

香港特別行政區政府
政務司司長辦公室

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CHIEF SECRETARY
FOR ADMINISTRATION'S OFFICE
Government of the Hong Kong
Special Administrative Region

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4 January 2008

Dr the Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
Chairman of the Subcommittee to
Study Issues Relating to the Provision of
Boarding Places, Senior Secondary Education
and Employment Opportunities for Children
with Special Educational Needs
Legislative Council Building
8 Jackson Road
Central
Hong Kong

Dear Dr Cheung,

**Subcommittee to Study Issues Relating to the Provision of
Boarding Places, Senior Secondary Education and Employment
Opportunities for Children with Special Educational Needs**

Residential respite service for persons with disabilities aged under 15

Thank you for your letter of 5 December 2007 conveying the views and suggestions of the Subcommittee Members on the provision of residential respite service for persons with disabilities (PWD) below the age of 15.

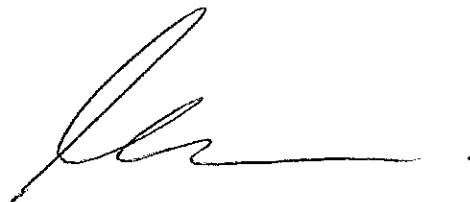
In response to the Subcommittee's letters of 28 February and 31 May 2007 on the same subject, the Administration had thoroughly considered the orientation of the residential respite service for PWD aged under 15, the jurisdictions and core areas of the education and welfare policies as well as the views of the Subcommittee Members. In our reply of 12 June 2007 to the Subcommittee, we pointed out that the provision of residential respite service for PWD aged under 15 is by nature a social service. In the

absence of new circumstances, I do not see justifications to depart from that view. Having said that, the contingency arrangement for special schools with unfilled boarding places to provide residential respite service for their students in genuine needs on voluntary and self-financing basis will continue.

Since the Administration's letter of 12 June 2007 to you, the Secretary for Labour and Welfare has carefully examined the possibility of extending the existing residential respite service provided by the Social Welfare Department (SWD) through non-government organizations (NGOs) to children aged 15 or below. As reported at the last Subcommittee meeting held on 30 November 2007, SWD had met with parents associations to understand the needs of their children and discussed with NGOs the provision of the service. So far, SWD has made good progress on the preparation for rolling out the new service with the intention of launching it in 2008/09.

Please rest assured that the Administration will continue to work closely with parents and NGOs to cater for the needs of parents and children for residential respite service.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Henry Tang', written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

(Henry Tang)

Chief Secretary for Administration

c.c. Secretary for Education
Secretary for Labour and Welfare