

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

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**Panel on Welfare Services**

**Background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat  
for the meeting on 10 April 2017**

**Implementation of after-school care and support services**

**Purpose**

This paper gives an account of past discussions at meetings of the Council and relevant committees on the implementation of after-school care and support services.

**Background**

2. According to the Administration, if parents are unable to take care of their children aged between six and 12 temporarily because of work, job-search or other reasons, they may consider using the services of the After School Care Programme ("ASCP"). ASCP is operated by non-governmental organizations ("NGOs") on a fee-charging basis, offering half-day support services for children aged between six and 12. Services provided include skill learning, social activities, meal service, etc. Through the Fee Waiving Subsidy Scheme for ASCP, the Social Welfare Department ("SWD") provides assistance to needy families by waiving or reducing the fee of after-school care services.

3. To strengthen the support for those parents who work longer, irregular hours and at weekends, or those who intend to join the work force so as to improve the financial condition, the Administration has enhanced ASCP by extending the service hours on weekday evenings, Saturdays, Sundays and school holidays in some after-school care centres as well as providing additional fee-waiving and fee-reduction quotas since December 2014, with a provision of 462 full fee-waiving places at 35 after-school care centres as at January 2017.

4. The Administration has also provided \$200 million matching funds under the Partnership Fund for the Disadvantaged ("PFD") to encourage business sector to work with organizations and schools to implement more after-school learning and support programmes for primary and secondary school students from grass roots families. The proposals for such programmes should include training programmes on whole-person development, and may also include tutorial classes or programmes for developing the disadvantaged students' learning capability and study skills, improving students' life planning skills, alleviating stress of parenting and improving parenting skills, supporting parents to stay in employment or enter job market, etc.

5. SWD launched the first and the second rounds of applications under the dedicated portion of PFD in January and December 2015 respectively for after-school learning and support programmes. About 150 after-school learning and support programmes have been approved so far, involving matching grants of about \$117 million and benefiting over 60 000 primary and secondary school students. With donations from commercial entities and matching grants under the fund, the overall funding for these after-school learning and support programmes exceeds \$230 million. SWD has called for the third round of applications on after-school learning and support programmes under the dedicated portion of PFD from December 2016 to March 2017.

## **Deliberations by Members**

### Suggestions of enhancing After School Care Programme

6. Some Members held the view that the existing number of places for after-school care services were insufficient. They queried about the Administration's criteria for determining the number of places for ASCP. The Administration was requested to significantly increase the number of ASCP places in view of the high service demand in the community.

7. The Administration advised that in planning the after-school care services, SWD assessed the service needs of individual districts having regard to their local characteristics, such as the population of children, relevant socio-economic factors, availability and utilization of existing after-school care services, etc. District Social Welfare Offices of SWD also consulted district organizations, District Council members, local residents, etc. on the needs for after-school care services in the districts. SWD would closely monitor the demand and usage rates of these services, which included requesting the service operators of various after-school services to submit reports periodically so as to monitor the utilization of the services. As at December 2015, 5 500 places were offered in different districts under ASCP, with about 5 100

children using the service. SWD conducted regular review of the adequacy of places and the demand for fee-waiving subsidies in various districts. It would liaise with NGOs concerned to increase the ASCP places to cope with additional demand as and when required.

8. On the suggestion of implementing ASCP in all primary schools across the territory, the Administration advised that ASCP sought to provide after-school care services for needy children aged between six and 12, so that they could receive care as appropriate. As various after-school care and learning programmes were run by schools and NGOs, subsidized by SWD or the Education Bureau ("EDB"), the suggestion of extending ASCP to all primary schools would need to be studied further. In this connection, a working group, comprising representatives of SWD, EDB, the stakeholders and special needs groups, was undertaking a review of child care services, including the After-school Care Pilot Scheme under the Community Care Fund. The review results would be made available in due course.

9. In response to Members' enquiry about monitoring the fee levels and quality of after-school care services provided by NGOs, the Administration advised that since the ASCP service operated under SWD's Fee Waiving Subsidy Scheme was provided by NGOs on a non-profit and self-financing basis, and the scope of services provided might be different, the service operators could set a reasonable service charge in accordance with the operating cost of the service and the financial status of the service users. SWD's District Social Welfare Offices maintained close liaison with the ASCP centres in the districts to review the service provision and to ensure service quality.

#### After-school learning and support programmes under Partnership Fund for the Disadvantaged

10. Some Members considered that EDB was currently implementing the School-based and Community-based After-school Learning and Support Programme ("ASLSP") with its objectives to support the disadvantaged students to participate in after-school activities with a view to facilitating their whole-person development and personal growth, which were similar to those of the projects under PFD. The Administration was requested to take measures to avoid redundancy and wastage of resources. The Administration advised that the provision of matching funds under PFD aimed to further encourage business sector and NGOs to work with schools to facilitate the whole-person development of students mainly from grass roots families. Projects under PFD and ASLSP had different objectives. SWD and EDB would keep in view the implementation of projects under PFD and ASLSP respectively, and might consider project integration wherever appropriate.

11. Members noted that most of the school-based after-school learning and support projects did not provide services on weekends, public holidays and school holidays. This would hinder grass roots parents from joining the labour market to improve their living. Members urged the Administration to set out clearly in the PFD application guidelines that NGOs should provide after-school learning and support services on weekends, school holidays and general holidays. The Administration advised that the NGOs concerned would be encouraged to provide their services accordingly.

### **Relevant papers**

12. A list of the relevant papers on the Legislative Council website is in the **Appendix**.

Council Business Division 2  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
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## Appendix

### Relevant papers on implementation of after-school care and support services

Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Legislative Council	27 June 2012	<a href="#">Official Record of Proceedings Pages 16509-16512</a>
Legislative Council	6 February 2013	<a href="#">Official Record of Proceedings Pages 6543-6549</a>
Panel on Welfare Services	25 July 2014 (Item II)	<a href="#">Agenda Minutes</a>
Subcommittee on Poverty	28 April 2015 (Item I)	<a href="#">Agenda Minutes</a>
Legislative Council	18 November 2015	<a href="#">Official Record of Proceedings Pages 1738-1763</a>
Finance Committee	2 April 2015	<a href="#">Administration's replies to members' written questions in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2015-2016 Pages 987-988</a>
Panel on Manpower	16 February 2016 (Item III)	<a href="#">Agenda Minutes</a>
Finance Committee	8 April 2016	<a href="#">Administration's replies to members' written questions in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2016-2017 Pages 97-100</a>