

For information
on 11 July 2009

Panel on Education

School Leaving Arrangements for Students

Studying in Schools for Children with Intellectual Disability

Purpose

This paper aims to explain to members the school leaving arrangements for students of schools for children with intellectual disability (ID schools).

School leaving arrangements for students of ID schools

2. Owing to the limitations in intellectual functioning of students studying in ID schools, these schools are offering an adapted curriculum, which differs significantly from the mainstream curriculum. During the 12 years of education, ID schools have to set learning objectives and draw up an individualized education programme for each student with intellectual disability (ID) based on his/her development and ability. Schools will review and revise the programme regularly to reflect the actual learning progress of each student with ID and to ensure that he/she will attain the academic level corresponding to his/her ability by the time he/she leaves school.

3. Students with ID are normally admitted to a school at the age of six and receive 12 years of education. They are pursuing an adapted curriculum provided by the school. At present, for those students with ID who have reached the age of 18 but have yet to receive 12 years of education because of late admission to school resultant from various causes, the Education Bureau (EDB) approves in principle their extension of stay in the following school year.

4. The EDB has always been flexible in handling applications for extension of stay. In accordance with the specific mechanism, students who have reached the age of 18 can apply for extension of stay due to various justified reasons. Apart from allowing an extension of stay for students at 18 or above who are absent from school for half a school year due to health or other justifiable reasons, schools can also let students with justifiable reasons to extend their stay for one year by making full use of the vacancies in the approved classes. A number of such applications are approved each year.

5. At the operational level, we need to plan for the number of classes to be operated in the following school year. To this end, we ask schools to submit the number of students who are leaving school at the age of 18 and the information on those who wish to extend their stay each year. Based on the existing enrolment, the estimated number of new students and the number of school leavers, we determine the number of approved classes and handle the applications for extension of stay.

6. The above school leaving arrangements for students with ID have been implemented for years. The New Senior Secondary academic structure will be introduced in all schools on a one-grade-per-year basis starting from the coming school year. Students with ID will continue to receive 12 years of education, and the established school leaving arrangements, including the flexible mechanism for handling applications for extension of stay, will still be in place.

7. We are examining the applications for extension of stay received in this school year, and will inform the schools of the outcomes as and when appropriate.

8. Members are invited to note the content of this paper.

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