Rotary Club offers lessons in business

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The Education and Manpower Bureau and the Rotary Club have launched a scheme to extend learning beyond the classroom by making use of business contacts from club members.

Under the “Adopt-A-School” programme, Rotary Clubs in various districts will form partnerships with nine secondary and primary schools to provide a variety of activities for students, teachers and parents. These include seminars on finance and stress management, work-shadowing as well as visits to enterprises. The programme starts this academic year.

Secretary for Education and Manpower Arthur Li Kwok-cheung said this week that schools were no longer the only source of information for students.

“People from all walks of life have a part to play in educating our youngsters,” he said.

“A good combination of knowledge gained in the classroom and experience of the outside world will contribute a lot to [students’] studies, communication skills and self-confidence,” Professor Li added.

Fung Pik-yee, principal of Apichau Kaifong Primary School, the only primary school in the scheme, said her school was paired up with two Rotary Clubs.

Ms Fung said she was happy about being included in the partnership. “Recognition by the Rotary Club is a boost for our teachers,” she said.

The principal said she wanted to make use of the opportunity to widen the exposure of her teachers and students. In December, teachers in her school will visit a golf course in Shenzhen. Ms Fung said she hoped they would acquire some management skills there, adding that students and parents might have the opportunity to visit offices of professionals.

Ms Fung said her students would reciprocate by taking part in Rotary Club events. “I want my students to understand the importance of giving,” she said.

Francis Wann, chief editor of the bulletin of the Rotary Club of Kingspark, said the programme was not going far enough.

“Schools usually want us to help with organising activities through our extensive networks,” he said. “But we don’t want our partnership to stop there... We don’t want to be just an extra pair of helping hands in running activities.”

Mr Wann said Rotarians would like to get involved in the school management and engaged in high level meetings with the EMB.

“We want to make changes happen,” he said.