

Revitalization of Campus to Establish Bilingual Chiayi Wenguang English Village

(Courtesy of the Division of Junior High and Elementary Education)



Due to declining birth rates, the utilization of the idle space at schools has become an important issue. Pertinent to Article 13 of the Act for Education Development of Schools in Remote Areas, the local government must make endeavor to integrate and make good use of the schools in remote areas and the resources in the areas so as to fully leverage such schools' social functions. The Wen-Guang Branch of the Zhuqi Elementary School in a remote area was shut down in 2011. Then, the Chiayi County Government obtained a sponsorship of NT\$58.78 million from the Formosa Plastics Group to construct new school buildings and to conduct renovation projects in 2013, plus a self-prepared fund of NT\$7 million for software upgrade and the other fund of NT\$10 million for annual operating expenses. In 2014, the Chiayi Wenguang English Village, the original site of Wen-Guang Branch, was completed and launched officially.

The Chiayi Wenguang English Village is a five-day and four-night English camp school with 60 students per camp session. The program design is well-aligned with the course goals in English and character education. The scenario-based classroom environments and the lively and

interactive teaching by Taiwanese and foreign teachers allow students to be immersed in the learning environment as if studying abroad.

Upon entering the school gate, visitors can see the European castle-style school buildings painted with lively colors. The classrooms are transformed into arrivals and departures lobbies, a waiting room, a check-in counter, a luggage check-in and security check area, a business class area with serving carts, a hotel lobby, a supermarket, and the customs. A series of scenario-based classroom environments enable students to experience the scenario firsthand. In addition to the scenario-based teaching, there are courses, including drama performance and mask catwalks. At night, there are team-building games, a stargazing activity, and an open-air cinema, as well as the singing, dancing, and drama performances that have been creatively conceived by students at the Wenzao Ursuline University of Languages, allowing participating students to learn happily.

The school also employs three foreign and four Taiwanese English teachers. The all-English teaching environment and communication with foreign teachers help to shape students' international perspectives through a thematic teaching approach and enable them to learn English more specifically, and they are also prompted to speak English naturally through group activities. Furthermore, the lessons, covering the aspects of food, clothing, housing, and transportation, as well as the experience of living abroad, enabling them to respect the diverse cultures around the world.

As summed by the K-12 Education Administration, the Chiayi Wenguang English Village has entered its seventh year, and has helped trained many children's language skills and brought English learning into their lives; as such, children can experience how it feels to study abroad without actually going abroad, thereby enhancing the next generation's international language competitiveness in all aspects.