



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部教育局
Education Bureau

Government Secretariat, The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
The People's Republic of China

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30 December 2013

Clerk to Panel
(Attn: Miss Polly YEUNG)
Legislative Council Panel on Education
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central
Hong Kong

Dear Ms YEUNG,

Panel on Education
Procedures on Handling of Accidents and Bullying in Schools

I refer to your letter dated 16 December 2013 on the captioned matter. The Procedures on Handling of Accidents and Bullying in Schools is enclosed for Members' reference please.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony TANG', written over a printed name in parentheses.

(Tony/TANG)
for Secretary for Education

Procedures on Handling of Accidents and Bullying in Schools

Procedures on Handling of Accidents by Schools

Under the Education Ordinance, schools shall be managed by their School Management Committee/Incorporated Management Committee. Through circulars and administration guide, the Education Bureau (EDB) provides schools with guidelines on matters including learning and teaching, school development, student affairs, financial management, personnel management, school premises safety, fire prevention and crisis management. The EDB also strengthens the crisis management capacity amongst school management by providing schools with training programmes such as crisis management seminars for newly-appointed principals, as well as training workshops or sharing sessions for school personnel. Meanwhile, the School Administration Guide is updated in a timely manner to enhance schools' crisis and emergency management capacity and knowledge. In addition, advice on related matter is provided to schools by the Regional Education Officers and related subject officers during school visits. Schools should draw up clear guidelines for both staff and students to equip them with knowledge on prevention of mishaps and accidents, and the appropriate actions to be taken in the event of accidents. Such guidelines include safety precautions during lessons and school activities, guidelines on extra-curricular activities, class suspension arrangements due to inclement weather and crisis management.

Generally speaking, should any student fall sick at school, the parents or guardians should be informed immediately and the student concerned should be sent to a clinic or hospital for treatment. For minor accidents such as cuts and bruises, the injured student should be given first aid treatment in school. Section 55 of the Education Regulations stipulates that at least two teachers in every school shall be trained in administering first aid so that they can render first aid and appropriate support when necessary. In the event of a serious accident, the school is required to ensure that there is a teacher to look after the student, including accompanying him/her to a hospital in an ambulance. The School Administration Guide reminds school to keep calm and take appropriate action swiftly in case of emergency which includes taking proper care of the student, seeking help from departments/organisations providing emergency services and calling the Police. The school should inform the parents and the EDB Regional Education Office concerned of the emergency immediately, and submit a written report to the EDB giving full details of the case.

According to the School Administration Guide, schools should draw up plans to tackle crisis, including specific policies and procedures to address a wide variety of crises, such as incidents of infectious diseases, student suicide and gas leakage. Hence, schools should set up a Crisis Management Team comprising the school head, representatives of teachers, clerical staff, janitor staff and specialists to draw up the crisis management criteria

and procedures. The Team should ensure that these plans are complete and appropriate for the establishment of an effective crisis management mechanism. The EDB also equips schools, through training programmes, with the necessary crisis management capacity.

To ensure that schools are given appropriate assistance, the EDB keeps in constant view the relevant support offered to schools, including training for school personnel, district-based/school-based support, guidelines and reference materials. In addition, necessary support on crisis and emergency management are provided to schools by our Regional Education Offices through close liaison with them.

Preventing and Handling of Bullying in Schools

The EDB has a very clear policy whereby any act of bullying in schools will not be tolerated. Circulars have been issued requiring all schools to take the matter seriously and implement proactive measures to ensure the safety of students at school, and strive to create a harmonious school environment conducive to students' learning.

The School Administration Guide sets out guidelines on handling of bullying cases that advise schools to adopt a whole-school approach in formulating and implementing anti-bullying strategies including clear stance on zero tolerance, reporting mechanism and handling procedures, highly transparent monitoring, and handling each bullying incident proactively and seriously. If unfortunately bullying incidents occur, schools should intervene and take follow-up actions as soon as possible, taking education, guidance and protection of their students as their prime concern. Actions to be taken by schools include stopping the act of bullying immediately upon receipt of such a report; assessing whether the student(s) concerned is/are injured or emotionally unstable and arranging for first aid/treatment as appropriate; intervening and conducting an initial mediation; and arranging for intensive counselling by counsellors or relevant professional service as appropriate. In handling of the above-mentioned cases, schools have to work together with parents to help bullying students rectify their behavioral problems, protect the students being bullied and restore a harmonious school environment.

To support schools in tackling school bullying, the EDB has put in place a mechanism to deal with and intervene in special cases. If suspected abuse is involved, the Family and Child Protective Services Unit of the Social Welfare Department in the respective district can be approached so that case consultation, referral, counselling and group work services, etc. would be provided. If the schools consider that the incident is serious or

involves criminal offence, they can report the case to the Police or seek support from the School Liaison Officers of the Police.

Regarding the prevention of school bullying, the EDB has attached great importance to the whole-person development of students and nurturing positive values among them. Beyond that, schools are required to augment the personal development education and life education elements in their school curriculum with a view to instilling in students a sense of respect for others, and helping them acquire communication, social and conflict-management skills to minimise occurrence of bullying. To this end, a series of teaching materials, resource packages, pamphlets and training and exchange sessions have also been provided to schools. In addition, we have organised diversified guidance and discipline programmes for schools, such as the Understanding Adolescent Project (Primary), the Pupil Ambassador: Active, Bright and Caring, and the Caring School Award Scheme to promote the spirit of caring, respect and self-discipline. Starting from the 2011/12 school year, we have launched the Harmonious School – Anti-bullying Campaign. To facilitate the implementation of the campaign, teaching materials, an anti-bullying charter, promotional materials and training for Harmonious Ambassador are offered to schools. An Anti-bullying Day/Week event has also been organised in schools to enhance students' anti-bullying awareness. In addition, since 2012, we have organised the biennial Internet Safety Best Practice Award Scheme which aimed at encouraging schools to take stronger measures to prevent cyber bullying. We also hold the Seminar on Unruly and Delinquent Behaviors in Schools every year to strengthen school personnel's capability of preventing and handling bullying in schools. The theme of this year's seminar is violence and bullying in schools. The EDB has ensured that emergency and school bullying cases are handled appropriately by schools through various means, including dissemination of circulars and guidelines, training programmes and close contacts with schools. Relevant activities have also been organised to strengthen the anti-bullying awareness of students and staff so as to create a harmonious school environment.

Regarding the incident of the death of a Primary 5 female student who fell off the building of her school earlier, the Education Bureau has requested the school concerned to submit a report. As the case is under investigation by the Police, it is not appropriate for the Bureau to comment at this stage.

Education Bureau
December 2013