

LegCo Panel on Education
Subcommittee on facilities in special schools for physically handicapped children
Progress of proposed improvement items requiring follow-up or review

Following the meeting on 25 November 1998 with the Sub-Committee of the LegCo Panel on Education, the Education Department (ED) convened a meeting on 29 January 1999 with the Hong Kong Special Schools Council (HKSSC) and the Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation Community Rehabilitation Network (HKSR) to further discuss the proposed improvement items.

2. The following is the progress of the proposed improvement items which are outstanding and which require follow-up action:

Proposed improvement items		Progress and ED's line to take
(a)	Cost estimates on air-conditioning in school hall, canteen and dormitory	The capital costs for providing air-conditioning in the dormitory, hall and canteen of 17 PH/SMH schools are estimated to be \$31.4 million and the annual recurrent costs \$4.12 million (for 11 dormitories, 10 school halls and 5 canteens). The Administration will further examine this issue in the light of the additional financial implications, competing priorities for resources, implications on boarding fees etc.
(b)	Inclusion of suction machine, oxygen, bed with railing, emergency call bell, small drawer set for medicine and sterilizer as standard provisions	ED is taking action to include these items as standard provisions.
(c)	Proposed increase of the spending limit from \$3000 to \$8000 under the School and Class (S & C) Grant	A HKSSC's survey reveals that the views of special schools are diverse and it is agreed that the current limit of \$3000 should remain unchanged.
(d)	Provision of adjustable desks and chairs for PH students.	ED is taking action to include these items as standard provision subject to detailed specifications to be provided by the HKSSC.
(e)	Provision of hand-rails for toilets and disabled toilets near junior classrooms	ED is taking action to include these items as standard provisions.

(f)	Enlarging the classroom from 45 m ² to 60 m ²	HKSSC had not been able to provide quantifiable justifications for the proposal. However, ED is still working to consider whether the classrooms should be enlarged.
(g)	Provision of kitchen facilities	There are private caterers who can cater for special diets for the schools. Hence, the proposal for provision of kitchen facilities is not necessary.
(h)	Design, space and facilities of the Activities of Daily Living Room and Physiotherapy Room	ED is examining the justifications from HKSSC.
(i)	Subvention of school bus	At present, schools have no difficulties in acquiring school bus through donations. As for the recurrent cost, it can be covered by bus fares paid by parents.
(j)	Provision of hydrotherapy pool	ED will not support this item as the utilization rate of school-based hydrotherapy pool is comparatively low (around 7 hours per week) and the community-based facilities should be fully utilized first. In this regard, ED will further explore with the Hospital Authority the possibility of allowing PH schools with more time slots for hydrotherapy.