



International schools in Hong Kong

ISSH30/17-18

Figure 1 – Student population at primary and secondary levels by types of schools, 2017/2018

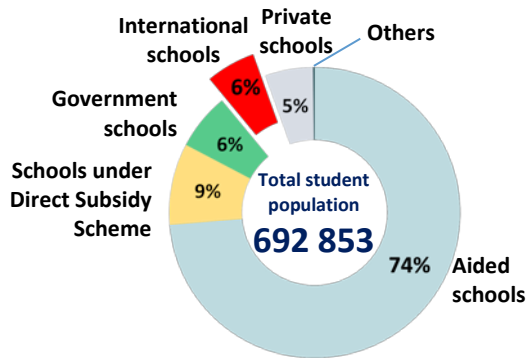
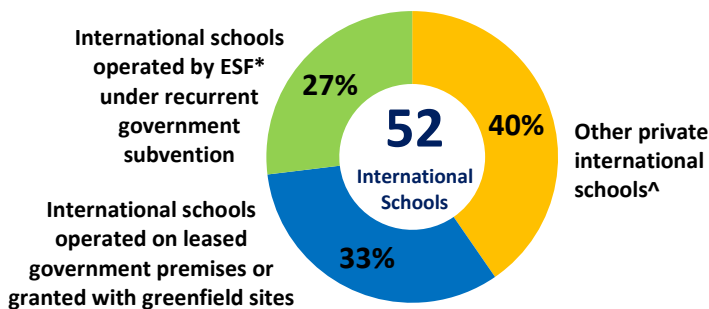
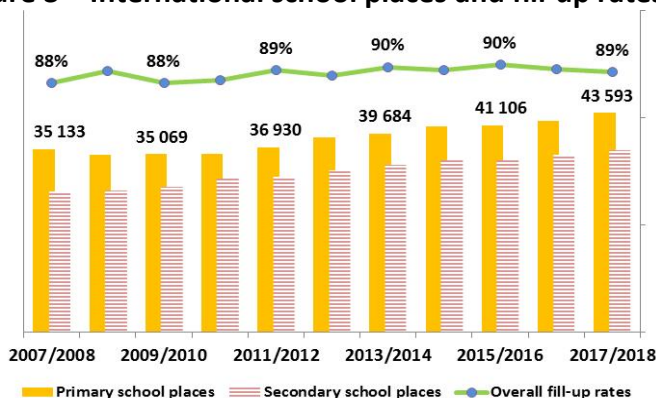


Figure 2 – International schools[#] by types of support, 2017/2018



- Notes: (#) Excluding one special school for children with special needs.
 (*) ESF was established through the enactment of The English Schools Foundation Ordinance (Cap. 1117) in 1967 with recurrent subvention and capital subsidies from the Government. In view of the changed environment nowadays, the Government is phasing out the current subvention over a period of 13 years until 2028-2029.
 (^) Some of them with a history of over 20 years were granted land by the Government at that time.

Figure 3 – International school places and fill-up rates*^{*}



- Note: (*) Fill-up rates refer to the number of students in international schools at both primary and secondary levels as a proportion to the number of school places available. Figures do not include the special school.

Highlights

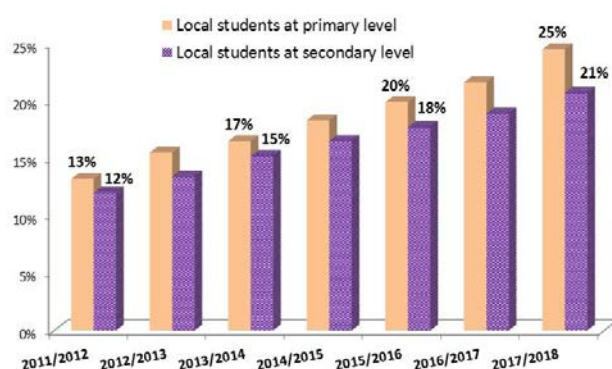
- In Hong Kong, international schools offer a range of non-local curricula, such as British, French and the International Baccalaureate programme designed for non-Chinese speaking students or for students wishing to pursue their studies overseas. In the 2017/2018 school year, international schools account for 6% of the student population at both primary and secondary levels (Figure 1).
- Presently, there are 52 international schools in Hong Kong, of which 19 are primary schools, eight secondary schools and 25 primary-cum-secondary schools. As shown in Figure 2, 27% are operated by the English Schools Foundation ("ESF") under recurrent government subvention, while 33% are operated on leased government premises (e.g. vacant schools) or developed on greenfield sites allocated by the Government.
- Allocation of vacant school premises and greenfield sites are part of the measures introduced by the Government in the 2000s to address the projected shortfall of international school places. In addition, it has also facilitated in-situ expansion and redevelopment of existing international schools. As a result of these measures, international school places have increased noticeably by 24% over the past decade to a total of 43 593 in the 2017/2018 school year (Figure 3). Fill-up rates overall held largely stable at about 88%-90% over the same period.

International schools in Hong Kong (cont'd)

Figure 4 – Annual tuition fees of international schools

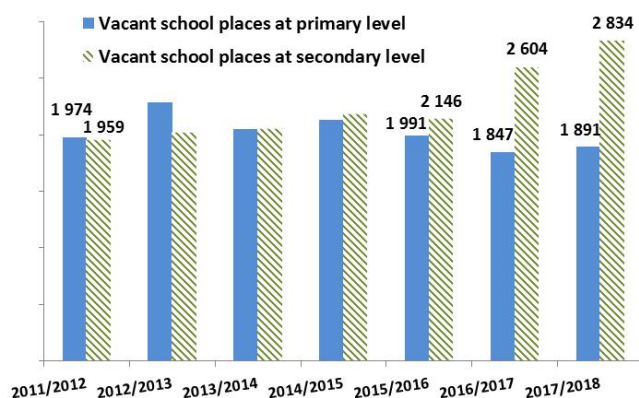
	Primary level			Secondary level		
	Lowest	Median	Highest	Lowest	Median	Highest
	HK\$'000			HK\$'000		
2014/2015	5.8	106.8	170.9	37.8	133.8	194.2
2015/2016	5.8	111.0	183.3	42.0	141.5	204.9
2016/2017	5.8	114.9	192.4	48.0	150.3	218.2
2017/2018	5.8	118.6	197.2	52.8	157.8	231.3

Figure 5 – Proportion of local students* in international schools



Note: (*) Local students are Hong Kong permanent residents and do not have any foreign passport (except British National (Overseas) Passport).

Figure 6 – Vacant school places* in international schools at both primary and secondary levels



Note: (*) The number of vacant school places represents the difference between the number of school places available and the number of students enrolled.

Highlights

- Tuition fees charged by international schools differ widely, with a median level staying above HK\$100,000 in the past few years. In the 2017/2018 school year, the median tuition fee is HK\$118,600 for the primary level, and HK\$157,800 for the secondary level (Figure 4). Compared with other types of schools, international school fees are typically on the higher end. For example, at the primary level, schools under Direct Subsidy Scheme charge a median annual fee of HK\$23,900 in the 2017/2018 school year; and Private Independent Schools, which offer non-local curricula mainly for local students, charge an annual fee of between HK\$75,000 and HK\$177,000.
- Despite higher tuition fees, the proportion of local students in international schools has been on the rise. In the 2017/2018 school year, 25% of the primary students are local students, as opposed to 13% in 2011/2012 (Figure 5), probably reflecting the growing preference among local parents over non-local curriculum and/or a more relaxed learning environment. Nevertheless, international schools are primarily provided to non-local students. Those on government assistance are generally required to reserve at least 70% of the places for non-local students. Hence, increasing popularity might indicate a more intense competition among local students.
- The number of vacant places in international secondary schools has risen visibly to 2 834 in 2017/2018 (Figure 6). According to a Government commissioned consultancy report published in 2017, the demand for international secondary schools would be stronger in the near future, underpinned by the increase in student enrolment in international primary schools in recent years. Overall, it is projected that there would be no shortfall in school places in the coming six years.

Data sources: Latest figures from the Education Bureau and individual websites of Private Independent Schools.

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19 June 2018
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