

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(4)409/15-16
(These minutes have been cleared
with the Chairman)

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Panel on Education

**Subcommittee to Study the Implementation of
Free Kindergarten Education**

**Minutes of the eleventh meeting
held on Monday, 9 November 2015, at 12:00 noon
in Conference Room 2B of the Legislative Council Complex**

- Members present** : Hon Starry LEE Wai-king, JP (Chairman)
Hon IP Kin-yuen (Deputy Chairman)
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, BBS, MH
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan, JP
Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung
Hon Steven HO Chun-yin, BBS
Hon Gary FAN Kwok-wai
Hon MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP
Hon CHAN Chi-chuen
Dr Hon Kenneth CHAN Ka-lok
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan
Hon Christopher CHUNG Shu-kun, BBS, MH, JP
- Members absent** : Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, GBS, JP
Hon WONG Yuk-man
- Clerk in attendance** : Miss Polly YEUNG
Chief Council Secretary (4)4

Staff in attendance : Miss Mandy NG
Council Secretary (4)4

Ms Sandy HAU
Legislative Assistant (4)3

Action

I. Election of Chairman and Deputy Chairman

Members agreed that it was not necessary to re-elect Chairman and Deputy Chairman. Ms Starry LEE and Mr IP Kin-yuen continued to serve as the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Subcommittee respectively.

II. Further work plan of the Subcommittee

(LC Paper No. CB(4)126/15-16(01) -- Paper entitled "Further work plan" prepared by the LegCo Secretariat)

2. The Subcommittee deliberated (index of proceedings attached at Annex).

3. The Chairman recapitulated that the Subcommittee had agreed to seek the House Committee's permission to extend its period of work for six more months until 30 April 2016. However, at its meeting held on 9 October 2015, the House Committee gave permission for the Subcommittee to extend its period of work for three more months (i.e. up to 26 January 2016) in the first instance. The Subcommittee would then be placed on the waiting list for re-activation of work. It was likely that the Subcommittee would be able to re-activate its work in early May 2016 under the existing broad principles for activation, operation and extension of period of work of policy subcommittees; and subject to no new policy Subcommittee being appointed in the coming months.

(Post meeting note: As set out in LC Paper No. CB(2)241/15-16 issued by the House Committee on 11 November 2015, a new policy subcommittee had been appointed by the Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene on 10 November 2015 and placed on the waiting list for activation. Under these circumstances, it had become unlikely that the Subcommittee would be able to re-activate its work in May 2016 as previously envisaged.)

4. Members noted from paragraph 6 of LC Paper No. CB(4)126/15-16(01) that the Subcommittee had deliberated on all the subjects in its "List of major subjects" but some members had indicated that items (b), (d) and (g) should be further pursued. At the invitation of the Chairman, members gave views on the Subcommittee's work ahead.

Support for non-Chinese speaking students and students with special needs

5. Dr Fernando CHEUNG suggested that issues related to the support for non-Chinese speaking students and students with special needs should be further pursued. He noted that there were only a few recommendations in the Report of the Committee on Free Kindergarten Education to address the needs of these disadvantaged groups, and urged the Administration to proactively take measures to support them. The Deputy Chairman, Mr Abraham SHEK, Ms Cyd HO and Dr Kenneth CHAN shared Dr CHEUNG's view.

Curricula of private independent and non-profit making kindergartens

6. Dr Helena WONG said that according to her observation, many parents would prefer to enroll their children in private independent ("PI") kindergartens ("KGs") despite their exorbitant tuition fees in order that their children could benefit from quality KG education. Dr WONG stressed the need to draw up a quality KG curriculum for adoption by non-profit making ("NPM") KGs upon implementation of free KG education. This would help ensure that NPM KG students would not be placed in a disadvantaged position when compared to their counterparts attending PI KGs. Dr WONG was keen to ensure that all children, irrespective of whether they were studying at PI KGs or NPM KGs, would receive quality education under the future KG policy.

7. The Deputy Chairman and Ms Cyd HO had no objection if the Subcommittee would deliberate on issues related to KG curricula. Ms HO considered that a quality KG curriculum should be geared to nurturing children's healthy development instead of imparting academic knowledge.

8. Mr TAM Yiu-chung, Mr Abraham SHEK and Mr IP KWOK-him expressed reservation on any suggestion that PI KGs were necessarily better placed in providing quality KG education than their NPM counterparts, as there were many NPM KGs which were renowned for providing KG services. Mr TAM highlighted that the background and resources support differed considerably between PI KGs and NPM KGs, such as in terms of the teacher-to-student ratios and pedagogies. A strict

comparison of these two types of KGs would not serve any useful purpose. Mr IP also considered that as members were not experts in KG education, it would be difficult to come to any conclusion as to what constituted a balanced and quality KG curriculum.

9. Mr Abraham SHEK declared that he was the Chairman of the Board of Governors of the English Schools Foundation ("ESF"). He suggested that the Subcommittee might wish to visit some KGs, such as those run by ESF or other school sponsoring bodies, in order to gain first-hand understanding into KG operations.

Other issues

10. Dr Kenneth CHAN expressed concern about the Administration's measures to facilitate children's transition from KG to primary education. He also urged the Administration to provide information on its financial commitment in providing free KG education, including the recourses implications if whole-day and long whole-day KGs were fully subsidized.

Conclusion

11. Regarding the three items mentioned in paragraph 4 above, the Deputy Chairman suggested that in order to enable a more focused and targeted discussion, members should forward specific questions/issues for which the Administration's further responses should be sought.

(Post meeting note: The circular to invite members to raise specific questions/issues, if any, for the Administration's response was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)196/15-16 on 10 November 2015.)

12. The Chairman said that she would discuss with the Deputy Chairman and the Administration in determining the meeting arrangements and notify members in due course.

(Post meeting note: The notice of meeting to be held on 20 November 2015 was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)222/15-16 on 16 November 2015.)

III. Any other business

13. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 12:25 pm.

**Proceedings of the eleventh meeting of the
Subcommittee to Study the Implementation of
Free Kindergarten Education
on Monday, 9 November 2015, at 12:00 noon
in Conference Room 2B of the Legislative Council Complex**

Time marker	Speaker(s)	Subject(s)	Action required
<i>Agenda Item I – Election of Chairman and Deputy Chairman</i>			
000118 - 000224	Chairman	Opening remarks	
<i>Agenda Item II - Further work plan of the Subcommittee</i>			
000225 - 000337	Chairman	The Chairman invited members to give views on the Subcommittee's work ahead.	
000338 - 000703	Chairman Dr Fernando CHEUNG	Dr CHEUNG suggested that issues related to the support for non-Chinese speaking students and students with special needs should be further pursued.	
000704 - 000930	Chairman Dr Helena WONG	Dr WONG opined that the Subcommittee should deliberate on issues related to curricula of private independent ("PI") kindergartens ("KGs") and non-profit making ("NPM") KGs.	
000931 - 001050	Chairman Mr Abraham SHEK	Mr SHEK expressed reservation on any suggestion that PI KGs were necessarily better placed in providing quality KG education than NPM KGs.	
001051 - 001402	Chairman Ms Cyd HO Deputy Chairman	The Deputy Chairman and Ms HO had no objection if the Subcommittee would deliberate on issues related to KG curricula.	
001403 - 001547	Chairman Dr Helena WONG	Dr WONG was keen to ensure that all children, irrespective of whether they were studying at PI KGs or NPM KGs, would receive quality education under the future KG policy.	
001548 - 001817	Chairman Dr Kenneth CHAN	Dr CHAN expressed concern about the Administration's measures to facilitate children's transition from KG to primary education. He also urged the Administration to provide information on its financial commitment in providing free KG education.	
001818 - 002031	Chairman Mr TAM Yiu-chung	Mr TAM considered that a strict comparison of PI KGs and NPM KGs would not serve any useful purpose as the background and resources support differed considerably between these two types of KGs.	
002032 - 002218	Chairman Mr Abraham SHEK	Mr SHEK suggested that the Subcommittee might wish to visit some KGs in order to gain first-hand understanding into KG operations.	

Time marker	Speaker(s)	Subject(s)	Action required
002219 - 002421	Chairman Mr IP Kwok-him	Mr IP considered that members were not experts in KG education, it would be difficult to come to any conclusion as to what constituted a balanced and quality KG curriculum.	
<i>Agenda Item III - Any other business</i>			
002422 - 002509	Chairman	Closing remarks	

Council Business Division 4
Legislative Council Secretariat
29 December 2015