

Information Paper

**Information Technology (IT) in Education
Site Preparation at Schools**

Purpose

Most schools need to carry out site preparation works in order to implement IT in education. This paper briefly describes the works required and the related procedures.

Background

2. The Administration announced in 1997 a series of measures to promote IT in education. These initiatives include provision of, on average, 40 computers for each primary school and 82 computers for each secondary school, and the selection of ten primary schools and ten secondary schools to participate in an IT pilot scheme (the "pilot scheme"). To install the additional IT equipment, most schools need to carry out site preparation works, which include increasing electrical installation, converting some of the classrooms, installing air-conditioners in computer rooms, establishing server rooms, and fixing trunkings for power supply and electronic signal cable.

3. The objectives of the pilot scheme are to let the more IT-ready schools advance at a faster pace; and more importantly, to identify and promote best practices in using IT to enhance the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Each participating primary school has been allocated \$3.71 million and each secondary school \$6.07 million for procuring computer facilities, carrying out site preparation works, establishing computer networks and

acquiring teacher training. From June this year, each pilot school can, depending on its own needs, flexibly deploy the funds allocated. The Government will review the scheme in two years' time.

Progress of site preparation works at schools

4. Site preparation works for all schools, apart from those for the pilot schools, are co-ordinated by the Government. To tie in with the initiative of providing 15 computers to each primary school, the Education Department (ED) has commissioned contractors to increase the electrical installations in primary schools where necessary. To date, over 60% of the primary schools have been installed with the computers, and it is expected that all electrical and computer installation works will be completed by the end of this year. Furthermore, the ED has provided 21 computers to each secondary school to replace the outdated computers in their computer rooms by August this year. This replacement exercise did not require site preparation works.

5. The Government will increase the provision of computers in each primary school and each secondary school to 40 and 82 on average. The ED has invited schools to forward proposals on configuration of computer facilities and general site preparation works required. The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department and the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) will start the site preparation works in phases later. It is expected that all the works will be completed by mid 2000. Schools will be provided with more computers once the site preparation works in their schools are completed. We are also planning to allow schools to procure computers by themselves, taking account of the completion date of the site preparation works.

6. In order that the pilot schools can complete all the site preparation works and computer networking as soon as possible, the 17 aided schools appoint their own authorised persons to carry out those works. For the three Government schools, the site preparation works are undertaken by the ArchSD as the school premises are government properties.

7. In the process of carrying out site preparation works, aided schools are required to submit several items of information to the ED for approval by ArchSD and the Information Technology Services Department. These include the work and fee proposals from not less than three authorised persons, the work design and tender documents prepared by the appointed authorised person for appointing contractors, and his recommendation on contractor appointment.

8. The inclusion of the above approval requirement has taken account of the following factors:

- The ArchSD is more familiar with the school design and characteristics. Its involvement will help ensure work safety and proper maintenance of the schools by the department in future.
- We need to ensure that the computer networks of the pilot schools can be linked up with those of other schools in future.
- Most schools do not have experience in tendering construction works and designing computer networks. Advice from professional departments will help protect the interests of the schools.

9. To date, two of the pilot schools have completed all site preparation works including computer networking. The other 16 are expected to complete all site preparation works by the commencement of the second term of the current school year. The remaining two schools will complete the works later due to the need to construct a new computer room and the need to resolve electricity problems respectively.

Education Department

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