ITEM FOR ESTABLISHMENT SUBCOMMITTEE OF FINANCE COMMITTEE

HEAD 156 – GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT : EDUCATION BUREAU Subhead 000 Operational expenses

Members are invited to recommend to Finance Committee the following proposals of the Education Bureau with immediate effect upon approval of Finance Committee –

- (a) the creation of the following supernumerary post up to 31 March 2019
 - 1 Assistant Director of Education (D2) (\$154,950 \$169,450); and
- (b) the creation of the following permanent post
 - 1 Principal Education Officer (D1) (\$130,500 \$142,750).

PROBLEM

The Education Bureau (EDB) needs dedicated staffing support at the directorate level to devise an overall strategy for the new free quality kindergarten (KG) education policy, provide steer in the formulation of specific details of the measures, oversee the implementation of the new policy, and monitor the progress of the relevant measures.

/PROPOSAL

PROPOSAL

2. We propose to create the following directorate posts in the new Kindergarten Education (KGE) Division in the Professional Development and Special Education (PD&SE) Branch of EDB immediately upon approval of Finance Committee –

- (a) one supernumerary Assistant Director of Education (ADE) (D2) post designated as Principal Assistant Secretary (Kindergarten Education) (PAS(KGE)) for about three years to 31 March 2019; and
- (b) one permanent Principal Education Officer (PEO) (D1) post designated as Principal Education Officer (Kindergarten Education) (PEO(KGE)).

JUSTIFICATION

The new free quality KG education policy

- 3. Provision of 15-year free education and quality KG education is one of the priorities of the current-term Government. EDB set up the Committee on Free Kindergarten Education¹ (the Committee) in April 2013 to examine the related issues and recommend practicable and sustainable proposals for implementing free quality KG education. The Committee submitted a report on 'Free Kindergarten Education' to EDB in May 2015.
- 4. Having regard to the recommendations of the Committee and views collected through public consultation from June to July 2015, the Government decided to introduce a new policy on free quality KG education in place of the existing Pre-primary Education Voucher Scheme (PEVS) starting from the 2017/18 school year. The policy objectives are to provide good quality and highly affordable KG education, and enhance the accessibility of students to different modes of services that suit their specific needs.

/5.

.

The Committee comprised 21 members including the Chairman, the Vice-chairman, representatives from the KG sector, school sponsoring bodies, a primary school, a teacher education institution, the Education Commission, EDB as well as representatives of parents and members from other professions. The membership and terms of reference of the Committee are at Appendix 1 of the Report of the Committee on Free Kindergarten Education (the Report) which has been uploaded to EDB website (http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/edu-system/preprimary-kindergarten/kg-report/index.html)

For details of the Report, please visit EDB's website below – http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/edu-system/preprimary-kindergarten/kg-report/index.html

5. Underpinned by the guiding principles of uniqueness, equity, quality, diversity and sustainability in KG education, the free quality KG education policy will improve the quality of KG education in various aspects through the following measures: (i) providing direct subsidies to eligible local non-profit-making KGs; (ii) further improving teacher-student ratio; (iii) creating a career ladder for KG teachers development and advancement; (iv) stepping up quality assurance; and (v) enhancing parent engagement and parent education, etc.

Need for the posts of Principal Assistant Secretary (Kindergarten Education) and Principal Education Officer (Kindergarten Education)

- 6. Following the announcement in the 2016 Policy Address that the free quality KG policy will be implemented from 2017/18 school year, there is a pressing need for EDB to formulate the implementation details and oversee the smooth launching of the various measures starting from the 2017/18 school year. Specifically, before implementation of free KG in the 2017/18 school year, EDB has to draw up the details of various aspects and measures of the new policy, including the entry and exit mechanisms for KGs under the new subsidy scheme; mechanism and systems for disbursement of grants; implementation details of the new rental subsidy scheme; measures for monitoring fee revision and collection of other fees; measures to enhance KGs' administration, management and accountability; and measures to promote KG teachers' professional development, etc. In addition, the preparation work on relevant research studies to examine the impact of the new policy on the quality of KG education has to be completed before the 2017/18 school year so that relevant data could be collected starting from the first year implementation.
- 7. The KG sector is a very pluralistic and splintered set-up with diversified governance, management and different interests³. The KGs are located in a variety of premises, such as self-acquired or self-owned premises, privately leased premises, or public housing estates. Hence, formulation of the implementation details of the new KG policy is a complicated, intricate and politically sensitive task and requires coordination across divisions within EDB as well as across bureaux/departments (b/ds) at the senior management level. Taking the KG premises-related issues as an example, the issues involve land policy, planning standard, legal consideration, valuation of the market rent, etc. which require in-depth study and discussion with various stakeholders and relevant b/ds such as the Lands Department, Department of Justice and the

/Planning

.

In the 2015/16 school year, there are about 300 school sponsoring bodies and small organisations running some 730 KGs under PEVS.

Planning Department. In addition, EDB will have to update the Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Education on the implementation progress of the new KG policy, communicate with various stakeholder groups and major advisory bodies (such as the Education Commission) and respond to enquiries from the KG sector, stakeholders, mass media, etc. from time to time.

- 8. In light of the substantial increase in recurrent resources for implementing the new KG policy, EDB sees the need for stepping up the monitoring and enhancing the quality assurance of KGs. In this connection, we will issue clear guidelines in consultation with the KG sector to ensure proper use of Government funding; enhance the governance, transparency and accountability of KGs; devise measures to enhance the quality of KG education; strengthen support to students with diverse needs; formulate a continuous professional development policy and measures to facilitate professional upgrading of KG principals and teachers; strengthen training and support for KGs to ensure effective planning and deployment of resources, etc.
- 9. To implement the free KG policy, a new KGE Division comprising the existing four KG Sections, namely the Kindergarten Special Duty Section, Kindergarten Administration Section, Kindergarten Inspection Section and Joint Office for Kindergartens and Child Care Centres will be set up. These teams will take up additional/new duties arising from preparation for, and implementation of, the new free KG policy, which are listed at Enclosure 1. As different aspects and measures of the new KG policy would be taken up by these teams, effective and efficient co-ordination of these teams' work at directorate level will be required to ensure that the policy is properly implemented in overall terms.
- 10. Preparation, implementation and monitoring work during the initial three years (start-up years) is crucial in ensuring the successful delivery of the new KG policy and effective achievement of its intended policy objective. We therefore see the need for dedicated steer and support at the directorate level to ensure effective formulation and vigilant monitoring of the implementation details during this critical period. In view of the complexity and expected additional work as stated in paragraphs 6 to 9 above, we propose creating one supernumerary ADE (D2) post designated as PAS(KGE) up to 31 March 2019 to steer the work of a newly formed KGE Division in formulating implementation details of the new KG policy and preparation for its implementation. We also propose creating a permanent PEO post, designated as PEO(KGE) who will assist PAS(KGE). Upon the lapse of the supernumerary ADE (PAS(KGE)) post by 2019, the PEO (PEO(KGE)) will oversee the continued implementation of the free quality KG policy. The main responsibilities and proposed job descriptions of the ADE (PAS(KGE)) post and the PEO (PEO(KGE)) post are at Enclosure 2.

Encl. 1

11. The supernumerary ADE (PAS(KGE)) post will be put under the direct supervision of the Deputy Secretary of PD&SE Branch, and the permanent PEO (PEO(KGE)) post will be under the direct supervision of the supernumerary ADE (PAS(KGE)) post. The line of command for the permanent PEO(KGE) post upon lapse of the supernumerary PAS(KGE) by 31 March 2019 will be considered in due course taking into account the experience during the initial years' implementation of the new policy and the key issues to be handled by that time.

Non-Directorate Support

12. The proposed posts of ADE (PAS(KGE)) and PEO (PEO(KGE)) will be supported by teams of non-directorate staff in the new KGE Division. These teams will be strengthened to carry out the additional duties in relation to the implementation of the free quality KG education policy as set out in Enclosure 1. A total of 56 and three non-directorate posts in EDB and Rating and Valuation Department (RVD) respectively will be created as follows –

	2016-17	2017-18	Remarks
(a) EDB - KGE Division	20 [2]	20	Net increase of 12 posts in the KGE Division in 2016-17 and 11 posts to be offset by time-limited posts which would lapse and regrading of posts.
- Special Education Division	-	6	To strengthen support services for KGs in catering for students with risk of developmental delay.
- Curriculum Development Institute	1 [1]	-	To review "The Guide to the Pre-primary Curriculum".
- Finance Division	1 [1]	6	To cope with the increase in workload arising from more diverse modes of subsidies to KGs.
InformationTechnologyManagementDivision	-	2	To take charge of the development and operation of the information technology systems.
(b) RVD	-	3	For assessment of market rental value for provision of rental subsidy to eligible KGs.
Total:	22 [4]	37	

^[] denotes the time-limited posts among the total.

13. The existing and proposed organisation charts of EDB and the new KGE Division (including existing manpower and newly created posts in 2016-17) are at Enclosure 3.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

14. We have critically examined the feasibility of redeploying existing directorate officers in EDB to take up the substantial work as outlined above but found it not feasible. There are 12 Principal Assistant Secretaries (PAS) in EDB. Currently, in addition to kindergarten education, PAS(SE&KG) is also responsible for the policies and services on special education. mounting pressure from the public on enhancing special education, it is expected that the workload relating to special education will further increase considerably in the coming years arising from initiatives to improve special education services including those recommended by the Subcommittee on Integrated Education under the LegCo Panel on Education in its report issued in 2014. Hence, PAS(SE&KG) can hardly absorb the additional duties arising from new KG policy as set out in paragraphs 6 to 9 above. As regards the other 11 PASs in EDB, they are fully engaged with their own portfolios and hence cannot take up the additional duties of the two proposed posts. The major responsibilities of all other divisions in EDB are at Enclosure 4.

Encl. 4

Encl. 3

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

15. The proposed creation of the supernumerary ADE (PAS(KGE)) post and the permanent PEO (PEO(KGE)) post will incur an additional notional annual salary cost at mid-point of \$3,636,600 as follows –

Post	Notional annual salary cost	No. of
	at mid-point (\$)	Posts
Assistant Director of Education	1,973,400	1
Principal Education Officer	1,663,200	1
Total	3,636,600	2

The additional full annual average staff cost of the proposal, including salaries and staff on-cost, is \$5,142,000.

16. For the 59 non-directorate posts mentioned in paragraph 12 above, the notional annual salary cost at mid-point is \$28,350,300 and the full annual average staff cost, including salaries and staff on-cost is \$39,233,000.

17. We have included sufficient provision in the 2016-17 Estimates to cover the cost of the proposal and will reflect the resources required in the Estimates of subsequent years.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

18. We consulted the LegCo Panel on Education on 1 February 2016. Members agreed that the proposal should be further deliberated by the Establishment Subcommittee. At the meeting, Members raised concerns and enquiries about the operational need of creating the two proposed directorate posts for preparation and administration of the new free quality KG education policy. The situation is elaborated and clarified in paragraphs 6 to 14 above.

ESTABLISHMENT CHANGES

19. The establishment changes in EDB for the past two years are as follows –

	Number of Posts					
Establishment (Note)	Existing (As at 1 May 2016)	As at 1 April 2016	As at 1 April 2015	As at 1 April 2014		
A	32#	32	32+(1)	32+(1)		
В	1 397	1 397	1 398	1 385		
С	4 112	4 106	4 059	3 980		
Total	5 541	5 535	5 489 + (1)	5 397 + (1)		

Note:

- A ranks in the directorate pay scale or equivalent
- B non-directorate ranks, the maximum pay point of which is above MPS point 33 or equivalent
- C non-directorate ranks, the maximum pay point of which is at or below MPS point 33 or equivalent
- () number of supernumerary directorate posts
- # as at 1 May 2016, there was no unfilled directorate post in EDB.

CIVIL SERVICE BUREAU COMMENTS

20. The Civil Service Bureau supports the proposed creation of the supernumerary ADE (PAS(KGE)) post and the permanent PEO (PEO(KGE)) post. The grading and ranking of the proposed posts are considered appropriate having regard to the level and scope of responsibilities.

/ADVICE

ADVICE OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON DIRECTORATE SALARIES AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

21. As the ADE (PAS(KGE)) post is proposed on a supernumerary basis, its creation, if approved, will be reported to the Standing Committee on Directorate Salaries and Conditions of Service. For the permanent PEO (PEO(KGE)) post, the Standing Committee on Directorate Salaries and Conditions of Service has advised that the grading proposed for the post as set out in the proposal is appropriate.

Education Bureau May 2016

Existing and additional duties of the four Kindergarten (KG) Sections under the Kindergarten Education Division arising from the new free quality kindergarten education policy

- The Kindergarten Special Duty Section, with eight time-limited posts 1. lapsed in 2015-16 and one post due to lapse in 2016-17, is now responsible for formulating the framework of measures under the new policy, soliciting feedback from major stakeholders with a view to refining the implementation details and drawing up guidelines for KGs' compliance This Section will be made permanent starting from and reference. 2016-17 and be tasked to co-ordinate implementation issues of the free quality KG policy that require inter-departmental collaboration. Specifically, under the new KG education policy, it will also be responsible for co-ordinating admission for Nursery (K1) classes (including measures to ensure that a child is not holding more than one school place at a time); handling premises-related issues (including allocation of KG premises, review of the Planning Standard, exploration of the setting up Resource Centres for KG education and co-location of KGs in primary schools, etc.); disbursement of funds to KGs; promotion of parent education, etc.
- The Kindergarten Administration Section is now responsible for 2. administration of the Pre-primary Education Voucher Scheme, fee increase applications and KG teachers' professional development. Under the new free quality KG policy, it will be tasked to formulate proposals regarding specific details on, and monitoring of, KGs in compliance with guidelines in teacher-student ratio, remuneration and career ladder for teachers, collection of miscellaneous charges and trading operation in KGs. It will also co-ordinate matters on fee increase applications which will involve more vigorous vetting and in-depth scrutiny of KG's income and expenditure to ensure proper use of government funding and offer of free KG education as appropriate. In addition, it will administer the new rental subsidy scheme and maintenance grant; and mechanism for KGs' entry to, and exit from, the new scheme. In addition to its existing work in promoting teachers' professional development, it will collaborate with relevant experts in the formulation of a Teacher Competencies Framework and a Principal Competencies Framework as well as development of a continuous professional development policy for KG teachers.
- 3. The Kindergarten Inspection Section monitors and evaluates the performance of KGs in Hong Kong through inspections, and promotes quality KG education in Hong Kong. Under the new free quality KG education policy, while it will continue with the existing tasks in

supporting KGs' school self-evaluation and conducting Quality Review, it will also enhance the quality assurance framework (including review of the performance indicators to tie in with the implementation of free quality KG education policy and align with the latest trends of KG education) and conduct more focus inspections to promote quality KG education under the new policy. Besides, it will also take charge of the strategies in the promotion and/or conduct of local research on the latest trends in child development and impact of the new policy on the quality of KG education.

4. The Joint Office for Kindergartens and Child Care Centres will continue to be responsible for supervising the operation of kindergarten-cum-child care centres (KG-cum-CCCs), including processing various applications from KG-cum-CCCs. In addition, it will review the schedule of accommodation for KGs and the Operation Manual for Pre-primary Institutions with a view to increasing the indoor floor area of KGs in new Government-owned KG premises such as those in new public housing estates as far as feasible.

Job Description

Principal Assistant Secretary (Kindergarten Education)

Rank : Assistant Director of Education (D2)

Responsible to: Deputy Secretary for Education (3)

Main duties and responsibilities -

- 1. To devise an overall strategy for the implementation of the new free quality kindergarten (KG) education policy;
- 2. To provide steer in the formulation of specific details of the relevant measures, including
 - (a) the design, planning and implementation of the mechanism and systems for disbursement of funds and grants under the new policy;
 - (b) the formulation of the new rental subsidy scheme and the planning of the implementation details;
 - (c) the formulation of the mechanisms for monitoring the fee revisions and collection of fees;
 - (d) the design of the entry and exit mechanisms for KGs under the new subsidy scheme;
 - (e) the design of measures to enhance KGs' administration, management and accountability including formation of school management committees;
- 3. To devise strategies in enhancing KG teachers' professional development in respect of formulation of a Teacher Competencies Framework and a Principal Competencies Framework as well as development of a continuous professional development policy with appropriate targets;
- 4. To formulate measures for improving the physical accommodation and facilities for KG education, revision of the planning standards for provision of KG places and exploration of long-term measures in the supply of KG premises;

- 5. To steer the promotion of parent education, setting up of Parent-Teacher Associations in KGs as well as enhancements in transparency in school administration to facilitate parents' understanding of school policy and practices;
- 6. To draw up strategies for promoting local researches on child development to facilitate the sustainable development of quality KG education;
- 7. To oversee the overall implementation of new KG education policy in the early stage and communicate with relevant stakeholders on related issues;
- 8. To liaise with related bureaux/departments (e.g. Labour and Welfare Bureau, Rating and Valuation Department, Planning Department, etc.) in relation to the preparation for the new KG education policy and its implementation in the early stage; and
- 9. To serve as Division Head and oversee the work of new KG education.

Job Description

Principal Education Officer (Kindergarten Education)

Rank: Principal Education Officer (D1)

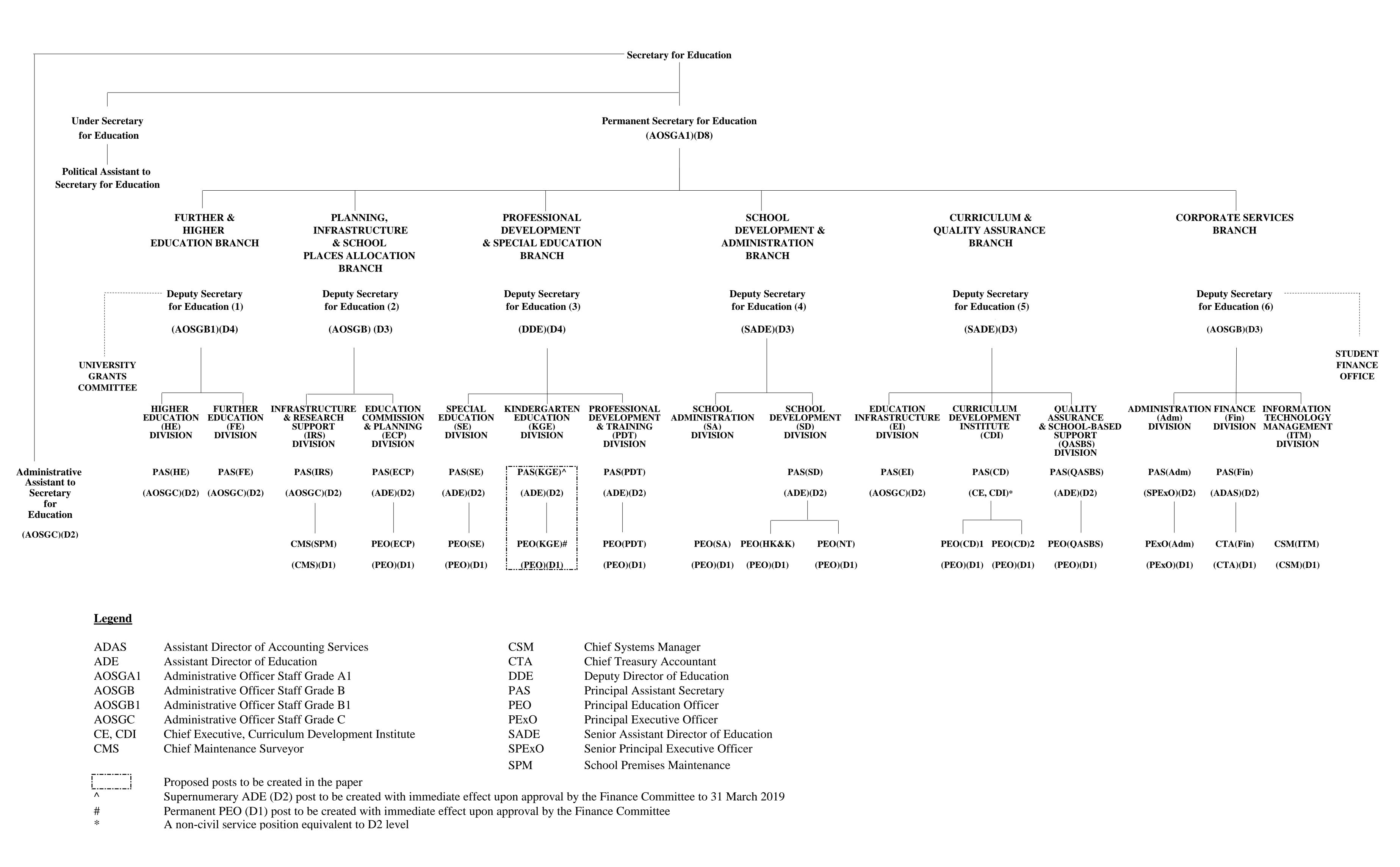
Responsible to : Principal Assistant Secretary (Kindergarten Education)

Main duties and responsibilities -

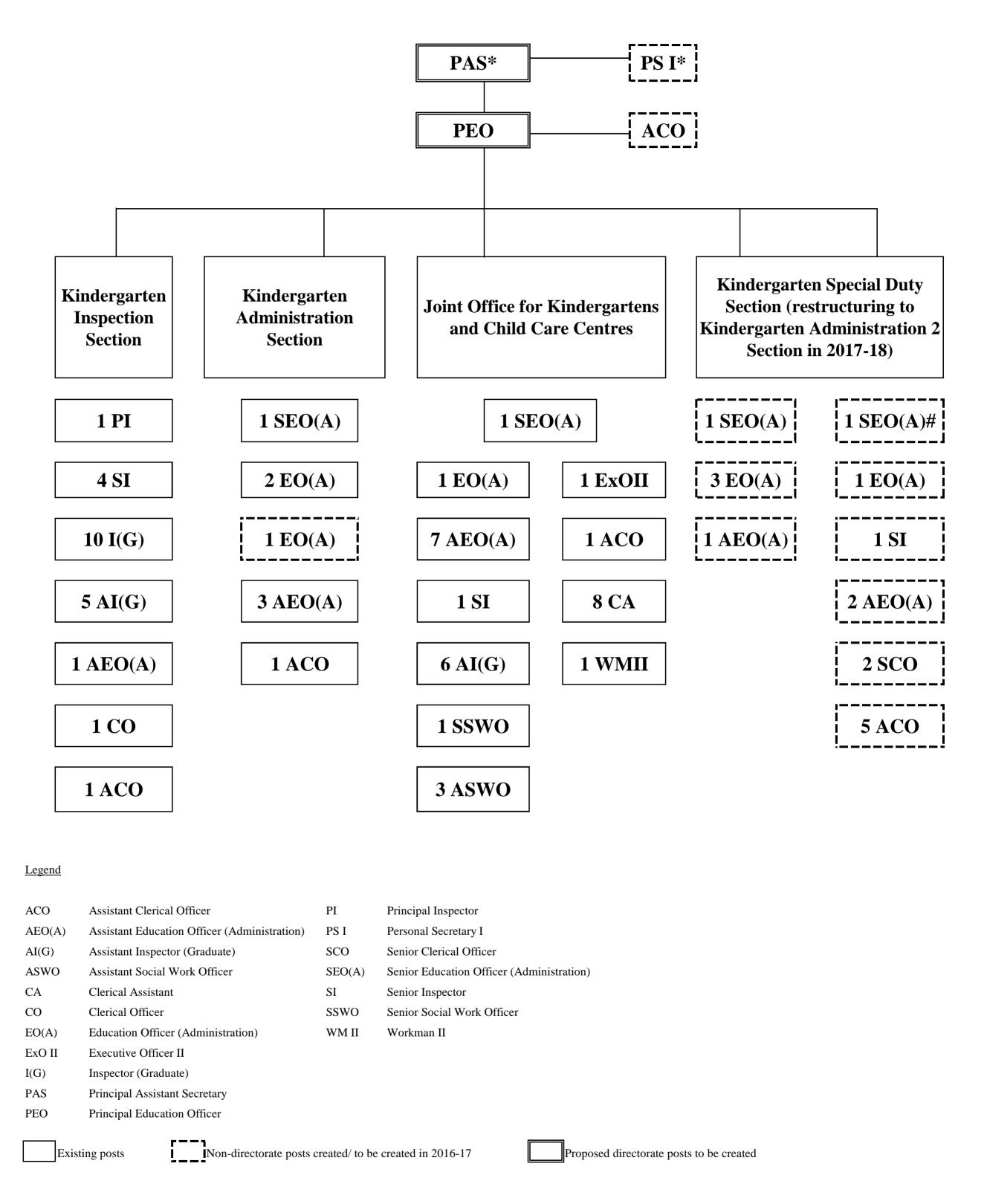
- 1. To assist the Principal Assistant Secretary (Kindergarten Education) (PAS(KGE)) to devise an overall strategy for the implementation of the new free quality kindergarten (KG) education policy (before the post of PAS(KGE) lapses on 31 March 2019);
- 2. To assist the PAS (KGE) in the formulation of specific details of the relevant measures and devising strategies in enhancing KGs teachers' professional development, enhancing KGs' administration, management and accountability, improving KGs' physical accommodation and increasing the supply of KG premises, promotion of parent education and local researches on KG education, etc. (before the post of PAS(KGE) lapses on 31 March 2019);
- 3. To oversee the smooth operation of the policies and measures on free quality KG education including KGs' compliance with the requirements under new policy; enhancement in KGs' administration, management and accountability; operation of the entry and exit mechanism for KGs joining the new scheme; smooth operation in disbursement of funds and grants, rental subsidy, administration of fee revision, collection of fees, etc.
- 4. To oversee the smooth operation a Teacher Competencies Framework and a Principal Competencies Framework and development of a continuous professional development policy, and explore strategies on further enhancements in teachers' professional development such as the long-term goal of raising the qualification requirement for KG teachers to degree level;
- 5. To monitor the progress in improving the physical accommodation and facilities for KG education, revision of planning standard for provision of KG places and exploration of long-term measures in increasing the supply of KG premises;

- 6. To monitor the progress in the promotion of parent education, setting up of Parent-teacher Associations in KGs and enhancements in transparency in school administration to facilitate parents' understanding of school policy and practices;
- 7. To promote local researches on child development to facilitate the sustainable development of KG education, and to oversee the progress of those researches;
- 8. To liaise with major stakeholders, bureaux/departments concerned with a view to refining implementation details of various measures in relation to KG education in response to experiences in implementing the new policy and changing needs of the society;
- 9. To liaise with related bureaux/departments (e.g. Labour and Welfare Bureau, Rating and Valuation Department, Planning Department, etc.) in relation to the preparation for the new KG education policy and its smooth implementation; and
- 10. To carry out any other duties in relation to the planning and implementation of the new KG education policy.

Existing and Proposed Organisation Chart of the Education Bureau



Proposed Organisation Chart of Kingdergarten Education (KGE) Division, Education Bureau

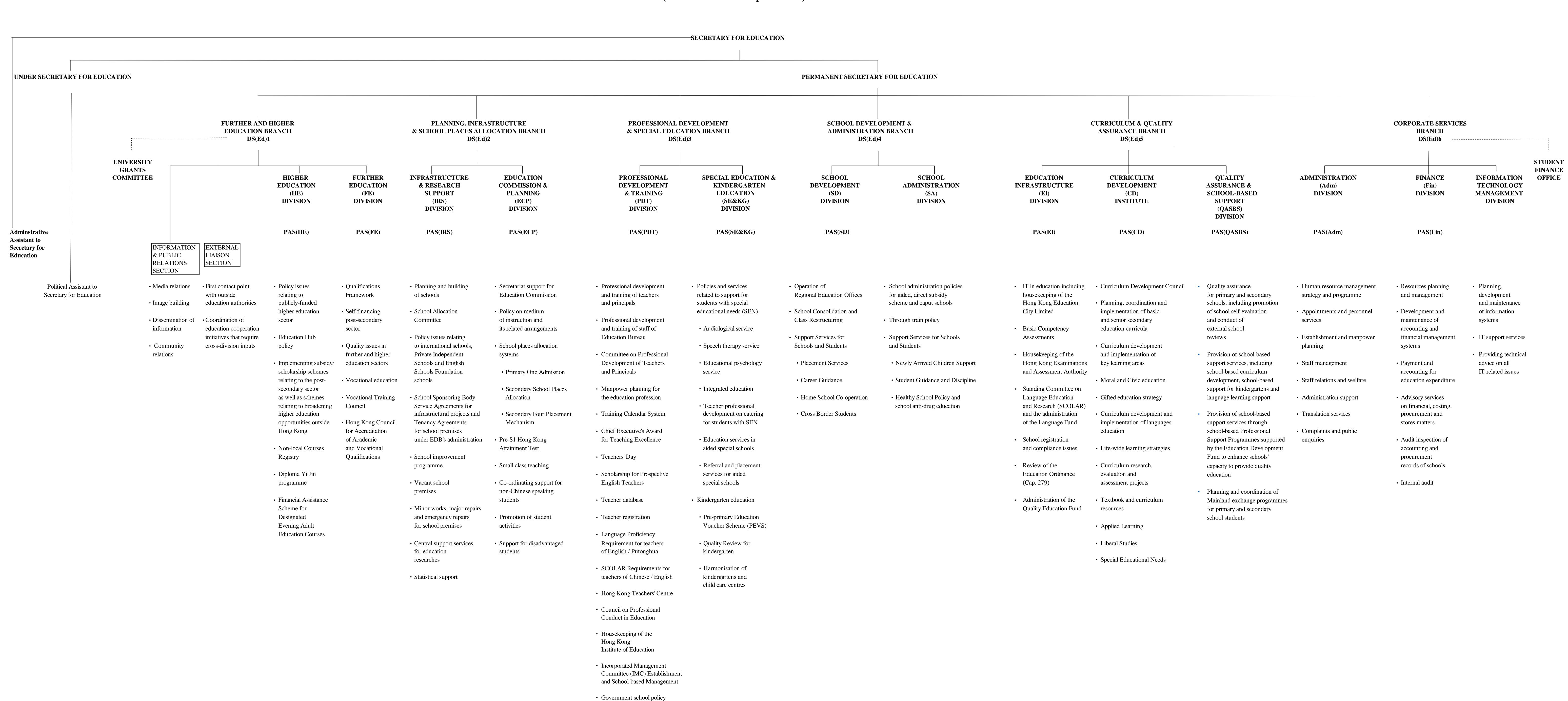


^{*} Time-limited post for about three years up to 31 March 2019

20 posts, including 7 AEO(A), 1 SI, 1 I(G), 1 AI(G), 1 ExO II, 1 SCO, 2 CO, 5 ACO, 1 WM II, will be created in KGE Division in 2017-18 (including regrading of eight posts) to carry out various measures and new initiatives upon the full implementation of the new KG policy.

[#] Time-limited post up to 31 March 2017

Major Responsibilities of Divisions in Education Bureau (Position as at 1 April 2016)



and development

in aided schools

Salary verification for staff

Arrangement for surplus

Administrative issues

teachers of aided schools

relating to Native-speaking

English Teacher Scheme