

立法會
Legislative Council

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seen by the Administration)

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**Subcommittee to Study Issues Relating to the Provision of
Boarding Places, Senior Secondary Education and Employment
Opportunities for Children with Special Educational Needs**

**Minutes of meeting
held on Monday, 28 May 2007, at 10:45 am
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building**

- Members present** : Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung (Chairman)
Hon LEE Cheuk-yan
Hon Mrs Selina CHOW LIANG Shuk-ye, GBS, JP
Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong
Hon CHAN Yuen-han, JP
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
Hon Jasper TSANG Yok-sing, GBS, JP
Hon Audrey EU Yuet-mee, SC, JP
- Public Officers attending** : Item II
- Mrs Fanny LAM FAN Kit-fong
Principal Assistant Secretary (School Administration
and Support), Education and Manpower Bureau
- Ms Eugenie WOO Yu-chun
Senior Specialist (Educational Psychology Service/New
Territories), Education and Manpower Bureau
- Mrs Mary MA LO To-wan
Commissioner for Rehabilitation, Health, Welfare and
Food Bureau
- Mr SIT Tung
Assistant Director (Rehabilitation and Medical Social
Services), Social Welfare Department

Dr Miranda Lee Siu-yuen
Principal Medical & Health Officer, Department of
Health

**Attendance by
invitation** : Item II

Heep Hong Society Parents Association Concern
Group for Inclusive Educaiton

Ms NG Lai-ho
Convenor

Hong Kong Association for Specific Learning
Disabilities

Mrs Iris NGAN KEUNG Wai-lin
Chairperson

Mrs LAU LI Man-ying
Vice-Chairperson

Hong Kong Society of Child Neurology and
Developmental Paeditrics

Dr CHAN Chok-wan
President

Division of Educational Psychology, Hong Kong
Psychological Society

Mrs Eva SUM LEE
Convenor of PR Sub-Committee

Ms Kathy WONG
Member

Caritas - Hong Kong Youth & Community Service

Ms LAM Wai-fan
Caritas Jockey Club Integrated Service for Young
People - Tak Tin Supervisor

Ms MOK Wai-har
Caritas Youth & Community Service, Specific
Learning Difficult Service Project In-change

Mr TSUI To
Student

Mr LAU Shing-shun

Ms FUNG Chun-lin

Ms TAM Sau-wah

Hong Kong Council of Social Service

Mr CHAN Kam-ming
Chief Officer, Children and Youth Service

Clerk in attendance : Miss Odelia LEUNG
Chief Council Secretary (2)6

Staff in attendance : Mr Stanley MA
Senior Council Secretary (2)6

Miss Carmen HO
Legislative Assistant (2)6

Action

I. Confirmation of minutes
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1943/06-07]

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 April 2007 were confirmed.

II. The Ombudsman's recommendations on assessment of children with specific learning difficulties
[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1841/06-07(01) and CB(2)1942/06-07(01)]

2. The Subcommittee deliberated (proceedings of meeting at **Annex**).

Views of individuals and deputations

3. The Subcommittee received four individuals and six organizations to present views on the provision of assessment and support services for students with specific learning difficulties (SpLD students). The major views are as follows -

Action

Identification and assessment

- (a) Early identification of SpLD students was crucial to the provision of timely intervention and support in both academic and affective domains. The Administration should standardize the provision of a comprehensive assessment service for primary one (P1) students. The Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB) should coordinate efforts and resources in the public and private sectors in this respect.
- (b) The prevalence of SpLD in reading and writing (dyslexia) at different levels of studies in Hong Kong should fall within 9.7% to 12.6%, instead of only 0.99% as assessed by EMB at P1 level. The concern about possible adverse labelling effects on the children for being identified to have mild or moderate SpLD at an early age was unjustified.
- (c) All public sector and private schools should be required to administer the "Observation Checklists for Teachers" to P1 students and assessments on SpLD at different levels as specified by EMB.
- (d) The format of assessment reports should be standardized and simplified to facilitate understanding and follow up. An assessment report should include the result of the intellectual assessment of the student, performance of his/her competencies and the psychologist's recommendations on his/her learning. Parents should be provided with the assessment reports of their children. Appeal on matters relating to assessment should be available.
- (e) A working group comprising representatives from the key stakeholders should be set up to coordinate statistics on assessment and classification of SpLD students at different levels, and transfer of SpLD information among relevant institutions such as from schools to the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA).
- (f) The Administration should outsource the assessment services to the private sector to reduce the waiting time for SpLD assessment in the short run, and formulate policies to increase the supply of educational psychologists in the long run. To protect the interests of parents, the Administration should regulate the provision of assessment and educational services for SpLD children in the private sector.

Action

Support and resources

- (g) There was an urgent need for the provision of resources and support to secondary schools to assist SpLD students in learning.
- (h) EMB should provide schools with guidelines on curriculum design and teaching to support SpLD students in learning and collaborate with schools to provide appropriate support for SpLD students in education.
- (i) EMB should adopt the principle of "monies following the students" for the provision of resources to schools with enrolment of SpLD students, and provide all schools including Direct Subsidy Scheme schools with similar level of resources and support for enrolment of SpLD students.
- (j) EMB should provide professional development programmes on SpLD for principals and teachers to identify, teach and support SpLD students in schools. School social workers should also be trained to support SpLD students in learning and development.
- (k) EMB should collaborate with schools and Non-Governmental Organizations to conduct programmes on SpLD for parents to learn the basic knowledge and skills to help their SpLD children in learning.
- (l) The school management should arrange remedial classes to support SpLD students in learning, organize group and social activities for SpLD students to enhance self-image and develop social relationship, and inculcate an inclusive culture in school.
- (m) Both schools and HKEAA should review and improve the provision of special examination arrangements and modulation in assessment of the performance of SpLD students on an on-going basis.

Views of members

4. Members requested the Administration to follow up on the recommendations of The Ombudsman to improve assessment services for SpLD students. They urged the Administration to -

Identification and assessment

- (a) work in partnership with parents and other stakeholders to enhance early identification of SpLD students;

Action

- (b) arrange the conduct of SpLD assessment for students at pre-primary or P1 level by the Department of Health (DH), and for students at P6 by EMB;
- (c) formulate policies on recruitment of additional educational psychologists to reduce the waiting time for assessment in the short term, and on the development and supply of qualified educational psychologists to improve the services in the long term;
- (d) provide information on assessments conducted by DH for pre-primary, primary and secondary students in the past years;

Support

- (e) establish a working group consisting of stakeholders including parents, teachers, educational psychologists, social workers and related medical and healthcare professionals to collaborate their efforts and the use of school and community resources to support SpLD students in education;
- (f) standardize and simplify the format of assessment reports and provide parents with the report to facilitate the provision of follow-up and support services by schools and parents for SpLD students;
- (g) issue guidelines on the handling and transfer of student data between the schools concerned to facilitate the provision of continuous and consistent support for SpLD students in primary and secondary schools; and
- (h) publicize the procedures for application of special examination arrangements and the criteria for the provision of modulation in assessment of the performance of SpLD students in public examinations.

Motion

5. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong moved the following motion -

(Translation)

"That the Subcommittee requests that -

- a. the Administration should review whether the assessments adopted in Hong Kong on children with special educational needs (SEN) are too stringent, and whether such assessments conform with the recognized international standards;

Action

- b. the Administration should unify the standards of assessment on children with SEN, which include the results of their intellectual assessment, performance of their competencies and the psychologists' recommendations on their learning;
- c. assessment reports should be made available to the parents of a child, whereas the relevant assessments should be completed by the Department of Health and the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB) respectively before the child is admitted to Primary One and Secondary One, and with the parents' consent, the reports can be submitted to the schools concerned;
- d. schools must follow the psychologists' recommendations on learning when teaching the students, EMB's subvention shall follow the students, and the schools must deliver the implementation report on the standardized teaching measures to parents on the annual Parents' Day;
- e. the Administration should promptly increase the number of educational psychologists through training and overseas recruitment to cope with the needs of students;
- f. the Administration should ensure that the relevant services be extended to Direct Subsidy Scheme schools; and
- g. the Administration should convene advisory group meetings with parents and the social services organizations concerned on a regular basis to solve the problems in partnership."

6. The motion was unanimously supported by members.

7. Members requested and the Administration agreed to provide written response to the motion and the views raised before the commencement of the new legislative session.

Admin

III. Any other business

8. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 12:45 pm.

**Proceedings of the meeting of
Subcommittee to Study Issues Relating to the Provision of
Boarding Places, Senior Secondary Education and Employment
Opportunities for Children with Special Educational Needs
on Monday, 28 May 2007, at 10:45 am
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building**

Time marker	Speaker	Subjects	Action required
000000 - 000420	Chairman	Confirmation of minutes	
000421 - 000703	Chairman	Welcome to deputations/individuals and introduction of the issues to be discussed.	
000704 - 000901	Administration (Admin)	Briefing on the Admin paper [LC Paper No. CB(2)1942/06-07(01)]	
000902 - 001648	Hong Kong Society of Child Neurology and Developmental Paediatrics	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)1997/06-07(01)]	
001649 - 002032	Mr TSUI To	Presentation of views - sharing of personal experience	
002033 - 002323	Mr LAU Shing-shun	Presentation of views - sharing of experience of his daughter who was a SpLD student	
002324 - 002756	Ms FUNG Chun-lin	Presentation of views - sharing of experience of her daughter who was a SpLD student	
002757 - 003202	Ms TAM Sau-wah	Presentation of views - sharing of experience of her daughter who was a SpLD student	
003203 - 003609	Division of Educational Psychology, Hong Kong Psychological Society	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)1997/06-07(03)]	
003610 - 004124	Hong Kong Council of Social Service	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)1997/06-07(05)]	
004125 - 004622	Caritas - Hong Kong Youth & Community Service	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)1997/06-07(04)]	
004623 - 005134	Heep Hong Society Parents Association Concern Group for Inclusive Education	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)1997/06-07(01)]	
005135 - 005727	Hong Kong Association for Specific Learning Disabilities	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)1997/06-07(02)]	

Time marker	Speaker	Subjects	Action required
005728 - 010850	Chairman Admin	<p>PAS(SAS)'s response to views of deputations/individuals, highlighting that -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - both EMB and DH had set up regular co-ordination meetings involving more senior officials to take forward the Ombudsman's recommendations concerning both department, apart from the long standing liaison meetings between the two departments at the working level; and - the prevalence rate of SpLD would vary according to the assessment criteria adopted. 1% of students at P1 level were assessed by EMB as students with severe SpLD. <p>SS(EPS/NT)'s explanation on the rationale of assessment accommodation for students with SpLD in school and public examinations, to illustrate that the accommodation in school internal examinations might not be exactly the same as that in public examination; and the concept of adjusted teaching for students with mild or moderate SpLD at primary levels.</p> <p>PMHO(DH)'s assurance that DH would continue to listen to the views of stakeholders on service delivery for children with SpLD.</p>	
010851 - 012551	Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong Chairman Admin	<p>Mr CHEUNG's concern about the lack of consistent criteria and standards adopted by EMB and DH for assessment of SpLD. His suggestions to conduct assessments for students at pre-primary levels by DH and at P6 by EMB, with corresponding increase in resources for the appointment of additional educational psychologists. Assessment reports should be standardized and presented in such a way as to facilitate understanding and follow-up and provided to parents for reference. Additional resources should be allocated to schools on the basis of SpLD students enrolled.</p> <p>PAS(SAS)'s explanation on the mechanism, the checklists, instruments, and tools developed for identification of SpLD, the assessments conducted by EMB and DH, and the limited supply of qualified educational psychologists by local universities. Her agreement to consider the suggestion of conducting assessment at pre-primary and P6 levels by DH and EMB respectively. She also stated that it was a worldwide trend to treat SpLD as a</p>	

Time marker	Speaker	Subjects	Action required
		<p>learning problem and adopt a response-to-intervention approach by observing the students' learning needs and supporting them with teaching and learning strategies.</p> <p>SS(EPS/NT)'s clarification that EMB and DH used the same assessment tools and criteria in assessing SpLD students.</p>	
012552 - 013716	Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung Admin	<p>Mr LEUNG's views and suggestions that -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Admin should ascertain the prevalence of SpLD students by conducting an assessment for all students at P1 or pre-primary levels and P6 level; - HKEAA should publicize the criteria for provision of special examination arrangements and modulation in assessment of SpLD students; - DSS schools should provide appropriate support for SpLD students in learning; - SpLD student profile should be updated and transferred to the schools concerned to facilitate teaching; and - EMB should coordinate regular meetings with key stakeholders including parents and professionals from various disciplines to enhance support for SpLD students in learning. <p>PAS(SAS)'s response that EMB held regular meetings with parents and would reinforce measures to remind schools to transfer student data from primary to secondary schools as appropriate; the subsidy for DSS schools had included provision of support for students with special educational needs; and HKEAA had held briefings for schools and parents on provision of special examination arrangements for students with SEN.</p> <p>SS(EPS/NT)'s response that the current identification of SpLD students by teachers at P1 was reliable; and additional tools would be available to assist secondary school teachers in this regard. Her concern about the additional workload for teachers if they were required to fill in the screening checklist for each and every student at P1, because currently teachers fill in the checklists only for students whom they observed to have learning difficulties..</p>	

Time marker	Speaker	Subjects	Action required
013717 - 015710	Mrs Selina CHOW Admin Chairman	<p>Mrs CHOW's views that assessment reports should be given to parents. Collaboration of efforts among parents, EMB, DH and schools was essential for enhancing support services for SpLD students. Her emphasis that parents were most familiar with their SpLD children's needs and schools should work in close partnership with parents. Her suggestion that EMB should encourage parents to contribute towards helping their children to learn and EMB and DH should simplify the presentation of assessment reports to facilitate understanding and follow-ups by parents, teachers, social workers, etc.</p> <p>PAS(SAS) agreement with Mrs CHOW's view on partnership with parents in supporting students with SEN and remarked that EMB personnel, schools and their student support teams would usually had meetings to discuss the support strategies on each case of students assessed to have SpLD or other SEN.</p> <p>Chairman's remark that not all schools had a student support team or held meetings to discuss and follow up the case of each student assessed to have SpLD.</p> <p>SS(EPS/NT)'s explanation that EMB emphasized home-school collaboration, the adoption of a whole-school approach and the establishment of an inclusive culture in recent years. The establishment of student support teams in primary and secondary schools were in progress. The guidelines on provision of support for SpLD students for primary schools were already available while those for secondary schools would soon be issued.</p> <p>PAS(SAS) explanation that primary schools under the new funding mode were required to establish student support teams; and schools would organize follow-up meetings with parents and educational psychologists after identification of each SpLD student.</p> <p>Chairman's view that EMB and DH should follow up the recommendations of the Ombudsman to involve parents and NGOs in the provision of support for SpLD students. His suggestion that EMB and DH should simplify the presentation of assessment reports to facilitate understanding and the provision of follow-up services and support for SpLD</p>	

Time marker	Speaker	Subjects	Action required
		students by NGOs, parents and other stakeholders. PAS(SAS)'s agreement to meet with parents and NGOs to discuss support measures for SpLD students.	See para 4(e) of the minutes
015711 - 015907	Chairman Admin Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong	Chairman's enquiry about the provision of assessment for students at pre-primary, primary and secondary levels by DH. PMHO(DH)'s agreement to provide the information after the meeting.	See para 4(d) of the minutes
015908 - 020203	Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong Chairman Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung	Motion moved by Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong and supported by all members present.	See para 5 of the minutes
020204 - 020250	Chairman Admin	At the Chairman's request, Admin agreed to provide written response to the motion before the start of the next session.	See para 7 of the minutes

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
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