

LEARNING FOR LIFELONG IMPACT

ANNUAL REPORT 2022 - 2023



DAS Academy
ENABLING EXCELLENCE

OUR MOTTO

Enabling Excellence

OUR VISION

To be a world-class academic institution providing education and research in the area of special educational needs.

OUR MISSION

To empower special education professionals and caregivers to help people with special educational needs achieve their full potential.

DAS Academy Ltd (UEN: 201003689Z)

CPE Registration No.201003689Z

Validity: 30 December 2021 – 29 December 2025

Registered Address:

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Main Banker:

OCBC Bank

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Director's Message	4
About DAS Academy	5
Board of Directors	6
Academic and Examination Board	7
Highlights of the Year	8
Funding	13
Success Stories	15
Programme Overview	20
Financial Highlights	21
Governance Evaluation Checklist	22



A MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF DAS ACADEMY



As a domain expert in the disability field, DAS Academy empowers educators, allied professionals and caregivers with knowledge and skills, to provide the best support to children with dyslexia, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder and other Special Educational Needs (SEN).

At the DAS Academy, we believe that if you get things right for learners with SEN, you will get things right for every learner. The effort taken to make instruction accessible to learners with SEN will always improve learning for all other learners in the mainstream classroom.

As always, our team of lecturers-practitioners at DAS Academy is highly committed to the mission of empowering struggling learners and stands ready to deliver contextualised, grounded and practical training for our stakeholders.

Dr June Siew
Head of DAS Academy

ABOUT DAS ACADEMY

The DAS Academy is a Private Education Institution (PEI) registered with the Committee for Private Education (CPE), an agency under the SkillsFuture Singapore (SSG). Formerly the training services arm of the Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS), DAS Academy was officially incorporated on 19 February 2010, to provide training services for parents, caregivers and educators to be well-equipped with skills in supporting learners with dyslexia and other common co-occurring Special Educational Needs (SEN).

DAS Academy specialises in training for educators and parents and empowers them with theoretical knowledge and practical skills to support children with SEN. With a team of practitioner-lecturers from various SEN related disciplines (i.e., educational therapists, psychologists and speech therapists), DAS Academy delivers training that is holistic, practical and grounded in SEN frameworks and theories. The DAS Academy lecturing team also draws on DAS' more than 25 years

of rich heritage of specialist dyslexia assessments and intervention services to provide our adult learners with an applied learning experience.

DAS Academy is a key SEN training provider in the local landscape, with a mission to empower special education professionals and caregivers to help people with SEN achieve their full potential. Our hands-on and practical workshops and certificate courses are often attended by mainstream educators, employees of social service agencies as well as parents and caregivers of children with SEN. The elaborate courses, such as the Specialist Diploma, the Postgraduate and Masters programmes, cater to the growing academic needs of educational professionals in the SEN sector. DAS Academy's vision to be a world-class academic institution providing education and research in SEN is reflected in our ongoing collaborations with the government, and various local and international educational and professional bodies.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



MR LEE SIEW PIN ERIC
Director



MR KAKA SINGH S/O DALIP SINGH
Director



DR CYNTHIA TAN
Director



MR KEVIN KWEK
Director



MS WONG MAY-LYN
Director



MR LEE SIANG
Director

ACADEMIC AND EXAMINATION BOARD



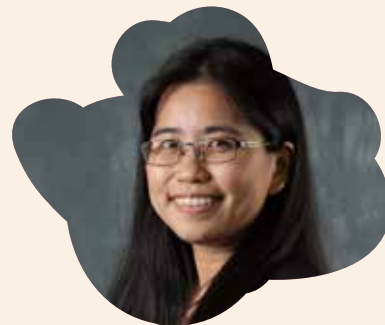
MR LEE SIANG



DR ANGELA FAWCETT



DR GEETHA SHANTHA RAM



LOIS LIM



DR SHIRLEY EGLEY



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES AND BEYOND

RETURN OF DR PRISCILLIA SHEN

Dr Priscillia Shen has returned from her leave from work after having completed her final thesis of Doctor in Education (Dual Award) studies at the Institute of Education, University College London and National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University. Investigating how dyslexia affects bilingual children on second language learning has been her main research interest. Since her first research on “Dyslexia and Chinese language in Singapore” through her Master thesis, the findings contributed to the development of the DAS Chinese Programme in 2013 and DAS Academy’s Chinese workshop and certificate courses in 2014.

Her doctoral institutional-focus study at NTU-NIE explored the linguistic difficulties of English-Chinese bilingual learners with dyslexia face in learning English and Chinese for the purpose of developing a screening



assessment in Singapore and found 6 key categories of difficulties that are cognitive-linguistic, expressive, sentence formation, reading, writing and comprehension. Her final doctoral thesis at UCL-IOE investigated the difference in cognitive-linguistics skills between English-Chinese bilingual learners with and without dyslexia in Singapore and how these cognitive-linguistic skills predict reading development in English and Chinese which further informs how early intervention in building these skills can support struggling readers. With her doctorate qualification, she hopes to continue making a positive impact on dyslexia, bilingualism and early intervention for bilingual learners through her work as a lecturer and researcher.

TRAINING NETWORK MODEL (TNM) 2.0

This year, DAS Academy saw the launch of the Training Network Model (TNM) 2.0. DAS Academy is honoured to be selected as one of the seven key partners of the Social Service Institute (SSI) in developing professionals in the social service sector. To secure the funding, DAS Academy created seven new courses that are aligned with the National Skills Framework. This has allowed professionals and individuals (who are Singaporeans/ Permanent Residents) to enjoy greater accessibility to our courses through

the substantial funding provided by Skillsfuture Singapore (SSG).

With this, our good influence can be further extended to the social service agencies to make a greater impact in the community.

The inaugural run of two TNM 2.0 courses brought in healthy numbers of 30 students. Below is the feedback from our students from the inaugural run of the two courses.

STUDENTS FEEDBACK

Thank you so much to the both of you for this course and I really found it very valuable, especially when I returned to my classroom and suddenly everything seemed clearer with the behaviours that my learners exhibited. From this Executive Function Course, my biggest

takeaway is that I am able to view my learners and their behaviours through a different lens - one that has increased clarity and by relating unwanted behaviours to the learners' executive functions.

(Lim Jia Hui, Educational Therapist)

After this Executive Function Course, I am inspired, empowered and feel lighter:

Inspired - Now I can identify and have better insight into the specific executive functioning skills my child needs supporting in.

Inspired - Now I can identify and have better insight into the specific executive functioning skills my child needs supporting in.

Empowered - Now I am equipped

with strategies and actions I can take to provide the support needed.

Feel lighter - I like this Executive Function Course because I feel supported by fellow parents, teachers, allied educators and social workers in our class. Throughout our three days of discussing in class and outside of class. I am encouraged and inspired by many others in the same boat and know that I am not alone in the challenges I face.

(Serene Mahaffy, Parent)

DAS ACADEMY GRADUATION

After two years of virtual graduations, we finally brought back the physical DAS Academy graduation held at Lifelong Learning Institute. We had Dr Fermin Diez, Deputy CEO, National Council of Social Services (NCSS) and Mr Lee Wee Chee, Director of Social Service Institute (SSI) grace our ceremony.



It was successful on many fronts:

- 0 The smooth and seamless flow of the whole programme, both the main event and the reception
- 0 The immaculate and careful management of all guests – special guests, board, students and their guests, as well as staff
- 0 The impactful messages that communicated the heart of what we are doing, through the heartfelt speeches and well put together videos

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE ENTIRE DAS FAMILY:

Priscillia for orchestrating this entire event, Nurul and Suriati – the genies who made things happen, Mariam and Rebecca who eyeballed the speeches of the valedictorians, Publicity and Publication (P&P)'s team heartfelt videos, and our captivating emcees Steven and Hamada who lifted the mood with their lively and professional hosting skills!

But our success was beyond the organisation of this physical event. Over the many years, our work has clearly made an impact in the sector. The feedback from Fermin and Wee Chee (below) has made us very proud of ourselves. The heart and values that define us have come through very clearly from the graduation.

FEEDBACK

I loved the speeches and the DAS vibe – caring, passionate and united. A constellation of stars like you said!

– **Mr Lee Wee Chee**

I left yesterday very impressed with you, the team and the quality of the students. Left my impressions in one of the linkedin posts that you all posted yesterday.

– **Dr Fermin Diez**

NEW DAS ACADEMY PARENT ORIENTATION SERIES

In this fresh initiative for new DAS parents, Dr June Siew, reveals the secrets of unlocking a dyslexic child's potential through the growth mindset. It can be daunting for parents to get a dyslexia or SEN diagnosis. Upon a diagnosis, they can be plagued by doubts, concerns and anxiety.

Many of them think of SEN labels as being defeating and limiting. It is not wrong. A child with hidden disabilities is like a balloon with a tiny, almost unnoticeable hole. Despite blowing doubly hard to inflate the balloon, it never really reaches its full size because of the air that escapes through the tiny hole. Furthermore, having dyslexia in the context of a competitive education system can be very intimidating.

This termly one-hour interactive zoom session was very well-received and provided parents a platform to find out more about proactive parenting support, talk about their fears and clarify their questions.

NEW WEDNESDAY WEBINARS SERIES

In this fresh new initiative, we have packaged our longer courses into 45 minutes impactful bite-sized format to reach out to busy professionals and parents who only have lunchtime to spare. We have seen good success with the sessions that cover a variety of practical support

topics ranging from English literacy, to executive functions, to Chinese, to math, to ADHD. These monthly complimentary sessions have attracted SEN officers, educators, therapists and parents who are passionate about the proactive support of children with SEN.

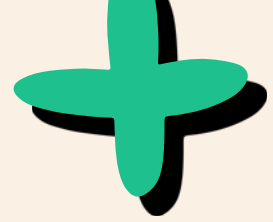


FUNDING



DAS Academy strives to make our courses more accessible to community partners and stakeholders through various course funding schemes:

THE CAREGIVERS TRAINING GRANT (CTG) provided by the Agency of Integrated Care (AIC) continues to make training more affordable for parents and caregivers of learners with SpLD/SEN to attend workshops by the DAS Academy in order to build capabilities to better support their children at home. At the same time, DAS offers additional funding to DAS parents whose children are on the bursary scheme to attend courses by the DAS Academy at highly subsidised fees. Parents are thus provided with an increased level of support and empowerment in supporting their children at home.



The **DYSLEXIA ASSOCIATION OF SINGAPORE (DAS)** continues to put aside some funding for parents to access training at DAS Academy since 1 April 2019. This has made the certificate courses more attainable for DAS Parents whose children are on bursary.

PROFESSIONAL CAPABILITY GRANT (PCG)

continues to support the training of social service professionals from Social Service Agencies. This funding which is administered by National Council of Social Service (NCSS) is available for 14 DAS Academy certificates.

This year, seven of DAS Academy's courses become eligible for **70% SKILLSFUTURE FUNDING VIA THE TRAINING NETWORK MODEL (TNM) 2.0** initiative by the Social Service Institute (SSI). Funding can be accessed by both Singaporeans and Permanent Residents. These courses are recommended for professionals or self-learning individuals working with children with dyslexia, ADHD and other Special Educational Needs.

These funding schemes ensure that the community supporting the children with dyslexia, from parents to educators to service providers, has easy access to the most updated knowledge and skills and a winning mindset to empower the children to achieve their fullest potential.



SUCCESS STORIES

The DAS Academy would like to give our heartiest congratulations to our students who graduated from our Master of Arts and Specialist Diploma programmes in 2022 and share the success stories of our valedictorians. Through these CPE-registered programme, we strive to impart the essential knowledge and skills to educational professionals and people who wish to make a positive change in the lives of children with learning differences.

We sincerely wish our graduates all the best in their personal or professional endeavours in the field of dyslexia and/or special educational needs.





**NURUL
HUDA**

**Valedictorian of Master of Art
in Special Educational Needs /
Additional Learning Needs**

Nurul Huda is a dedicated educator with a solid focus on the individual needs of differently-abled students. She started her journey as a Special Educational Needs Officer in 2007 and was introduced to the Dyslexia Association of Singapore during her trainee days. During her eight years as an SEN officer in a mainstream school, she worked with numerous students with varying special educational needs who struggled to learn at a suitable pace due to the academic demands of the curriculum and school. Nonetheless, she held on to the belief that every student can learn and they have their own strengths and weaknesses,

and that she should be the advocate for these students. After obtaining her degree in psychology, she joined the DAS as an educational therapist in 2015 and enrolled in the Master programme in 2017. She acknowledges that like her students, she too completed her academic milestones at her own pace, and it is possible to achieve success despite all challenges especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. Besides supporting students in the DAS Main Literature Programme (MLP), Huda is also supporting students in the Prep2PSLE programme and is an Edtech Integration Specialist.

She believes that technology can be used as a supplementary tool to enhance the learning of students with special educational needs.

DARRELL TAN

Valedictorian of Spec Dip in Learning Support for SpLD

Darrell is a primary level English educator who is a learner at heart. He started his journey as a beginning teacher 8 years ago with the firm belief that education is the vehicle for social mobility. As a learner on a never-ending journey to expand his repertoire in teaching, he has constantly sought out ways to engage his students. His experiences with students with SEN, particularly dyslexia, further reinforced the need to look for more pedagogical tools so that he can empower his students in unpacking the gift of literacy.

He found a beacon of light at DAS Academy by enrolling in the Specialist Diploma programme. He was able to unpack the English language much better using the Orton-Gillingham approach, which not only benefited students who had specific learning differences, but also those who did not have a good foundational base in English.

Equipped with the newfound pedagogical tools and knowledge, he was not only able to apply them as a Primary school educator, but also further implement these knowledge and skills as a Master Trainer overseeing the curriculum.



LIM JIA HUI

Valedictorian of Spec Dip in Ed Therapy (English Support)

Jia Hui's foray into teaching began about four years ago. Through an overseas learning trip in university, she was deeply inspired by the passion and resilience teachers in India had despite the various challenges they faced. After encountering students with specific difficulties through her internships, she was introduced to the DAS and subsequently became one of its educational therapists for the Main Literacy Programme, supporting students with dyslexia and other co-occurring challenges. At the time she joined the DAS, Jia Hui was relatively new to the special education field and together with her

colleagues of the same batch, she was thrown into a flurry of challenges in the midst of COVID-19 pandemic. From being virtually trained on Orton-Gillingham principles and application of educational therapy skills to navigating the world of online classes and getting to know the DAS students virtually, she truly enjoys the meaning and growth the experience brings looking back.

Recognising the importance of putting relationships before academic rigour, she constantly strives to build students' confidence, motivation, and grit to positively guide the path of their future.





**LIM
CHING CHING**

Valedictorian of Spec Dip in Ed Therapy (Chinese Support)

Ching Ching's teaching journey began with a passion to make learning Chinese fun and engaging through stories from Chinese culture and its history. Prior to embarking on her journey with the DAS, she has been volunteering as a Sunday class teacher at a Chinese cultural association for close to 17 years and until today. During the Covid-19 circuit breaker in 2020, she enrolled in online classes on nurturing social-emotional learning aspects of children and youths. Inspired by what she learnt and determined to help children who lag behind the mainstream education, Ching

Ching made plans to switch her then administration job to teaching and became an educational therapist for the DAS Chinese Programme.

It was a steep learning curve for Ching Ching as she had neither formal teaching experience nor a Chinese-related degree. Quoting a saying by Mencius (孟子): "The foundation of a country is the family (国之本在家), the foundation of a family is the individual member (家之本在身)", she strongly believes that every student wants to do their best and every teacher has to be that constant factor in their lives who love and embrace their individual learning differences.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

PROGRAMME NUMBERS

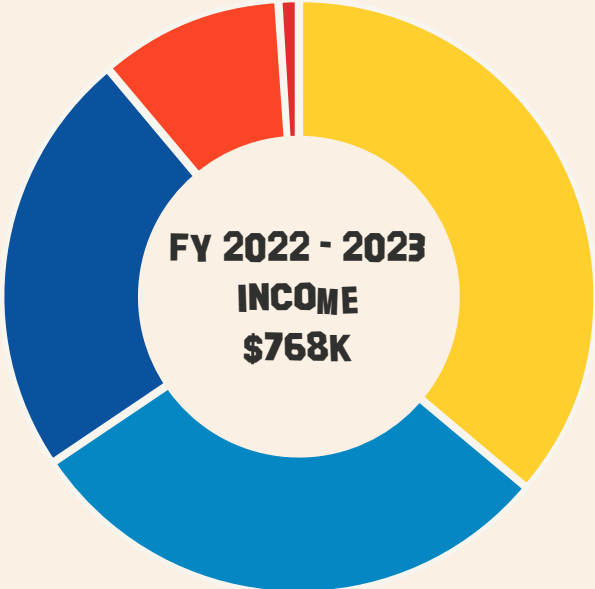
There were a total of 37 programmes conducted for FY2022-2023 with a total of 513 participants and students. These programmes included 20 workshops, 17 certificate courses, customised trainings, the Specialist Diploma in SpLD, the Specialist Diploma in EdTs and the Master Programme in Special Educational Needs/ Additional Learning Needs.

SUMMARY

Master of Arts in Special Educational Needs/ Additional Learning Needs (MA SEN / ALN)	15
Specialist Diploma in Specific Learning Differences	16
Specialist Diploma in Learning Support for Specific Learning Differences (SpLD)	43
Specialist Diploma in Educational Therapy (English Support)	33
Specialist Diploma in Educational Therapy (Chinese Support)	3
Certificate Courses	297
Workshops	216
Customised Training	273

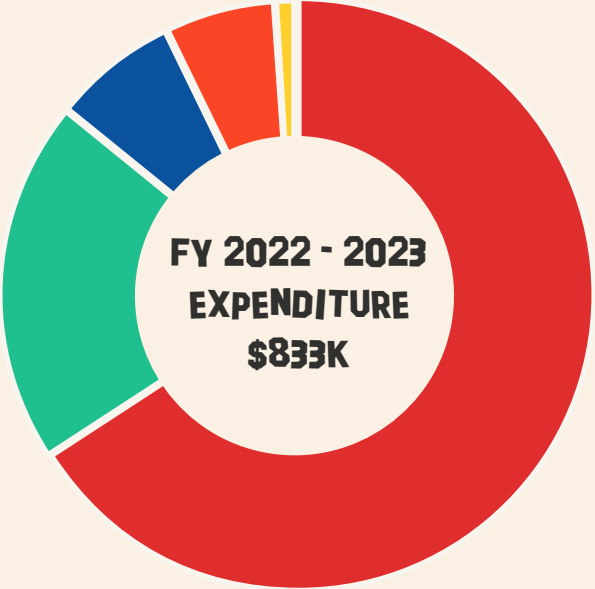
FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

TOTAL INCOME



- Master of Arts in Special Educational Needs / Additional Learning Needs \$180k (23%)
- Specialist Diploma \$221k (29%)
- Certificate Courses \$278k (36%)
- Workshops \$79k (10%)
- Others \$9k (1%)

EXPENDITURE



- Staff costs \$552k (66%)
- Course expenditures \$60k (7%)
- Rental Expenses \$163k (20%)
- Depreciation of plant and equipment \$6k (1%)
- Other operating expenses \$48k (6%)

GOVERNANCE EVALUATION CHECKLIST

Name of Organisation: DAS Academy Ltd

UEN: 201003689Z

Preview Governance Evaluation Checklist Submission for the period Apr 2022 – Mar 2023

S/N	Code guideline	Code ID	Response (select whichever is applicable)	Explanation (if Code guideline is not complied with)
Board Governance				
1	Induction and orientation are provided to incoming governing board members upon joining the Board.	1.1.2	Complied	The Board of Governance of DAS Academy Ltd refers to the Board of Directors of its parent company, Dyslexia Association of Singapore.
	Are there governing board members holding staff* appointments? (Skip items 2 and 3 if "No")		No	As above
4	The Treasurer of the charity (or any person holding an equivalent position in the charity, e.g. Finance Committee Chairman or a governing board member responsible for overseeing the finances of the charity) can only serve a maximum of 4 consecutive years. If the charity has not appointed any governing board member to oversee its finances, it will be presumed that the Chairman oversees the finances of the charity.	1.1.7	Complied	
5	All governing board members must submit themselves for re-nomination and re-appointment, at least once every 3 years.	1.1.8	Complied	
6	There are documented terms of reference for the Board and each of its committees.	1.2.1	Complied	
Conflict of Interest				
7	There are documented procedures for governing board members and staff to declare actual or potential conflicts of interest to the Board at the earliest opportunity.	2.1	Complied	
8	Governing board members do not vote or participate in decision making on matters where they have a conflict of interest.	2.4	Complied	

S/N	Code guideline	Code ID	Response (select whichever is applicable)	Explanation (if Code guideline is not complied with)
Strategic Planning				
9	The Board periodically reviews and approves the strategic plan for the charity to ensure that the charity's activities are in line with the charity's objectives.	3.2.2	Complied	
Human Resource and Volunteer* Management				
10	The Board approves documented human resource policies for staff.	5.1	Complied	
11	There is a documented Code of Conduct for governing board members, staff and volunteers (where applicable) which is approved by the Board.	5.3	Complied	
12	There are processes for regular supervision, appraisal and professional development of staff.	5.5	Complied	
Financial Management and Internal Controls				
13	There is a documented policy to seek the Board's approval for any loans, donations, grants or financial assistance provided by the charity which are not part of the charity's core charitable programmes.	6.1.1	Complied	
14	The Board ensures that internal controls for financial matters in key areas are in place with documented procedures.	6.1.2	Complied	
15	The Board ensures that reviews on the charity's internal controls, processes, key programmes and events are regularly conducted.	6.1.3	Complied	
16	The Board ensures that there is a process to identify, and regularly monitor and review the charity's key risks.	6.1.4	Complied	
17	The Board approves an annual budget for the charity's plans and regularly monitors the charity's expenditure.	6.2.1	Complied	
	Does the charity invest its reserves (e.g. in fixed deposits)? (Skip item 18 if "No")		No	

S/N	Code guideline	Code ID	Response (select whichever is applicable)	Explanation (if Code guideline is not complied with)
Fundraising Practices				
	Did the charity receive cash donations (solicited or unsolicited) during the financial year? (Skip item 19 if "No")		No	
	Did the charity receive donations in kind during the financial year? (Skip item 20 if "No")		No	
Disclosure and Transparency				
21	The charity discloses in its annual report – (a) the number of Board meetings in the financial year; and (b) the attendance of every governing board member at those meetings.	8.2	Complied	The Board of Governance of DAS Academy Ltd refers to the Board of Directors of its parent company, Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS). Hence, refer to DAS' Board meetings disclosure.
	Are governing board members remunerated for their services to the Board? (Skip items 22 and 23 if "No")		No	Disclosed in the financial statements Note 15
	Does the charity employ paid staff?		Yes	
24	No staff is involved in setting his own remuneration.		Yes	
25	The charity discloses in its annual report – (a) the total annual remuneration for each of its 3 highest paid staff who each has received remuneration (including remuneration received from the charity's subsidiaries) exceeding \$100,000 during the financial year; and (b) whether any of the 3 highest paid staff also serves as a governing board member of the charity. The information relating to the remuneration of the staff must be presented in bands of \$100,000. OR The charity discloses that none of its paid staff receives more than \$100,000 each in annual remuneration.	8.4	Complied	This was disclosed in the financial statements Note 15(b).