

For information on
27 May 2013

**Legislative Council Panel on Education
Subcommittee on Integrated Education**

Services Provided to Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders,

Speech and Language Impairment and Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties

Purpose

This paper briefs Members on the identification and support services provided by the Government for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), Speech and Language Impairment (SLI) and Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (EBD).

Background

2. ASD is a developmental disorder caused by a malfunctioning of the brain. Symptoms are generally apparent before a child reaches the age of three. Students with ASD display impairments in three aspects of their daily lives, namely social interaction, speech comprehension and expression, as well as behaviour. In Hong Kong, ASD is diagnosed by psychiatrists, pediatricians with relevant professional training or clinical psychologists.

3. Language is the building block of knowledge and an important tool for thinking and social interaction. The most common types of SLI manifest in students are articulation, language, voice and fluency problems. Students with SLI have varying degrees of difficulties in learning new words, writing compositions, solving problems, as well as participating in group discussions and project learning.

4. EBD refers to a persistent condition in which students' emotion and behaviours are significantly different from their age peers such that their learning, social and family lives are adversely affected. Physiological, psychological, cognitive and environmental factors could interact with each other and contribute to the formation of EBD which could consist of various combinations of symptoms.

Some students with developmental disorders, such as ASD, Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder and SLI, could have EBD.

5. Based on the records of the Education Bureau (EDB), the numbers of students with ASD and SLI attending public sector ordinary schools in the 2012/13 school year are as follows¹:

	Primary Schools	Secondary Schools
ASD	2 840	1 310
SLI ²	1 940	190

6. As regards the tertiary education level, figures are compiled based on the information provided voluntarily by individual students pursuing full-time sub-degree and undergraduate programmes. For the 2012/13 academic year, there are 11 students with ASD and 4 students with SLI³.

Identification and Assessment Mechanism

7. The Government has established an effective system for the early identification and assessment for children with developmental disorders, including children with ASD and SLI, with a view to providing them with appropriate support. Apart from the Developmental Surveillance Scheme implemented at the Maternal and Child Health Centres (MCHCs) of the Department of Health (DH) for children aged 0-5, DH, the Hospital Authority (HA), EDB, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) and non-government organizations (NGOs) jointly launched the Comprehensive Child Development Service (CCDS) by phases since 2005, to enhance and early identify pre-primary children with developmental problems. CCDS makes uses of MCHCs of DH and other service units as platforms to identify at-risk pregnant women mothers with postnatal depression, families with psychosocial needs and pre-primary children with health, developmental or behavioural problems. Children in need and their family members will be referred to the appropriate health and welfare service units for follow up. Pre-primary institution teachers can also refer children in need to the

¹ EBD refers to the emotional and behavioural conditions of students. It is not a disability type and the symptoms could be transient, hence EDB does not have the relevant statistics.

² According to the records of the 2012/13 school year, there are over 20 000 students with SLI attending public sector primary and secondary schools. The figure in the table only represents students with SLI as their major special educational needs (SEN) type and who have been diagnosed with moderate or severe SLI.

³ Excluding students pursuing non-UGC funded sub-degree/degree programmes.

MCHC of the district for assessment and appropriate treatment. Under CCDS, a referral and reply system has been developed and implemented in all pre-primary institutions since 2008. In addition, a “Pre-primary Children Development and Behaviour Management - Teacher Resource Kit” was prepared by the DH in collaboration with EDB and SWD to enable kindergarten teachers to have a better understanding about the CCDS operation and referral system, and enhance their knowledge in common pre-school developmental and behavioural problems to facilitate early identification and referral of children in need for assessment and treatment.

8. The Child Assessment Service (CAS) of DH provides comprehensive multi-disciplinary team assessment for children who are under 12 years of age with special educational needs (SEN), including children with ASD, SLI and EBD, and arrange rehabilitation services for them as necessary. The assessment team comprises multi-disciplinary professionals such as paediatricians, clinical psychologists, medical social workers, audiologists, speech therapists, optometrists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, public health nurses and other auxiliary personnel. They collaborate to provide children suspected with these developmental difficulties with assessment and diagnosis. Children concerned will be referred to the Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Specialist Outpatient Clinics or Speech Therapy Department of HA for further diagnosis and treatment as necessary according to their individual needs and family circumstances.

9. Moreover, all Primary one (P1) to Secondary six students who have enrolled in Student Health Service centres (SHS) of DH would be given a series of health services during their annual appointment, including physical health assessment and individual health counseling. Medical and nursing staff will also screen the psychosocial conditions of the students through interviews with the students and their parents and by means of the health assessment questionnaires. Students with suspected signs of EBD, ASD and SLI but have not received related assessment before, would be further assessed by the clinical psychologists of SHS. If necessary, these students would be referred to HA, NGOs or schools for further follow-up.

10. For students with ASD, their symptoms are generally apparent before they reach the age of three. In other words, in most cases, their disability is diagnosed before P1, and they should have received the pre-school rehabilitative services provided by SWD as mentioned in paragraphs 19 and 20 below, with a view to enhancing their communication and social skills, as well as behavioural performance

through early intervention. Subject to the consent of the parents, students with both ASD and intellectual disability (ID) are placed in special schools for students with ID. Through the Resource Teaching Programme for Autistic Children in Special Schools, students with ASD studying in special schools are provided with enhanced support in addition to normal classroom teaching in the form of individual or small group intervention, in-class support and follow up intervention. On top of providing special schools with additional remedial teachers, EDB has compiled “A Guide to the Resource Teaching Programme for Autistic Children in Special Schools” (2002) to facilitate schools in implementing enhanced teaching programmes for students with ASD.

11. Students with ASD having average intelligence will study in ordinary schools. EDB encourages parents to inform schools of their children’s SEN as soon as practicable, while promoting schools to adopt the Whole School Approach (WSA) to deploy appropriate resources and professional support to cater for the needs of these students. With the consent of parents, schools can access the assessment reports of students diagnosed with ASD through the Primary One Admission System and the information transferred from the DH/HA before they are admitted so that the early intervention mechanism can be activated in a timely manner.

12. Teachers in public sector primary and secondary schools who suspect their students to have ASD and require professional assessment or consultation services can refer the students to school-based educational psychologists (EPs) for preliminary assessment and follow-up. Where necessary, EPs will refer students to psychiatrists for assessment. Some Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Services under HA also accept direct referrals from schools.

13. EDB has also designed the “Teachers’ Observation Checklist for Identifying Speech and Language Impaired Students in Primary Schools” and “Teachers’ Observation Checklist for Identifying Speech and Language Impaired Students in Secondary Schools” to help teachers in early identification of students with speech and language difficulties, including articulation, voice, fluency, language and other related learning problems. Schools may refer the students concerned to school-based speech therapists or the Speech and Hearing Services Section of EDB as necessary for assessments and follow-up services.

14. For early identification of students at risk of EBD, school staff can review student records, conduct daily observation, student survey and Assessment

Programme for Affective and Social Outcomes (APASO) and subsequently make necessary environmental, instructional, guidance and activity arrangements. If the problems persist, teachers can refer the students to student guidance teachers/personnel for further assessment with tools such as checklists and questionnaires so as to learn more about the salient factors of the EBD and to provide extra supporting services such as group counseling and parental training. If the problems of individual student persist and warrant professional assessment or consultation services, teachers can refer the student to professionals, such as EPs, clinical psychologists, family social workers or psychiatrists for in-depth assessment, diagnosis and treatment. Based on the results of the professional assessment and diagnosis, school staff will provide necessary support such as instructional, emotional and individual support as appropriate.

15. The multi-disciplinary professional teams of HA comprising healthcare practitioners in various disciplines, including child psychiatrists, paediatricians, clinical psychologists, nurses, speech therapists and occupational therapists, provide early identification, assessment and treatment services for needy children. In 2011-12, an additional 48 members of the teams including doctors, nurses and allied health professionals had been recruited to the multi-disciplinary teams to provide the service.

Support Services

Medical Services

16. CAS of DH provides interim support services for parents, such as talks, workshops and practical training, to help them understand their children so that they can give their children better care and seek early intervention. For diagnosed cases, children concerned will be referred to the Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Specialist Outpatient Clinics or Speech Therapy Department of HA for further diagnosis and treatment as necessary according to their individual needs and family circumstances. Subject to the consent of the parents, CAS will refer preschool children in need to receive preschool rehabilitation services under SWD's subvented programmes. For school-aged children, assessment reports of the CAS will be sent to EPs via EDB to facilitate school personnel to take note of the educational needs of the children concerned and provide them with timely support. CAS would also provide an assessment summary to parents for their onward submission to schools for early preparation for provision of special educational support.

17. The professional teams of HA provide appropriate treatment and training to children diagnosed with ASD, with a view to enhancing their ability in communication, socialization, emotion management, problem solving, learning and life skills, etc. Knowledge about ASD is also provided to the parents and carers of children diagnosed with ASD in order to enhance their understanding of the symptoms and treatment needs of the children. In addition, HA's professional teams maintain close liaison with related organizations, such as early training centres or schools, to provide appropriate support according to the developmental needs of the children. In terms of support to children with SLI, the HA provides speech therapy services as appropriate to pre-school children with SLI or children in need of medical rehabilitation services such as those who have undergone cleft lip and repair surgery.

18. The SWD sends medical social workers to station at CAS and the psychiatric wards and clinics of HA with a view to working in collaboration with the team of medical professionals to jointly develop children's rehabilitation plan so as to assist the implementation of the above-mentioned support and services.

Rehabilitation Services

19. The SWD provides children with disabilities from birth to six years old, including those with ASD and SLI, with early intervention through pre-school rehabilitation services, with a view to enhancing their physical, psychological and social developments, thus improving their chances of participating in ordinary schools and daily life activities, and helping their families meet their special needs. For details, please visit the website of SWD at http://www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_pubsvc/page_rehab/sub_listofserv/id_serpresch/.

20. The Government has been steadily increasing the provision of pre-school rehabilitation places. Over the past six years, the Government has allocated funding to provide about 1 500 additional places, representing an increase of nearly 30%. There are currently a total of 6 230 pre-school rehabilitation places. The SWD anticipates that about 607 additional places will come on stream in 2013-14. Furthermore, the Community Care Fund launched an assistance programme on "Training Subsidy for Children who are on the Waiting List of Subvented Pre-school Rehabilitation Services" in December 2011, with a view to providing training subsidy at a maximum of \$2,500⁴ a month for pre-school children from low-income families who are in need of rehabilitation services, thereby enabling them to receive self-

⁴ Starting from 1.5.2013, the maximum of the subsidy has been increased from \$2, 500 to \$2,615.

financing services operated by NGOs and facilitating their learning and development. Moreover, the SWD, through its District Support Centres for Persons with Disabilities, provides one-stop support and training services for persons with disabilities (including children with disabilities) living in their respective geographical districts to facilitate their integration into the community, and provides training, educational courses, talks, workshops, etc. for their carers so as to enhance their caring ability. In addition, the Parents/Relatives Resource Centre also organises social and recreational activities for parents/carers of children with disabilities to facilitate experience sharing and mutual support.

Education Services

21. The Disability Discrimination Ordinance (DDO) came into force in 1996. The Code of Practice on Education (the Code) issued by the Equal Opportunities Commission also took effect in 2001. The Code provides schools and educators with practical guidelines and assists educational establishments in developing policies that prevent and eliminate disability discrimination. The Code stipulates that educational establishments should not discriminate against students with disabilities and have the obligation to provide reasonable accommodation for students with SEN, including adaptations to teaching, communication and assessment methods. Hence, the rights of students with SEN have been protected under the existing law in Hong Kong. In fact, the adoption of the Whole School Approach to Integrated Education (IE) in Hong Kong is in line with the global trend in the development of IE. In order to support ordinary schools to provide appropriate services to students with SEN, EDB has been providing schools with additional resources, professional support and teacher training.

Additional Resources

22. To help public sector primary and secondary schools support their students with SEN, including those with ASD, SLI and EBD, EDB has been providing schools with additional resources on top of the recurrent subvention for ordinary schools, including Learning Support Grant (LSG), the Integrated Education Programme, the Intensive Remedial Teaching Programme and provision of additional teachers for schools with Territory Band Three and bottom 10% junior secondary students, etc. For students with severe EBD or ASD, EDB will consider providing schools with a time-limited grant where appropriate for employing teaching assistants to help the students concerned to establish classroom routines.

23. In terms of support to students with SLI, EDB provides schools with the Enhanced Speech Therapy Grant (ESTG) for employing their own speech therapists or procuring school-based speech therapy services. Eligible public sector primary schools are provided with a basic grant according to the number of approved classes each year and a top-up grant based on the number of students with moderate or severe SLI. The ESTG has become a recurrent subvention since the 2009/10 school year.

Professional Support

24. Since most students with ASD are already diagnosed before their admission to P1, the student support teams, as a general practice, will meet with the students and their parents to make preliminary assessment of the children's situation and needs, and obtain the education plans and progress reports prepared by the child care centres/kindergartens before the commencement of the school year. Students with ASD are encouraged to join the adjustment programmes for P1 students organised by schools/NGOs/hospitals during summer vacation. To facilitate early integration into school, some schools will assist these students in familiarising with the general school rules and routines, as well as in getting to know the channels to seek necessary assistance before the start of the school year. Furthermore, teachers may make reference to related teaching resources for students with ASD, such as making use of the checklist entitled 「自閉症兒童課堂及社交適應評估量表」 (2007) which was commissioned to the Department of Psychology of the University of Hong Kong by EDB, to promptly assess students' learning needs before devising suitable teaching programmes for them. Also, EPs will explain to teachers the needs of students with ASD and the key strategies to teach them. As for students with ASD who have greater adjustment difficulties, including those with both ASD and ID, EPs will help schools put in place more intensive support measures before these students report to school. Examples include arranging different visual reminders in class as early as possible to help students establish appropriate classroom behaviour, reinforcing compliance behaviour in class through personalized reward programme, and arranging collaborative teaching at the beginning of school year through which immediate learning support and feedback can be provided, etc.

25. School professionals, including guidance teachers, school social workers and EPs, also provide support and guidance services for students with learning or adjustment difficulties (including students with ASD or EBD). Should the behavioral and/or adjustment problems of the students with EBD persist despite school-based remedial support provided, schools may, upon parental consent, refer

the students to the Adjustment Unit for pull-out remedial support provided by EDB or the short-term adjustment programmes organised by schools of social development. We will consult and seek the assistance of psychiatrists for students with ASD who show severe adjustment problems.

26. EDB launched the School Partnership Scheme in 2003/04, under which a school support network has been established. Through the network, ordinary schools with rich experience in IE are encouraged to serve as resource schools and share with other ordinary schools their knowledge and practices in supporting students with SEN. In the 2012/13 school year, we have made arrangements for 5 secondary schools and 8 primary schools to serve as resource schools. These resource schools work closely with some other ordinary schools as partners and share their experience and strategies in addressing the diverse needs of individual students through case seminars, on-site support, school network meetings and district sharing sessions. In addition, 12 special schools have been invited to serve as special schools cum resource centres (SSRCs). Where necessary, SSRCs for the intellectually disabled will offer short-term learning programmes to ordinary school students with ASD and ID who have experienced significant adjustment difficulties.

27. In addition, EDB has all along been collaborating with tertiary institutions to develop theory-driven and evidence-based teaching model and materials. The structured strategies and learning materials can help teachers enhance the social, communication and adaptive behaviours and skills of the students with ASD.

28. EDB formed the Hong Kong Social Thinking Research Team with a university and an NGO in 2007 to localize the social thinking training curriculum (ILAUGH model) developed by Ms Michelle Winner, renowned American scholar. A set of training materials applicable to local secondary students was published and distributed to all secondary schools in Hong Kong in 2009. The Hong Kong Social Thinking Research Team is now summing up the experience it gathered over the past few years in promoting ILAUGH and delivering training to school staff. Supplementary information on the social thinking training curriculum is being compiled, which are expected to be made available for use in the 2013/14 school year. Tools and materials developed by EDB for students with ASD in recent years are listed at Annex.

29. To step up support for students with ASD attending ordinary school, EDB launched a pilot project on enhancement of support services for students with ASD in

the 2011/12 school year. The pilot project comprises two parts. For the first part, NGOs are commissioned by EDB to provide participating schools with three-year structured on-top group training for students with ASD, covering areas like social cognition, communication, emotion management and learning skills, with a view to facilitating their academic and social integration. In the 2012/13 school year, 39 secondary schools and 109 primary schools joined this part of service. As for the second part, a tiered support model is developed and piloted in 30 primary schools. School staff are supported to provide systematic support for junior primary students with ASD on the developmental, preventive and remedial dimensions. Assessment tools and intervention strategies will also be developed and tried out in the project. The consolidated knowledge and experience will be compiled into an operation manual for dissemination to all primary schools in Hong Kong upon completion of the project.

30. As regards the support for SLI students, specialists from EDB visit schools regularly to understand the support for SLI students and the needs of individual schools, and where appropriate give professional advice to schools on the provision of more effective school-based support for the students. To ensure that schools with the ESTG are putting such resources into proper uses, specialists from EDB pay visits to these schools to understand the implementation and progress of school-based speech therapy service. The specialists also conduct reviews of individual SLI students with a view to understanding their speech and language problems, as well as their progress in speech and language skills. Apart from rendering professional advice, specialists from EDB also collaborate with teachers to incorporate speech therapy elements and therapeutic strategies into their teaching for the benefit of their SLI students in their learning.

31. In addition, EDB has developed therapeutic and resource packages on various themes for teachers and parents to support SLI students and children respectively. Apart from distributing the packages to schools and parent-teacher associations, we have also uploaded them onto HKEdCity (<http://www.hkedcity.net/>) so that teachers and parents can make use of relevant strategies to help students overcome SLI. Details of the packages are at Annex.

32. Our school curriculum aims at enhancing students' psychological health and promoting healthy living through the acquisition of "knowledge", "skills" and "values and attitudes". The various key learning areas or subjects, such as General Studies in primary education, Life and Society in junior secondary education and Liberal

Studies in senior secondary education, comprise contents on developmental changes, stress management, and healthy lifestyle, etc. These help foster students' positive attitudes, which in turn reduce their emotional and behavioural problems. EDB has also rolled out a series of guidance and discipline programmes, including the Understanding Adolescent Project for primary schools, the Enhanced Smart Teen Project for secondary schools in collaboration with the disciplined services, and the "Pupil Ambassador: Active, Bright and Caring" Scheme for promoting life education in primary and secondary schools.

33. Besides, EDB has strengthened the student guidance service since the 2002/03 school year and currently, all primary schools have school-based student guidance teachers/personnel who support students and their parents individually or through group programmes. As for secondary schools, school social work service is provided by the SWD. With effect from the 2000/01 school year, the SWD has fully implemented the initiative of "one school social worker for each secondary school" in all secondary schools.

Professional Development

34. Since the 2007/08 school year, EDB has been providing serving teachers with structured training courses designed to support students with SEN pitched at Basic, Advanced and Thematic levels (BAT Courses). The core and elective modules of the Advanced Course cover all types of SEN. Course providers will offer elective modules on different types of SEN, including ASD and SLI, having regard to participants' preferences. For the five school years from 2007/08 to 2011/12, schools admitting students with ASD were required to have at least one teacher completed the thematic course on catering for students with ASD. Similarly, schools admitting students with SLI were also required to have at least one teacher completed the thematic course on catering for students with SLI. Practicum or attachment to a special school and/or an ordinary school forms part of the curriculum in individual courses to enhance the practical elements of the training and further strengthen participating teachers' professional capacity. According to EDB's records, up to the end of the 2011/12 school year, among all public sector ordinary schools, 99.3% primary schools and 80.3% secondary schools have 10% or more of their teachers having received special education training. Some 80% public sector primary schools have 30% or above teachers with special education training. EDB has launched a new round of teacher training programmes as from the 2012/13 school year. Following the practice of the previous years, we have informed individual

schools of their teacher training situation to facilitate them to arrange systematically their teachers to attend training taking into account needs of the students and their teacher training plan. Enhancing teachers' professional capacity in catering for students with SEN is our policy target. We will keep in view the progress in teacher training of the schools with a view to further increasing the number of teachers with special education training.

35. Starting from the 2012/13 school year, we have offered a new round of professional development courses for teachers, and the elective modules of the Advanced Course and the Thematic Courses have been re-grouped into three categories, namely, (1) cognition and learning needs; (2) behavioural, emotional and social development needs; and (3) sensory, communication and physical needs. Thematic courses on behavioural, emotional and social development needs cover the knowledge and skills necessary for taking care of students with ASD or EBD. As required by EDB, each public sector ordinary school should have at least one teacher completing the related thematic courses on each type of SEN.

36. Starting from the 2007/08 school year, EDB has commissioned annually a tertiary institution to run a 120-hour thematic course on Psychological Approach to Effective Strategies in Handling Students' Challenging Behaviour to enhance teachers' understanding of the psychological approach and using the approach to formulate appropriate strategies for the support of students with SEN. The main objective of the course is to enhance teachers' understanding of students' developmental needs, including students' deviant and unruly behaviour, low self-esteem and some common emotional and behavioral problems. Through theoretical discussions and case analysis, the course helps teachers develop positive attitudes and effective strategies in helping students handle crises that they may face in different stages of development. EDB also provides teachers with the Certificate Courses on Student Guidance and Discipline for Teachers, which cover topics on understanding and managing students with learning/emotional/behavioural difficulties and preventive measure.

37. Moreover, EDB also organises from time to time workshops, seminars, talks and experience sharing sessions for school heads, teachers, teaching assistants and professionals to enhance their awareness and understanding of students with different types of SEN (including those with ASD and SLI) and with EBD. In the 2011/12 school year, EDB held 5 seminars and workshops for teachers and various professionals to enhance their awareness of, and equip them with, the skills to support

students with ASD, attracting some 250 participants. In September 2013, Dr Brenda Myles, a distinguished scholar, will be invited to give talks on effective support strategies for students with ASD to primary, secondary and special school teachers in Hong Kong. She will also give professional advice to the Pilot Project on WSA to Provide Tiered Support for Students with ASD. In the 2012/13 school year, EDB collaborated with a university in Hong Kong to offer professional training programmes for student guidance teachers and social workers in secondary schools to strengthen their skills in managing and supporting students with EBD. Besides, 13 seminars and workshops have been organized for school heads, teachers and speech therapists in the past two school years to further develop their skills in supporting students with SLI, which were attended by some 780 participants. In the 2012/13 school year, EDB invited Professor Bonnie Brinton, a renowned scholar, to give a thematic seminar on effective strategies on enhancing social competence of students with SLI for teaching staff and speech therapists of primary, secondary and special schools in Hong Kong. In the 2013/14 school years, EDB will invite two famous scholars, Professor Nickola Nelson and Dr. Kathleen Whitmire, to give talks in Hong Kong, in which they will share their views on the latest developments in the assessment of students with SLI and effective strategies for supporting students with SLI.

Special Examination Arrangements

38. On top of daily learning support, appropriate special examination arrangements (examination accommodations) are provided for students with SEN. EDB published the information leaflet on WSA – Assessment Principles and Strategies in 2004 and the Guidelines on Special Examination Arrangements for Students with SEN in Internal Assessment in 2009, which set out the general principles and strategies on special internal assessment arrangements, including detailed arrangements for students with ASD and SLI. The information has been uploaded onto the EDB website. In addition, EDB officers organise talks/workshops for schools on a regular basis to assist schools in further fine-tuning their school-based special examination policies and measures.

39. As regards public examinations, the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) provides special examination arrangements to candidates with SEN including those with ASD and SLI according to their needs. HKEAA has set up the Committee on Special Needs Candidates, comprising representatives from EDB, special schools, secondary schools, tertiary institutions,

Committee on Home-School Cooperation, and experts in the fields on educational psychology and occupational therapy. EDB has been working closely with the HKEAA to review continuously the special examination arrangements, including the types, target groups, criteria and arrangements.

Home-School Co-operation

40. Communication and co-operation between parents and schools are essential for supporting students with SEN. To enhance parents' understanding of their roles, EDB issued and uploaded onto its website the Parent Guide on WSA to IE in the 2008/09 school year. The Guide provides information on the procedures for identifying and assessing different types of SEN (including ASD and SLI) and on various support strategies. EDB also organises workshops on different topics for students in need and their parents to help them acquire the skills in improving language and communication ability, and also the skills in supporting students with EBD.

41. When providing speech therapy services to students with SLI, schools will keep parents informed of the relevant arrangements and the therapeutic progress of their children. Speech therapists will arrange training for parents and involve them in speech therapy sessions as an observer as appropriate to better equip them with the knowledge and skills in supporting their children with SLI.

42. Under the pilot project on enhancement of support services for students with ASD mentioned in paragraph 29 above, workshops and consultations for parents are also provided to enhance their skills in managing their children with ASD. They also receive emotional support via the services.

Cross-sector Collaboration

43. As mentioned in paragraph 27 above, EDB has all along been collaborating with tertiary institutions to develop diversified teaching materials for use by specialists, teachers and parents for strengthening support to students with SEN.

44. EDB also supports and participates in the Jockey Club District-based Network for Supporting Students with ASD Programme. Since the 2011/12 school year, three non-profit-making organisations have been supporting students with ASD through case management and by giving assistance to teachers, parents and school

system level. The EDB staff attended coordination meetings and related steering committee meetings under the programme to exchange views on the contents and strategies of the programme with service providers to ensure the achievements can be sustained.

45. To support students with more severe EBD, schools can conduct multi-disciplinary case conferences, where appropriate, in which psychiatrists, medical social workers, EPs and school personnel will discuss and work out the appropriate support strategies to deal with the emotional, social and learning problems of these students.

46. EDB also actively participates in the planning of the annual “Hong Kong Autism Awareness Week” and its relevant activities, working in partnership with various parents groups, NGOs and public health agencies to promote awareness and acceptance of people with ASD among teachers, parents, students and the public.

Service Effectiveness

47. At present, the Child & Adolescent Psychiatric Services of HA provides early identification, assessment and treatment for about 5,000 children with ASD. HA will continue to review and assess the effectiveness and the demand of the service targeted at ASD cases so as to better meet the needs in various aspects.

48. The CAS of the DH provides various educational activities for parents of children with SEN, organises or participates in educational seminars for the public. All these help enhance public awareness of children with SEN. As shown by the post-workshop questionnaires returned by parents, these activities have achieved pleasing results.

49. Under the School Development and Accountability Framework, schools should be open and transparent in their operation. Schools should establish a regular communication mechanism to help parents learn about school-based support measures for students with SEN, keep them informed of their children’s learning progress and enhance their involvement in supporting their children’s learning. On the implementation of the WSA to IE, schools are required to give details about their IE policies, resources allocated for that purpose and support measures for students with SEN in their annual reports, school websites and/or school profiles. A sample report is available at the Operation Guide on the WSA to IE for schools’ reference.

Moreover, the EDB officers will continue to monitor and advise schools on their efforts to achieve openness and transparency through regular school visits and year-end reviews. EDB will also remind schools of the importance of and ways to enhance transparency.

50. As observed by EDB during regular school visits and on the basis of information collected from schools' year-end self-evaluation reports, schools in general have put in place mechanisms for planning, implementing and evaluating support services for students with SEN. As revealed in schools' self-evaluation reports, students with SEN have shown improvements in their social adjustment, learning performance and learning attitude. Home-school co-operation has also been reinforced, while an inclusive culture and the spirit of the WSA have gradually taken root in schools.

51. Regarding the pilot project on the enhancement of support services for students with ASD, EDB requires the service providers to evaluate the effectiveness of the services and report the evaluation results in their annual review reports. EPs from EDB will comment on each group training programme, and furnish trainers with professional advice through on-site observation of group training in schools. EDB also holds regular meetings with the service providers to ensure the quality of their services. On the second part of the pilot project, EDB has conducted a questionnaire survey on parents, teachers, teaching assistants and support personnel to collect the views of the stakeholders on the project and evaluate its effectiveness. According to the preliminary findings, improvement was reported in respect of participating students' performance, teachers' cognition and strategies, and schools' support systems for students with ASD. EDB will continue to consolidate knowledge and experience obtained from the implementation of the project, and encourage other schools to adopt an evidence-based mode of school support.

52. As for the services for students with SLI, EDB conducted a review of the effectiveness of the ESTG in the 2008/09 school year. Stakeholders welcomed the provision of the grant, which had successfully enabled schools to arrange appropriate therapeutic services for their SLI students. The results of the review also indicated that school-based speech therapy services were conducive in all aspects to the use of the WSA by schools to enhance the speech, language and communicative abilities of SLI students. School-based speech therapy services were also found to be instrumental in strengthening students' language learning ability and facilitating effective learning in the classroom. In the 2011/12 school year, EDB collected the

views of principals, teachers, parents and speech therapists through a questionnaire survey on school-based speech therapy services. The findings indicated that over 90% of the stakeholders were satisfied with the delivery of school-based speech therapy services, and students who had been receiving such services showed improvements in speech, language, communication and language-related skills.

Advice Sought

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

Education Bureau

May 2013

Teaching materials developed by the EBD for teachers and student guidance personnel

(I) Teaching materials for supporting students with ASD

- CD-ROM on teaching students with ASD (Chinese version only) (2001)
(for enhancing teachers' understanding of the symptoms of students with ASD and the relevant teaching strategies)
- Checklist on classroom and social adjustments of children with ASD 「自閉症兒童課堂及社交適應評估量表」 (Chinese version only) (2007)
(for members of the student support team to assess students' learning needs and devise teaching programmes)
- Mind-Reading
 - Teaching Children with Autism to Mind-Read (Chinese version only) (2003)
(for social workers/student guidance personnel and teachers to teach students with ASD mind-reading skills)
 - Teaching package on “Mind-read I, II and III: Teaching Children with Autism to Understand and Manage Emotions” (Chinese version only) (2003, 2009, 2012)
(for social workers/student guidance personnel and teachers to teach students with ASD mind-reading skills)
- Social skills
“ILAUUGH Social Thinking Training Programme” (Chinese version only) (2009)
(for social workers/student guidance personnel and teachers to teach students with ASD social thinking skills)

(II) Teaching materials for supporting students with SLI

- A video on Vocal Hygiene <<學童聲線護理>> (Chinese version only) (2002)
- Resource Package on Correcting Students' Misarticulation I & II (Chinese version only) (2003)
- Resource Package on Narrative Skills and Utterance Expansion (Chinese version only) (2003)
- Resource Package on Social Communication Skills (Chinese version only) (2004)
- Resource Package on Verbal Comprehension and Expression (Chinese version only) (2005)
- Resource Package on Language Enhancement Strategies (Chinese version only) (2008)
- Resource Package on Proper Cantonese Pronunciation (Chinese version only)

(2010)

- Resource Package on Vocabulary Enhancement Strategies (Chinese version only)

(2012)