing how much our donors have given, and how frequently and what sort of appeal triggered their initial donation are all critical information that contributes to the success of fundraising.

We need to keep the donors active, engaged and inspired by constantly sharing with them information about the programme which they've funded and the progress the bursary students made through the help of their donations. To replace donor fatigue and obtain new donors for our organisation, we have to constantly build our donor database.

"We need to keep the donors active, engaged and inspired by constantly sharing with them information about the programme which they've funded and the progress the bursary students made through the help of their donations."

We feel that in Singapore, there seems to be a difference in the needs of companies and charities. Many companies prefer to help NPOs by getting their staff to volunteer in activities so that their staff are engaged with the beneficiaries. But many NPOs have professional staff delivering professional services and may not have enough volunteer activities for volunteers. Funds to allow beneficiaries, especially those from lower income families, to access the professional services offered is therefore more important to the NPOs.

Another difference is that charities prefer partnerships with companies to last longer than three years to provide stability for their programmes. But many companies prefer to support different charities and for short periods of one year. Many firms also prefer to donate items instead of funds and the items may or may not be needed by the NPO. It is for this reason that fund raisers must continue to encourage that the needs and interests of both companies and charities run parallel with each other.

#### **Percentage of students receiving financial assistance on the DAS MOE-aided literacy programme**

2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
35.2%	37.2%	40.7%	47%	44.7%	48.4%

With more financial assistance needed, the Fundraising team has increased our efforts to meet the fund raising targets to support all the programmes in the DAS. One of our focus is on donor retention. Once the donor is kept engaged and is satisfied, this will lead them to continue contributing year after year, as well as to increase their funding over time. NTUC Income OrangeAid is a fine example reflecting the success of donor retention who have been a great supporter of our DAS SES Preschool Programme since 2012.

Below are the thoughts of NTUC Income OrangeAid on the programme:-

#### **ORANGEAID ESTABLISHMENT & FOCUS**

Income OrangeAid was launched in October 2010 at Income's 40th Anniversary, and Income's CSR unit was set up in early 2011. We decided that OrangeAid will focus on children and youth from disadvantaged circumstances. Why children and youth? Because Income is an Insurance Company, and insurance is about the future, and children embody the future. Why disadvantaged? Because the vision is to provide

affordable insurance to all Singaporeans, and up till today, there is a pocket of people who are under-insured and underserved. They are primarily from disadvantaged circumstances. So the combination of these two factors form the focused population OrangeAid is compelled to reach.

## **STRATEGY**

With that focus, Income OrangeAid funds strategically and not haphazardly. DAS is part of the ecosystem and working with them enables OrangeAid to approach the problem strategically. Given that we had our initial partners such as Assumption Pathway School (APS), we started asking questions like: “Where did the children come from? Why would they need to study in a Specialised school?” While there is nothing wrong with having specialised schools, as it met specific needs, we realised that OrangeAid has to understand and deal with the issue further upstream in the education system to where the children feeding into schools like APS might be from. We realised that learning disabilities like Dyslexia might be one of the underlying causes.

So OrangeAid partnered DAS in 2012 in line with our strategy of supporting children in disadvantaged circumstances. We liked that DAS has the capability to work with preschool children to increase their chances of remaining in the mainstream education system.

## **PRESCHOOL PROGRAMME**

OrangeAid supports the Preschool Programme with bursary awards for K1 and K2 children from the lower-income bracket that require specialised early literacy intervention. This lessens the financial burden on families and also to reduce the chances of these children falling through the gaps which might have longer term negative impact.

The programme helps children acquire a good foundation in alphabet knowledge and phonograms, gearing them towards reading and spelling readiness. At the end of the preschool programme, children are better equipped with coping strategies and have built a good foundation in reading and spelling.

## **MULTIPLIER**

Apart from this, DAS investment in the community include training and awareness outreach to help caregivers and teachers be better equipped to spot symptoms amongst children in school. One of such is their Preschool Seminar, supported by Income OrangeAid, which discusses early signs of learning difficulties early

childhood educators from many other organisations, as well as intervention strategies available to help preschool children.

## **COMMITMENT TO NEEDY**

DAS also has a “turn no child away” policy, which we respect greatly. They have demonstrated that they will fund children with special needs themselves if they cannot find resources from the outside. We have grown it to support up to 57 children in 2015, and are supporting up to 70 children in 2016.

## **HIGH QUALITY REPORTING**

*OrangeAid is serious about social returns on investment. DAS is meticulous with their reporting. They are able to report meticulously, the amount of funding is given to each child, for how long, at what tier of funding and what outcomes the child has achieved after remediation and the results of the school-aged psychological assessment. It is this quality of reporting and meticulousness that OrangeAid likes. It shows accountability and we can communicate the accountability to OrangeAid stakeholders and donors.*

*Overall, DAS addresses a critical need in the community that hasn't yet been filled by any other organisation for a problem that affects some 10% of population in varying degrees. We are proud to be associated with the Dyslexia Association of Singapore because it enables us to be a part of early-stage upstream solutions to complex social issues... We have been supporting DAS since 2012 because we believe in long term support in order to achieve OrangeAid's strategy for long term social impact.*

Theodore Teo  
Deputy Vice-President &  
Head, Corporate Social Responsibility  
NTUC Income OrangeAid (2011–2016)

Fundraising's line of work is not exclusive to corporate and governing bodies though. Through community initiatives, DAS often receives the opportunity to work with much younger clients such as school going children from the primary to junior college levels.

At an age where fun usually prevails, these youths have redirected their interests to more noble pursuits such as volunteering and contributing to the general wellbeing of society.

It also helps that Singapore government schools have implemented the “Value in Action” (VIA) scheme to further incentivise these students to partake in community activities to champion for a social cause that is impactful to the needy groups in Singapore.

One such community project is the Youth for Causes (YFC) campaign, a youth-driven initiative organised by Citibank and the YMCA of Singapore, largely aimed at raising awareness and fundraising for the Voluntary Welfare Organisation (VWO) of their choice.

Targeted at youths from the ages of 15 to 25, YFC serves as a platform to promote social entrepreneurship and community leadership development among them by providing an initial seed funding of \$1,600 as well as volunteer mentorship to guide them along the way.

Since 2012, DAS has been fortunate to be selected as an adopted beneficiary by groups of students keen to champion our cause in helping dyslexics achieve, with a total of \$142,600 raised to date.

Getting new teams onboard is never an easy task. With the good rapport built over the years with these students, we do have many instances where junior teams from teams of the previous years come forth to render the support and to continue the good work that their seniors started. The DAS Fundraising Team plays the role as a mentor in this project. We help vet through their proposals, assist and offer suggestions in all of their fundraising activities. It is often heart-warming to see the passion ablaze in the eyes of some when they share their enthusiasm about their project and the creative ways that they devised to achieve their fundraising targets to benefit our students with dyslexia, especially those from the low income bracket.

Each year always poses a different problem, from the difficulty in securing student teams to the gathering of volunteers for the street sales. Despite all these challenges, it is without a doubt that Youth for Causes was not just a learning journey for the students but for DAS as well. It placed the fundraising team in different scenarios with different roles to play, from mentor to friend. This experience was nevertheless both enriching and meaningful as dealing with youths tends to bring a refreshing perspective on matters as we get to learn the latest trends among the youth culture.

To conclude, raising sufficient funds was and will always be a challenge and an uphill climb, especially with the current gloomy economic outlook that poses a serious concern for many charities. Nevertheless, we will continue to persevere in increasing sustainable funding sources and take concrete steps towards meeting the mission for our students with dyslexia.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



### JACQUELINE SONG

*Head of Fundraising*

*Jacqueline started her career in the Social Sector as a Manager for Market Development in the Senior Sector. She was in charge of the largest and most comprehensive exhibition for baby boomers and seniors in Singapore. She worked with top event companies and various interest groups to provide health and wellness tips, educational forum talks, stage performances and activities for the exhibition. She also reached out to commercial organisations to showcase products and services that meet the needs and interest of the seniors. This event saw a total turnout of more than 60,000 visitors, a significant increase from the past years.*

*Jacqueline next took on the role as Head of Marketing and Talent development at a social enterprise at \*SCAPE. She was put in charge of developing revenue drivers, and improving the development of company's administrative and operational processes. She was instrumental in the development and execution of the Youth programme for StarHub, including marketing the "Now You Can Leadership Series", expanding youth outreach, sourcing for school participation and producing the marketing collaterals for the campaign.*

*In 2011, She organised an 8 weeks outdoor show for the Singapore Tourist Promotion Board showcasing youth talent along Orchard Road. Her leadership skill was evident through her team's efficiency and professionalism in delivering a successful event reaching out to more than 30,000 visitors.*

*In 2013, Jacqueline joined DAS and started DAS on a focused path to raise funds through both corporate sponsorship and fundraising activities to provide bursaries for students from lower income families to attend the various programmes and services offered by DAS.*



# Financial Assistance provided at DAS

## Betty Lee

*Senior Bursary Administration Officer*

*Dyslexia Association of Singapore*

DAS believes that no child should be left behind because he or she cannot afford the cost of a DAS education. Every year, DAS offers various bursaries to Singaporean students attending MOE mainstream schools between Primary One and Secondary Five.

DAS bursaries are funded by two major sources:

- ◆ Ministry of Education Financial Assistance Scheme (MOE FAS) for dyslexic students.
- ◆ DAS's fundraising efforts including corporate donors.

The Ministry of Education funds the MOE-aided DAS Literacy Programme (MAP) while donations fund other DAS programmes. Studies from overseas have suggested that the provision of bursaries have resulted in better student retention and in some cases better results.

Bursaries are provided for the following services

- ◆ Psychological assessments
- ◆ MOE-aided DAS Literacy Programme (MAP) remediation
- ◆ Specialised Educational Services (SES) programmes. This bursary is only applicable to students who are currently on our MAP remediation. A bursary is given for only one SES programme, with the exception of Speech and Drama Arts programme, which is given as a second bursary. This second bursary policy is due to the limited donations received each year.

"It aims to equip educators and others working with children on the signs and symptoms of dyslexia, as well as the accompanying co-morbidities of learning differences, for the main purpose of early identification and intervention."

## MOE-AIDED DAS LITERACY PROGRAMME (MAP) REMEDIATION

Since 2007, the number of students receiving bursary has increased from 236 students to 1,450 students in 2015 for MAP. The bursary for MAP is funded by MOE under its Financial Assistance Scheme (FAS). DAS provides additional bursary to parents who are still unable to pay the difference in term fees despite being granted a quantum by MOE.

From 2008 on, all students who are applying MOE FAS for MAP programme may be awarded an in-principle approval (IPA) percentage (%) by DAS, subject to certain eligibility criteria being met. This enables the students to commence MAP lessons earlier, while waiting for the MOE FAS application to be approved. It is a commitment on the part of DAS. If the MOE FAS % approved by MOE in the later months is lower than the IPA %, DAS will absorb the difference and the student will continue at the IPA %. MOE FAS provides 33%, 50%, 70%, 90% and 100% waiver of the DAS term fees. Table 2 shows an increasing percentage of students receiving 90% to 100% bursary for MAP programme over the years.

Table 1 : Number of students receiving bursary for MAP remediation

Year	Student Enrolment as at October	No. of Bursary Applications Received	No. of Students Receiving Bursaries	% of Students Receiving Bursaries
2007	1,032	255	236	22.9
2008	1,085	314	298	27.5
2009	1,233	379	378	30.7
2010	1,633	589	575	35.2
2011	1,936	738	720	37.2
2012	2,211	928	900	40.7
2013	2,465	1,178	1,151	46.7
2014	2,723	1,380	1,336	49.1
2015	3,003	1,496	1,452	48.4
2016 *	2,972	1,422	1,388	46.7

*\*This is up to June 2016 only.*

Table 2 - Students who received 90% to 100% bursary for MAP remediation from 2007 to 2016

Year	No. of students who received MOE FAS/ DAS bursary	No. of students awarded 90% - 100%	% of bursary students awarded 90% - 100%
2007	236	95	40.3%
2008	298	121	40.6%
2009	378	198	52.4%
2010	575	422	73.4%
2011	720	489	67.9%
2012	900	560	62.2%
2013	1,151	705	61.3%
2014	1,336	794	59.4%
2015	1,452	850	58.6%
2016*	1,388	1,076	77.5%

*\*This is up to June 2016 only.*

The 2008-2009 global financial crisis was hailed as Singapore's worst ever recession. This most likely contributed to the spike in the number of students receiving 90% to 100% between the years 2009 and 2010.

Despite the MOE FAS % awarded by MOE, some parents may still find it difficult to pay the balance of the DAS term fees because of their financial constraints. The parents can appeal for higher bursary quantum and all appeal cases are reviewed by the DAS Bursary Appeal Committee.

## **CASE STUDIES ON APPEAL FOR HIGHER BURSARY PERCENTAGE**

*For confidentiality, the families and students names have been anonymised.*

### **CASE STUDY A**

Family A consists of 6 children of which 4 children having medical issues.

The father is under a debt management programme.

The eldest son was diagnosed with ADHD and Dyslexia by the Child Guidance Clinic (CGC) and the Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS). He has been visiting CGC ADHD, counselling and behavioural support. He was in DAS MAP remediation from Year 2009 to Year 2013.

The second daughter has ADHD, severe Oppositional Defiance Disorder (ODD) and dyslexia. She attends individual therapy and counselling with CGC for her ODD and also taking medication for ADHD/ODD. She joined DAS MAP remediation in Year 2010 and is currently still in the programme.

The third son has a learning disorder and dyslexia. He has follow-up visits with KK Women's and Children's Hospital (KKH) for speech therapy and occupational therapy, as well as paediatric treatment for allergy issues, tonsillitis and stomach problems. He has been a DAS student since 2009.

The youngest son was diagnosed with Global Developmental Delay (GDD) from the Child Development Clinic of KKH. He has follow-up visits with KKH for a gastric disorder, allergy issues and thalassemia. He has been hospitalised due to seizures and fits. He also has some heart issues. He is currently in DAS MAP remediation.

### **How DAS helped**

DAS has supported the three children from this family with 100% bursary for their MAP remediation since 2009.

**CASE STUDY B**

Student B has symptoms of ADHD and significant articulation, language and reading difficulties.

Student B was assessed by DAS and enrolled in DAS MAP remediation in Year 2013.

Student B's parents were not legally married and are not supporting him. As a result he was cared for by his nanny since infancy. Initially the nanny was paid to care for him. However, when his mother married and had her own family, the mother facing financial difficulties gradually stopped paying the nanny when he was 5 years old. Since then, the nanny voluntarily cared and financially supported this child although she was not his legal guardian. Student B's father was incarcerated for a few years and has been recently released. He is now working as a food stall helper but is not supporting his son. The nanny continues to care and support for the boy.

2013 - Student B was enrolled in one SES programme, Speech and Language Therapy and was granted 90% bursary.

2014 - Student B was enrolled in two SES programmes – i) Speech and Language Therapy and ii) English Exam Skills. He was only awarded bursary for Speech and Language Therapy. A fee of \$535.00 was chargeable for his second SES programme i.e. English Exam Skills programme. His nanny appealed for bursary for English Exam Skills programme.

2015 & 2016 – Student B was enrolled in two SES programmes – Maths and English Exam Skills. He was only granted bursary for Maths. His nanny appealed for bursary for English Exam Skills programme

**How DAS helped**

Student B has been awarded 100% bursary for MAP remediation, and he is still enrolled to date.

2014 - He was awarded 90% bursary for Speech and Language Therapy and 100% bursary for English Exam Skills programmes

2015 - He was awarded 100% bursary for English Exam Skills and Maths programmes

2016 - He was on 100% bursary for English Exam Skills and Maths programmes.

## **CASE STUDY C**

Family C has four children. The father's monthly gross income is \$2,800 and the mother is a homemaker.

Student C joined DAS MAP remediation in Year 2009. He was granted a bursary from Year 2011 to Year 2015. Unfortunately he failed his Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) for Year 2015. He was retained in primary school to retake the PSLE in 2016.

His mother withdrew him from his MOE School in 2016 as she felt that his teacher was not supportive and did not motivate her child. She indicated that the teacher always made comments to him such as, "why you don't understand?" or "how come you are dreaming?".

Student C is now in a private school pursuing his religious studies. His mother also engaged a personal tutor to prepare him for his GCE N (T) level examination. He is performing well as he is currently learning at his own pace.

Because Student C is not in a MOE school, he is not entitled to the MOE grant and bursary for the DAS MAP remediation. Hence his parents are required to pay the standard term fee of \$1,021.85 per term for his MAP remediation.

His mother appealed for a DAS bursary as she was unable to pay the standard rate fees. Student C stopped attending MAP remediation while the appeal was pending to be approved.

### **How DAS helped**

We regret that we were unable to accede to the mother's appeal for a DAS bursary based on the DAS bursary policy guideline, i.e. the child must be in MOE mainstream school for eligibility for a bursary.

The Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS) is a non-profit organisation with limited funds. There were 48.4% of students enrolled in MAP remediation receiving varying percentages of bursaries in 2015. We raise funds to help children from needy families to pay for DAS services. Hence we have to follow our bursary policy guidelines in order to ensure that the bursaries are sustainable in the longer run.

## **Case Study D**

Student D was diagnosed with autism and dyslexia. He is from Pathlight School.

Pathlight School is not a MOE mainstream school. Under MOE's guideline, he is not entitled to receive any bursary from the MOE FAS as he would have already received financial support from Pathlight School.

In Year 2011, Student D's mother appealed for a DAS bursary through her Member of Parliament of Tanjong Pagar GRC.

### **How DAS helped.**

It is imperative that this child be given the appropriate support for him to learn to read and write. DAS decided to award Student D a 90% bursary on a special case basis in Year 2011. Student D is still in MAP lessons and he has been receiving the same bursary percentage since then. The bursary provided came from the Roshen Daruwalla Trust Fund.

The Roshen Daruwalla Trust Fund was set up in 1999 in memory of Mrs Roshen Daruwalla, the late wife of DAS founding President Dr Jimmy Daruwalla. Mrs Daruwalla had contributed tremendously to DAS through her active fundraising efforts. She also volunteered her teaching services for dyslexic students. Her unfaltering support of DAS had inspired the setting up of the Trust Fund which provides for dyslexic students who cannot access DAS services via regular funding schemes. The Trust Fund is also used to purchase educational resources for teachers to support dyslexic children.

## **CHALLENGES FACED BY THE BURSARY TEAM**

To apply for financial assistance, applicants are required to submit relevant documents to support their financial status. Parents are required to submit completed relevant documents for their MOE FAS applications. Some parents find it difficult to submit the documentation required, are unable to comply or submit the wrong documents. Others will take a long time to rectify documents with discrepancies, hence delaying the submission of the MOE FAS application to MOE.

It is difficult for some parents to understand or accept that they can only declare grandparents as household members provided the grandparents' NRICs show the same address as the parents.

DAS uses the eligibility criteria for the MOE FAS scheme provided by MOE and is not

at liberty to disclose the criteria to parents. Hence, DAS is unable to turn away applications from parents who want to apply for a bursary for their child, but may not qualify for one. The processing of these additional bursary applications create an administration burden for DAS and MOE.

Managing the expectations of bursary parents each year can be difficult. Bursary applications are processed annually and the majority of parents hope for the same bursary percentage to be awarded based on the previous year despite having an upward adjustment in their gross family income in the new calendar year.

It is very challenging for the bursary team of two staff to process more than 1,000 bursary applications in the first quarter of the year. DAS is mindful that only the financially needy families are awarded with a bursary, therefore the bursary team is conscious of checking the bursary documentation thoroughly while processing all applications.

## CONCLUSION

The bursaries that DAS provides have helped many children from low socioeconomic status (SES) families, as well as families with unique financial situations. We are grateful to MOE for their unstinting support in providing financial assistance.

We also thank our corporate and private donors for their generosity. Through the funds we receive from our donors we are able to provide additional bursaries to support needy students to access our SES programmes that are currently not funded by MOE.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



### BETTY LEE

*Senior Bursary Administration Officer*

*Betty started her career in a financial institution. During those times, Betty served in various departments. She had at least 10 years of customer service experience and headed a team in the Trade Finance Department handling import and export documents*

*Betty joined DAS in 2005 to handle the administration of the Induction Programme. In 2008 she was transferred to the Bursary Team.*



# Staff Professional Development Division (SPD)

## What We Encompass

Sandhu Manmeet Kaur<sup>1</sup> & Geetha Shantha Ram<sup>2</sup>

1. Staff Professional Development Executive

2. Director MOE-Aided DAS Literacy Programme & Staff Professional Development  
Dyslexia Association of Singapore

The Staff Professional Development (SPD) Division oversees the training, continuing professional development, quality assurance and training and career pathways of Educational staff at the Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS). This division is overseen by Geetha Shantha Ram and supported by the Educational Advisors (EAs) and SPD Executive.

### WHY IS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IMPORTANT & NECESSARY?

*It's all to do with the training: you can do a lot if you're properly trained.*

- Queen Elizabeth II

*The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new lands,  
but in seeing with new eyes.*

- Marcel Proust

### THE THEORY BEHIND THE PRACTICE

Where the education industry is concerned, research declares without hesitation that the most crucial factor in ensuring student success (and therefore client happiness) is the quality of the service provided. And while our clients may not always be familiar with this research, they are united in their intention - to see their children succeed.

"...the most crucial factor in ensuring student success (and therefore client happiness) is the quality of the service provided."

In order to meet these expectations, educational institutions turn to professional development as a strategy. And this of course extends to all staff as each one influences client satisfaction at different times and in different ways.

### **What does staff professional development at an organisational level mean?**

DAS has well thought-out staff day activities through which staff have the opportunity to engage with each other in an informal setting.

DAS has also invested in training staff by funding their training with external agencies and in providing continued training throughout the staff's service in the form of in-service training. Annually, staff are also identified for conferences and further training, both local and overseas.

The implementation of the Staff Professional Development Division is to further enhance the professional and career development of DAS staff and is a mark of the organisation's commitment to staff welfare - by ensuring that staff are exposed to various strategies to effectively manage their job responsibilities - and to ensure that the service we offer is of the highest quality possible.

### **What does staff professional development at an individual level mean?**

While DAS has career and professional development pathways for all staff, individual attention will be given to everyone's personal professional wants and individual initiated professional development is not only supported, it's applauded. And wherever possible, opportunities to develop in the individual's area(s) of interest will be created.

### **What are the characteristics of an effective staff development programme?**

Studies conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of staff development programmes identify the following common characteristics to success:

- ◆ Involvement of staff planners
- ◆ Providing choice and differentiated learning opportunities
- ◆ Use of demonstration, supervised practice, and feedback as a part of training
- ◆ Ongoing assistance and support
- ◆ Connectedness to school settings and to school-wide efforts

## Are there other ways of developing a staff professionally other than through training?

There are certainly many ways to develop professionally (improve knowledge, skills, attitudes, and practice beyond the typical training experiences and these are represented by the differentiated staff development models available:

- ◆ Individually-Guided Staff Development
- ◆ Observation/Assessment
- ◆ Involvement in a Development / Improvement Process
- ◆ Training
- ◆ Inquiry

## How do you effectively design and implement the staff development programme?

By making certain paradigm shifts on what staff development should be:

- ◆ From individual development to individual plus organisational development.
- ◆ From intermittent efforts to a clear, coherent strategic plan for the organisation and the divisions within.
- ◆ From training that one attends away from the job to job-embedded learning.
- ◆ From a focus on generic skills to a combination of generic and content-specific skills.
- ◆ From staff developers who function primarily as trainers to those who provide consultation, planning, and facilitation services, as well as training.
- ◆ From staff development provided by one or two departments to staff development as a critical function and major responsibility performed by all administrators, leaders and senior staff.
- ◆ From teachers as the main beneficiaries of staff development efforts to intended improvement in performance for everyone.
- ◆ From staff development as an add-on to staff development as an irreplaceable process in ensuring student success.

"The implementation of the Staff Professional Development Division is to further enhance the professional and career development of DAS staff and is a mark of the organisation's commitment to staff welfare ."

These may be ideals, but many of these are already in place and the rest can certainly be achieved in time, with everyone's contribution. Together, we hope we can make this a reality.

### **HUMAN RESOURCES (HR) AND STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (SPD) ROLE**

Professional development of staff is managed by both the HR & SPD. A break down on the roles for better understanding is shown in the table below:

Activity	Responsibility	Target Personnel
Quality Assurance, Pathways and Personal Development	Human Resources	General Management Team
		Corporate Staff
		Centre Managers
		Administration Staff
	Staff Professional Development	Educational Therapists
		Psychologists
		Speech and Language Therapists
Sponsorship	Human Resources	All Staff
INSET's	Staff Professional Development	
Training Budget	SPD, HR and Finance	
Training Applications	SPD and HR	

## THE SPD FRAMEWORK



## TRAINING AND CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### 1. On the job training for Dyslexia and the Essential Literacy Approach (DELA)

- ◆ As part of the Specialist Diploma, new trainee Educational Therapists (EdTs) are required to fulfil 20 hours of on the job training during the first module (DELA)
- ◆ The 20 hours on the job training takes place during the 2nd & 3rd week of the DELA module (10 hours each week)
- ◆ This allows the EdTs to get an idea of what a typical class is like as well as for them to get the experience of teaching and lesson planning
- ◆ There will be an informal and formal observation conducted during this period
- ◆ Educational advisors assist with selecting Supervising Teachers (STs) and Cooperating Teachers (CTs)
- ◆ STs are EdTs with at least 2 years experience and CTs are EdTs who have at least 1 year experience. Both will observe lessons conducted by trainee EdTs and they assist with co-teaching too
- ◆ The STs will conduct an informal observation in the 1st week, after which a formal observation will be conducted by the EAs in the 2nd week

**2. Applied Educational Therapy (AET)**

- ◆ The educational advisors (EAs) plan for the lectures for this module, which runs for a period of 6 months. They also mentor the new EdTs
- ◆ There are 10 planned lectures, each of 3 hours long and most of these lectures are conducted by the EAs
- ◆ For the 1 to 1 mentoring, depending on the number of new EdTs, there is 1 EA to 1 EdT and sometimes 1 EA to 2 EdTs
- ◆ There are 12 - 1 to 1 mentoring session for a period of 6 months and each session is 1 hour

**3. In-Service Training (INSETs)**

- ◆ INSETs are conducted throughout the year by various teams for different staff groups
- ◆ Since 2014, a total of 49 INSETs has been conducted by various divisions
- ◆ These trainings usually help give an update and further improvements on how things are being done in the various departments. For example, the Curriculum Team conducts an INSET for the EdTs to inform them on updates on Reading Comprehension, CMs and/or SSAs conduct INSETs to update on forms used, the system, bursary, etc

**4. Budgeted & Ad-hoc Training**

- ◆ DAS is an organisation that is very pro-active when it comes to staff training
- ◆ A report in 2015 showed that the DAS spends 7 times the national average on staff training
- ◆ We have 2 types of training:
  - ◆ Budgeted
    - ◇ All divisions submit a wish list on the training they plan for their staff to attend within the financial year
    - ◇ This is usually prepared between September to December and confirmed by March the following year
    - ◇ Divisions are advised to keep to their planned budget
    - ◇ However, sometimes we have training that are not budgeted for but are useful for staff, this will fall under Ad-hoc training
  - ◆ Ad-hoc (usually non-budgeted)
    - ◇ When we have an ad-hoc training, the respective division that the staff is from is advised to make adjustments to the current budget
    - ◇ Either the number of pax attending other training is reduced in order to get some amount for the ad-hoc training or is replaced with a planned training

## 5. Consultants

- ◆ As we believe in training our staff, especially the EdTs to equip them with the expertise and knowledge to develop themselves, so that our children benefit from what they are taught, we engage consultants
- ◆ We have a Research Consultant Professor Angela Fawcett and a number of others that support some of the SES programmes as well as the Curriculum Team
- ◆ These consultants give their views on how to improve teaching resources as well as feedback on any research that takes place within the DAS

## 6. Attachments to schools/institutes

- ◆ There are 2 types of attachments at the DAS:
- ◆
  - ◆ Teachers from the Ministry of Education (MOE) and/or other Educational Institutes coming in to the DAS for lesson observation
    - ◇ The duration for the attachment is between 1 – 10 weeks
    - ◇ The EdT who the teacher is attached to has to have a minimum of 2 years experience
    - ◇ Reports are requested from the teachers who attend attachments at the DAS
    - ◇
  - ◆ DAS EdT's going for lesson observations to MOE schools and/or other Educational Institutes
    - ◇ SPD usually will liaise with schools to arrange for an attachment
    - ◇ We try to send at least 1–2 EdTs
    - ◇ Classes requested for observation – Standard Class, Foundation Class, School-based Dyslexia Remediation (SDR) & Learning Support Programme (LSP)
    - ◇ EdTs who go for these attachments are required to submit PD Reports

The table below shows the number of attachments we have had from January 2016 to August 2016:

To DAS	DAS to other schools
A total of <b>15</b> teachers from <b>4</b> different schools have come to DAS.	A total of <b>14</b> EdTs have visited <b>4</b> different schools

**7. Teams Teaching Teams (TTT)**

- ◆ Teams Teaching Teams was adapted from the ASSETS School in Hawaii, Honolulu
- ◆ This is a yearly event, which SPD has been organising since 2013
- ◆ All staff are expected to attend this event
- ◆ It is an event that encourages sharing of knowledge between staff and the topics shared range from academic to non-academic
- ◆ We usually have at least 20 sessions, each of a 45 minute duration
- ◆ To view a sample site, please view this link: <https://sites.google.com/a/das.org.sg/ttt-2016/>

**8. Attending Local / Overseas Conferences**

- ◆ Staff get opportunities to attend and/or present at conferences both local and overseas
- ◆ These staff are usually recommended by management based on their research papers
- ◆ Staff who present at conferences are expected to write up their research for journal publication, either in Asia Pacific Journal of Developmental Differences (APJDD) or other international journals
- ◆ They are also expected to share their presentations upon their return. Please refer to table below:
- ◆ From January – August 2016, we have attended and presented at the following conferences:

Conference	Local / Overseas	PD Report	TTT Presentation
Attended	Overseas	YES	YES
	Local	NO	YES
Presented	Overseas	YES	YES
	Local	NO	YES
Did not attend or present but poster was presented	Local & Overseas	NO	YES
Did not attend or present but submitted paper/poster. But paper/poster not selected	Local & Overseas	NO	NO



Conference	Number of staff attended and/or presented
British Dyslexia Association (BDA) - United Kingdom	6
Regional Language Centre (RELC) - Singapore	2
Special Education Network In Asia (SENIA) - Malaysia	4
Asia Pacific Dyslexia Festival and Symposium 2016 - Japan	1

## QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PATHWAYS FOR EDUCATIONAL THERAPISTS (EDTs) & PSYCHOLOGISTS

### 1. Preview and Writing tests for recruitment of new EdTs

- ◆ A preview session is conducted for candidates who have applied for the EdT position
- ◆ This session is conducted before the interviews
- ◆ The session is conducted to communicate to the candidates on what is expected of them, the training that they will be going through as well as their career development
- ◆ The writing test is conducted after their 1st interview
- ◆ The purpose of the writing test is to determine the language, grammar and spelling used by the candidate and this is used to short list

### 2. Centre Support for EdTs

- ◆ Every learning centre has an EA allocated to support the EdTs there
- ◆ Some EAs are allocated to 2 learning centres
- ◆ The purpose for this support is to help EdTs with any concerns that they have with regards to their lessons, documents, etc

### 3. Lesson & Documentation Audits for EdTs

- ◆ We conduct two types of QAA audits: (1) Documentation (2) Lesson Observation
- ◆ All MAP EdTs including sessionals will be audited once every financial year

- ◆ EdTs will be notified of the audit 1 week in advance via email
- ◆ Feedback will be communicated to EdTs after the audit
  - i. EdTs will receive their original feedback forms which they will be required to upload in their e-portfolios
  - ii. Summary of the EdTs' audit will be shared with CMs
- ◆ EdTs who have completed their 6-month mentoring will be included in the audit i.e. their third term's documentation
- ◆ SPD, CMs and EdTs will work together to identify further training/support (eg. mentoring) for those who did not meet the necessary criteria
- ◆ A follow-up audit may be carried out after the refresher training/support or after 1 term
- ◆ If the EdT fails to meet the necessary criteria again during the repeat lesson observation/documentation audit despite the training/support given, he or she would be deemed to not to have met the requirements and further monitoring may be required.

#### **Documentation Audit**

- ◆ The following documents from previous term will be audited (e.g. if audit done in Term 3, then documents from Term 2 will be audited):
  - i. MAP Programme Plan with goals for the class/students
  - ii. Lesson Plans
  - iii. Worksheets
  - iv. Students' red files/books of works
  - v. Communication Log
- ◆ Note that documents will be randomly selected by SPD

#### **Lesson Observation Audit**

- ◆ For the Lesson Observation Audit, EdTs are to submit a 1 hour video recording of their class (video should not exceed 3GB)
- ◆ EdTs must show competency in conducting band appropriate lessons in accordance to the MAP Integrated Curriculum lesson plan templates.
- ◆ EdTs must be able to demonstrate in their 1 hour video that they are able to teach comprehension and / or writing
- ◆ The areas that will be looked at are as follows :
  - i. Band A: Language and Vocabulary (oracy), Reading Fluency, Phonemic/Phonological Awareness, Phonics (Review), Writing and /or Listening Comprehension (Band A1 & A2)/ Reading Comprehension (Band A3)
  - ii. Band B: Phonics (Review), Fluency, Language and Vocabulary, Writing and /or Reading Comprehension
  - iii. Band C: Phonics (Review), Fluency, Language and Vocabulary, Writing and/or Reading Comprehension

- ◆ EdTs are advised to submit, where possible, video lesson of a different group from what was submitted previously
- ◆ Along with the video, EdTs are required to submit the lesson plan for that class, worksheets used and the students profile

#### 4. **Quality Assurance for Psychologists**

- ◆ Quality assurance for all psychologists are as follows:
  - i. The creation and maintenance of an e-portfolio of their professional work, achievements, trainings attended and range of cases taken
  - ii. Clocking in of at least 50 hours of continual professional development hours which may consist of attendance of in-service training, external workshops, courses, seminars or conferences, training they conduct for others as well as peer feedback of their work.
- ◆ All psychologists at the DAS are required to be members of a professional body such as the Singapore Psychological Society (SPS). For those with Masters, registration with SPS is necessary before they are deemed to be independent practitioners.

#### 5 **Intensive Remediation (IR)**

- ◆ EdT who would like to recommend their students for one of the following status: IR (1)/IR(2)/IR(3) due to the severity of: behavioural issues, literacy difficulties, a combination of both and/or other aspects that warrant guidance and support.
- ◆ The students should have already been observed under Broad-based Support and Educators would already have the strategies suggested by the observer (Senior EdT or peer) but had little success
- ◆ If it is a new case from Admissions:
  - ◇ Recommendation of student into the IR must be reflected upon assessment on the referral spreadsheet
  - ◇ To include EA who overlooks IR in Placement email sent out to Centre Managers (CMs)
  - ◇ The EA arranges a sit-in observation of student with CM and EdT
- ◆ For a unique case:
  - ◇ CM, Psychologist, EdT and EA (IR personnel) will convene to discuss the suitability of the student in the MAP Programme
  - ◇ Parents may be asked to sign the Placement Agreement Form
  - ◇ EA (IR personnel) will prepare the IR Request form indicating the action plan for the next 1 term

- ◇ EA (IR personnel) will inform other EAs attached to the LC of student who has been highlighted
- ◇ A follow-up with EdT and review will be done in 2 terms/1 semester
- ◇ The review observation will be done by EA (IR personnel) or EA attached to the LC
- ◆ If it is a new case from EdTs:
  - ◇ EdTs may express concern for a particular student and would like to recommend him/her for the IR program due to the challenges and difficulties they may face in their classes.
  - ◇ EdTs could, informally, bring such cases up to either the SPD Team and/or CMs.
  - ◇ CMs to note that following this, EdTs have to fill in the IR Request form which is to be submitted to the SPD Team for a formal follow-up. Submission of request will have to be made between Weeks 1- 4 or Weeks 6-8 of each term
  - ◇ EdT to email the IR request form to the SPD Team for follow-up and consideration
  - ◇ Following discussion with SPD Team and receiving confirmed status of student, CMs will be informed
  - ◇ Monitoring/support/follow-up commences
  - ◇ Review to take place after 2 terms/1 semester

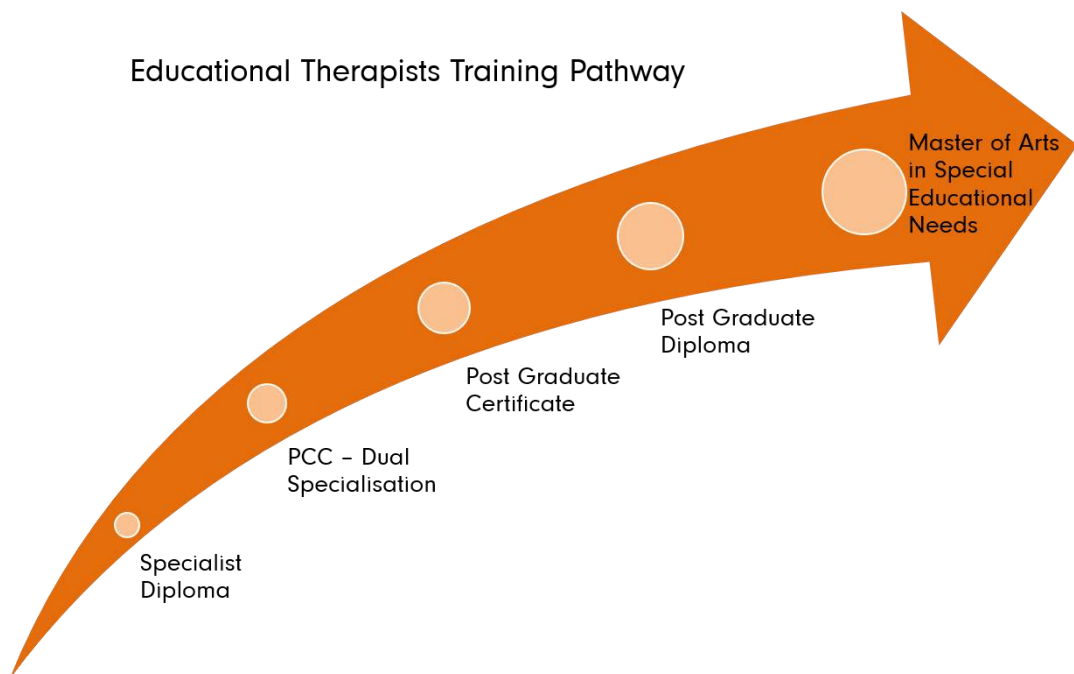
## **6. Appraisals**

- ◆ Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are taken into account when appraising
- ◆ The different groups of both EdTs & Psychologists are evaluated based on different work targets
- ◆ The targets act as a guideline to indicate what are the necessary tasks and qualifications expected to be completed and achieved within the financial year
- ◆ These targets as well as performance are linked to possible promotions and/or bonuses

## 7. Training Pathways

### Educational Therapists

- ◆ Once an Edt has completed the Specialist Diploma and 1 year of employment at the DAS, they can proceed to selecting a Dual Specialisation in one of the Specialised Educational Services (SES) Programme
- ◆ The SES Division consists of 6 programmes:
  - ◇ Math
  - ◇ Chinese
  - ◇ Preschool
  - ◇ Speech & Drama Arts
  - ◇ English Exam Skills
  - ◇ Specialist Tutoring
- ◆ After or while attaining a specialisation, the EdT can proceed to doing their Post Graduate Certificate (PGC)
- ◆ All new EdTs are expected to complete up to PGC in order to be promoted to Senior EdT
- ◆ They can then decide if they want to continue to complete their Post Graduate Diploma (PGD) & Masters for further promotion



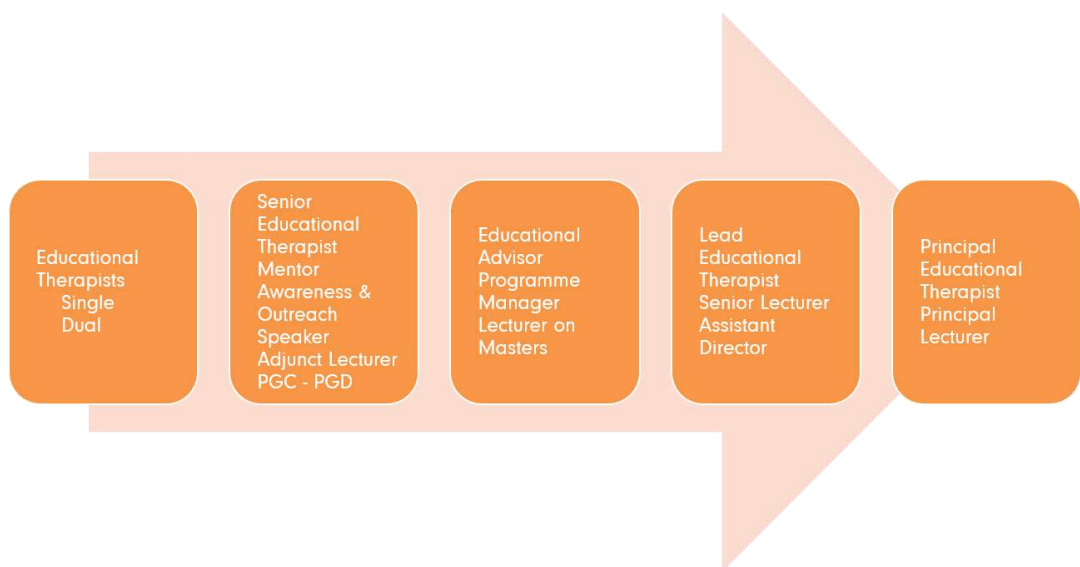
### **Psychologists**

- ◆ When the psychologists first start their employment at DAS, they go through a certificate course conducted by DAS Academy. This course covers the Initial Psychologist Training – 4 weeks theory & Practicum – 5 months of supervision and to complete 20 cases
- ◆ They are also expected to:
  - ◇ do journal/topical presentation and case presentations of 10 hours each
  - ◇ do case consultations and report vetting (ongoing for every case)
  - ◇ attend INSETs/TTT – 24 hours
  - ◇ do 2 peer observations
  - ◇ attend the DAS annual conference
- ◆ In the 2nd year of their employment, they are required to:
  - ◇ attend the 3 weeks Dyslexia and the Essential Literacy Approach (DELA) training
  - ◇ do journal/topical presentation and case presentations of 10 hours each
  - ◇ do case consultations and report vetting (ongoing for every case)
  - ◇ attend INSETs/TTT – 24 hours
  - ◇ do 2 peer observations
  - ◇ attend the DAS annual conference
  - ◇ deliver training of about 3 – 6 hours
  - ◇ attend supported training and sponsorship
- ◆ To be a senior psychologist in the 3rd year, the following have to be met:
  - ◇ complete the Certificate of Competence in Educational Testing (CCET)
  - ◇ do journal/topical presentation and case presentations of 10 hours each
  - ◇ do case consultations and report vetting (ongoing for every case)
  - ◇ attend INSETs/TTT – 24 hours
  - ◇ do 2 peer observations
  - ◇ attend the DAS annual conference
  - ◇ deliver training of about 3 – 6 hours
  - ◇ attend supported training and sponsorship
  - ◇ supervision of psychological trainees (this is optional)
  - ◇ MAP intervention (this is optional)

## CAREER PATHWAYS

### Educational Therapists

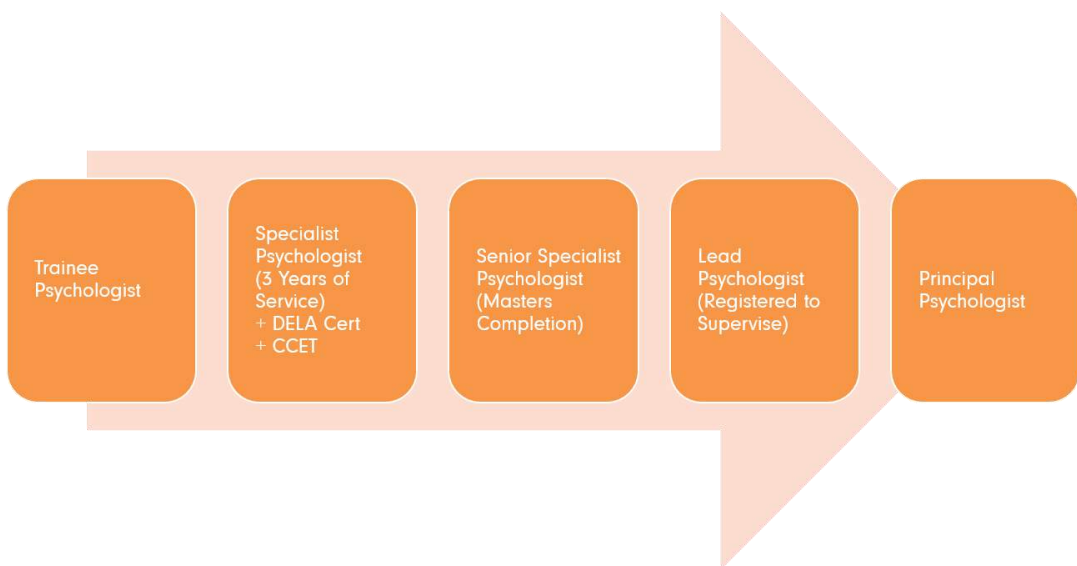
- ◆ As mentioned earlier, EdTs have to complete their PGC and be dual specialised in order to be promoted to Senior EdT
- ◆ As a Senior EdT, they can contribute as a mentor to new EdTs or conduct awareness talks
- ◆ Once they complete their PGD, they can take on the role of an Adjunct Lecturer
- ◆ Moving forward, they can decide to be an Educational Advisor or a Programme Manager
- ◆ Upon completion of their masters, they can convert to being a Lecturer
- ◆ In the following years to come, with experience and continuous upgrading of oneself with training, a Senior Edt can be promoted to a Lead EdT to a Principal EdT, a Lecturer to Senior Lecturer to Principal Lecturer or either can be promoted to an Assistant Director



## Psychologists

- ◆ Trainee Psychologist - 6 months passed probation and DAS certificate
- ◆ To be promoted to a Specialist Psychologist, up to 3 years of service with additional DAS DELA certificate and CCET is required
- ◆ Upon completion of Masters, the Specialist Psychologist can be promoted to a Senior Specialist Psychologist
- ◆ For further promotion to being a Lead Psychologist, the Senior Specialist Psychologist has to be registered and in a position to supervise

Finally, with growth in expertise and continuous upgrading of oneself, a Lead Psychologist can be promoted to Principal Psychologist



## 9. Professional Membership

- ◆ EdTs and Psychologists are highly encouraged to have a professional membership
- ◆ This is part of their career path
- ◆ For EdTs, they are encouraged to be a member of the Register of Educational Therapist (Asia) – RETA, which is an initiative by the DAS
- ◆ For the Psychologists, they are encouraged to be a member of the Singapore Psychological Society (SPS)
- ◆ For SLTs, they are encouraged to be a member of the Allied Health Professions Council (AHPC)



## **Personal Development**

### **1. E-portfolio**

- ◆ The e-portfolio is like an online Curriculum Vitae that was created for staff to include the following:
  - ◇ A small write up about themselves
  - ◇ Qualifications
  - ◇ Sharing of videos or interesting articles
  - ◇ Trainings attended
  - ◇ Continuing Professional Development Hours

### **2. Research**

- ◆ At the DAS, we are very pro-active with research
- ◆ Our staff not only conduct research within the DAS, but they collaborate with other institutes as well
- ◆ We have done collaboration with Temasek Polytechnic, Nanyang Technological University, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy & University of South Wales
- ◆ Our research papers have been presented at renowned conferences like the BDA & IDA and are also published in the Asia Pacific Journal of Developmental Differences (APJDD)
- ◆ As of 2016, we have 10 new research projects and more to come

### **3. MAP Educational Therapist of the Year Award**

- ◆ This award started in 2015
- ◆ It is an effort to further motivate EdTs and to give them the recognition they deserve
- ◆ Who is awarded is not determined by the management, instead it is determined by fellow colleagues through votes
- ◆ Once we receive the votes by the given deadline, the selected staff are viewed by the SPD Team and shortlisted based on several other components like their QAA scores, punctuality, behaviour, etc
- ◆ After the shortlisting process, we then approach colleagues to provide us with a survey that has scoring based on a set of criteria, from this we get the MAP EdT of the year
- ◆ In 2015, we had 2 winners - Miranda Chng & Tarsheeni Rajoo

This handbook documents the range of activities conducted by members of the SPD team and the functions the division serves in order to collaboratively enhance the knowledge skills and abilities of the DAS staff.

In the words of Benjamin Franklin, “without continual growth and progress, such words as improvement, achievement, and success have no meaning.”

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



### **SANDHU MANMEET KAUR**

*Staff Professional Development Division (SPD) Executive*

*Manmeet Kaur has a BSc(Hons) in Business and Management Studies from the University of Bradford. She joined DAS in 2013 as an Administration Officer for the Staff Professional Development Division and was promoted to an Executive in 2015. Throughout her time, she has supported the Staff Professional Division on staff training needs and assisting the Educational Advisors with administrative support. She has been organising the yearly Teams Teaching Teams event since 2014. In 2015, she took on two other portfolios - Administrator for RETA (Register of Educational Therapists Asia) and Research Coordinator. She always looks forward to assisting DAS colleagues to find the best professional development options so that they can provide quality services to DAS clients.*



### **GEETHA SHANTHA RAM**

*Director of MOE-aided DAS Literacy Programme & Staff Professional Development*

*Geetha Shantha Ram is the Director of the MOE-aided DAS Literacy Programme (MAP) and has led curriculum enhancements for the DAS through the Essential Literacy Approach and the current integrated curriculum. Formerly, the Assistant Director of the DAS Academy, Geetha trained Allied educators, parents and other professionals and continues to present at conferences, most recently at the 2016 International Dyslexia Association Conference.*

*Geetha has a Masters in English (NUS) and a Post Graduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (Distinction) (LMU) and with over 10 years of experience supporting children and adults in the area of dyslexia, Geetha constantly aspires to provide a quality service to dyslexics that searches for and realises their true potential and provides them with a view to appreciate their own unique gifts.*

# STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Supporting and enabling our teachers to grow!

