

For discussion  
on 17 December 2010

**LegCo Panel on Education**  
**Review of the Pre-primary Education Voucher Scheme**

This information note appraises Members of the implementation of the Pre-primary Education Voucher Scheme (PEVS).

**Background**

2. The objective of the PEVS introduced since the 2007/08 school year (sy) is for all children of the relevant age group to receive affordable and quality pre-primary education. This is to be achieved through—

- (a) parental choice, facilitated by direct fee subsidy for parents in the form of a voucher, coupled with transparency of kindergarten (KG) operations;
- (b) well-qualified teaching staff, facilitated by financial support for professional upgrading and ongoing professional development; and
- (c) accountability, facilitated by a quality assurance mechanism that combines self-evaluation with external review.

**Current State of Development**

*Number of KGs and pupils under PEVS*

3. As of the 2010/11 sy, 757 out of 951 KGs or about 80% are taking part in the PEVS. Among them, 111 are private independent KGs that have been converted to non-profit making (NPM) operation since the 2007/08 school year. In the 2010/11 sy, approximately 123 600 KG children receive fee subsidy under the PEVS. The value of the voucher in the 2010/11 sy has been increased to \$14,000 per student per annum (pspa) and will be increased to \$16,000 pspa in the 2011/12 sy. Needy families may apply for additional fee subsidy on top of the voucher. The existing levels of fee remission for half-day KGs and whole-day KGs, including the voucher subsidy, are \$18,700 pspa and \$30,200 pspa respectively.

### *Professional upgrading of principals and teachers*

4. With effect from the 2009/10 sy, all newly appointed principals are required to possess a Bachelor in Education (Early Childhood Education) and to complete the Certification Course for KG Principals. Up to August 2010, about 490 KG principals/teachers have completed the Certification Course for KG Principals. All teachers are expected to complete the Certificate in Early Childhood Education [C(ECE)] by the 2011/12 sy. As at the beginning of the 2010/11 sy, over 90% of KG teachers were either holding or pursuing the C(ECE).

### *Quality Review (QR)*

5. As at September 2010, Education Bureau (EDB) has completed quality review for about 81 % of the NPM KGs joining PEVS. The QR reports have been posted on the EDB website for reference by parents and members of the public. 80% of the respondents to the post-QR questionnaire survey conducted by EDB agreed that QR could accurately evaluate school performance. About 90% agreed that QR was helpful for their school development planning. 87.6% agreed that the process of QR was open and transparent.

### *Publication of KG Profile and information booklets for parents*

6. The Profile of Kindergartens and Kindergarten-cum-Child Care Centres is updated annually to facilitate parents in their choice of KGs. The PEVS KGs are required to disclose information on the deployment of funds to various expenditure areas, in addition to other essential operational and curriculum details. Printed version of the Profile is available for public access at the Regional Education Offices of EDB, Public Enquiry Service Centres of the Home Affairs Department, Maternal and Child Health Centres of the Department of Health, Integrated Family Service Centres of the Social Welfare Department and public libraries. Booklets on ‘怎樣幫助你在幼稚園階段的孩子’ and “兒童發展知多少—給學前兒童的家長” have also been prepared and distributed to parents through KGs.

### *School-based professional and developmental support*

7. School-based support services of EDB provide tailor-made onsite support services to pre-primary educators to assist them in designing and implementing high quality learner-centred educare programmes that cater for a wide range of young

learners. Workshops on school self-evaluation, school development planning have been conducted for principals and middle managers. These workshops are well-received by the participants.

### **Review of the PEVS**

8. A Working Group (WG) was set up under the Education Commission (EC) in October 2009 to carry out a review of the PEVS, with the following terms of reference:

- (a) to collect the views of stakeholders on the implementation of the PEVS;  
and
- (b) to make recommendations to the Government.

9 The WG has had focus group meetings with the key stakeholders, including academics of the local teacher education institutions, school sponsoring bodies, parents, KG principals and teachers as well as early childhood education bodies to gauge their views. 39 written submissions were also received. Following the series of focus group meetings held earlier this year, the WG met with the key stakeholders again in October 2010 to further gauge their views.

10. Upon receiving the WG's report from EC, the Administration will study it in details and consider the way forward.

**Education Bureau  
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