

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

LC Paper No. CB(4)1597/16-17  
(These minutes have been seen  
by the Administration)

Ref : CB4/HS/1/16

**Subcommittee on Children's Rights**

**Minutes of the ninth meeting  
on Tuesday, 20 June 2017, at 10:45 am  
in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex**

**Members present** : Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung (Chairman)  
Hon SHIU Ka-chun (Deputy Chairman)  
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung  
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki  
Hon KWOK Wai-keung  
Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan  
Hon IP Kin-yuen  
Hon Alvin YEUNG  
Hon Andrew WAN Siu-kin  
Hon CHU Hoi-dick  
Dr Hon CHENG Chung-tai  
Hon Nathan LAW Kwun-chung

**Members absent** : Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT, JP  
Hon HUI Chi-fung  
Dr Hon LAU Siu-lai

[According to the Judgment of the Court of First Instance of the High Court on 14 July 2017, LEUNG Kwok-hung, Nathan LAW Kwun-chung, YIU Chung-yim and LAU Siu-lai have been disqualified from assuming the office of a member of the Legislative Council, and have vacated the same since 12 October 2016, and are not entitled to act as a member of the Legislative Council.]

**Public Officers  
attending** : **Agenda item I**

**Labour and Welfare Bureau**

Mr David LEUNG, JP  
Commissioner for Rehabilitation

**Education Bureau**

Mr Godwin LAI  
Principal Assistant Secretary (Special Education)

Miss Louise HUI  
Senior Specialist (Speech Therapy)

**Social Welfare Department**

Mr FONG Kai-leung  
Assistant Director  
(Rehabilitation & Medical Social Services)

**Hospital Authority**

Dr SO Wing-yee  
Chief Manager (Quality & Standards)

Dr Henry LAM  
Consultant (Ear, Nose & Throat)  
Alice Ho Miu Ling Nethersole Hospital

Mr Jimmy WU  
Senior Manager (Allied Health)

**Attendance by  
invitation** : **Agenda item I**

Mr GUO Ning

Miss LAU Hiu-tung

Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of  
Hong Kong

---

Miss LAI Ka-man  
Deputy spokesperson

Mr Mario SO

Mr Aaron WONG Yiu-leung

The Democratic Party

Mr CHAN Yuk-ming  
Representative

Miss WU Lake-yan

Miss CHAN Tsz-yan

Ms WONG Yuet-on

Mr LAI Ka-yau

Miss TAM Tsz-yan

Miss CHU Man-him

Ms WONG Hoi-yan

Hong Kong Parents Association for the Hearing Impaired

Ms Vivian WONG  
Committee member

Advisory Committee of Hong Kong Association of the Deaf

Mr MAK Hoi-wah  
Chairman

Mr YIU Kun-man

Suen Mei Centre for Children

Ms Brenda LEE Siu-yee  
Chairman of Suen Mei Alumni Association

Silence

Mr WONG Lik-hang  
RSW

Silence Social Enterprise

Mr FUNG Fuk-ping  
Center-in-Charge

Suen Mei Speech & Hearing Centre

Mrs Bessie PANG  
Executive Director

Mr LO Kai-chun

Miss Chloe WONG

黎敏聰女士

Hong Kong Association of the Deaf

劉麗芳女士  
會長

Ms CHOI Tsz-wan

Miss WONG Suet-ying

Dr WONG Chi-tak

Miss FUNG Hiu-man

Miss LEUNG Pui-yan

Miss CHAN Yi-hin

Mr LEE Yin-fai

黃耀邦先生

Hong Kong Paediatric Foundation

Ms Gloria TIEN LUK Sau-kuen  
Executive Committee Member

**Clerk in attendance** : Ms Angel WONG  
Chief Council Secretary (4)4

**Staff in attendance** : Miss Mandy NG  
Council Secretary (4)4

Ms Sandy HAU  
Legislative Assistant(4)4

---

Action

**I. Support measures for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing children**

(LC Paper No. CB(4)1242/16-17(01) -- Paper provided by the Administration)

Other papers

Written submissions from deputations/individuals not attending the meeting

(LC Paper No. CB(4)1242/16-17(02) -- Joint submission from Professor Lena WONG, Professor Bradley McPHERSON, Dr Iris NG, Ms Annabelle WONG and Mrs Bessie PANG (*English version only*)

LC Paper No. CB(4)1242/16-17(05) -- Submission from 張錦權先生 (*Chinese version only*)

LC Paper No. CB(4)1242/16-17(06) -- Submission from 蕭潤威先生 (*Chinese version only*)

LC Paper No. CB(4)1242/16-17(07) -- Submission from Ms NI CHAN (*Chinese version only*)

LC Paper No. CB(4)1273/16-17(12) -- Submission from Miss Connie LO Chun-yi (*Chinese version only*)

Meeting with deputations/individuals and the Administration for agenda item I

The Subcommittee deliberated (index of proceedings attached at **Annex I**).

Action

2. The Subcommittee received views from 26 deputations/individuals attending the meeting and five written submissions from deputations/individuals which/who had not attended the meeting. Their major views and concerns were summarized as follows:

*Education*

- (a) after receiving intensive speech and hearing training, some deaf and hard-of-hearing children could communicate orally and attend ordinary schools. Schools should create environments more conducive to learning for these children by arranging them to sit nearer to the teacher in classrooms, exempting them from taking music and listening subjects, etc;
- (b) the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which had already been entered into force for Hong Kong, pointed out the importance of sign language to deaf and hard-of-hearing people. The role of sign language should therefore be clearly stated in Hong Kong's education policy to safeguard the right of deaf and hard-of-hearing children to access an inclusive and quality education;
- (c) oral language teaching might not accommodate the needs of all deaf and hard-of-hearing children. Some found it very difficult to understand what the teachers were talking in class although they could still hear sounds. Sign language could facilitate classroom teaching and played an equally important role as oral language. The Government should place equal emphasis on oral language and sign language so that deaf and hard-of-hearing children could choose to learn either oral language or sign language, or both;
- (d) the Centre for Sign Linguistics and Deaf Studies of the Chinese University of Hong Kong started the Sign Bilingualism and Co-enrolment in Deaf Education Programme ("Co-enrolment Programme") with funding from the Hong Kong Jockey Club in 2006. The Co-enrolment Programme yielded marked success in providing a common learning environment for deaf students and students with normal hearing. However, the Co-enrolment Programme would end next year due to resources constraints. On account of its success, the Administration should support the continuation of the Programme and provide funding support to sign bilingualism co-enrolment schemes currently implemented in ordinary schools;

Action

- (e) provision of sign language interpreters or services of note-takers for deaf and hard-of-hearing students was not common in senior secondary level. Similarly, support services for deaf and hard-of-hearing students were hardly available in the higher education sector. The Administration should have a holistic review on the implementation of the integrated education policy to better support SEN students;
- (f) there should be school counsellors who knew sign language to communicate effectively with deaf and hard-of-hearing students;

*Provision of assistive hearing devices*

- (g) free hearing aids provided by the Education Bureau ("EDB") could not meet the specific needs of some deaf and hard-of-hearing children. To provide greater flexibility, these children should be given the option of using the hearing aids provided by EDB or be issued subsidy or vouchers to purchase suitable hearing aids from a list of approved suppliers;
- (h) cochlear implant was made up of an implant which could usually last for a lifetime and an external speech processor subject to three-year warranty. After the warranty period, the costly repair and replacement of cochlear implant were not covered by the standard fees and charges of the Hospital Authority ("HA"). The Administration should consider providing subsidies to relieve the financial burden of the deaf from low income families;
- (i) under the prevailing tender systems, HA might procure different cochlear models in its various procurement exercises. As such, deaf children with binaural hearing loss might have different models of cochlear implants if the surgeries were performed separately in different periods. Different models of cochlear might vary in functionality and adversely affected their hearing ability;

*Other support measures*

- (j) the Administration should provide resources to facilitate early identification and intervention of deaf and hard-of-hearing children, so that these children could receive timely treatment and training;
- (k) after early identification and intervention, the Government should provide sufficient resources that could really suit the needs of deaf and hard-of-hearing children;

Action

- (l) parents were upset and disoriented when their children were identified as deaf or hard-of-hearing. Although medical social workers would provide relevant information on social services for their reference, it was a difficult decision for parents opting for suitable rehabilitation services and treatment for their children. The Administration should strengthen the counseling services and assistance to the parents for facing their children's problem and difficulty arising from their illness;
- (m) the Administration should step up publicity on spreading the message that deafness was not the same as muteness, hearing aids and cochlear implants could not restore hearing to a normal level, lip-reading could not put the deaf on par with hearing people, etc. so as to help the public understand the world of deaf people and their difficulties;
- (n) the role of sign language had long been downplayed. As a result, sign language interpreters were seriously insufficient in Hong Kong and local sign language had yet to evolve as a common language. The Administration should speed up the building up of a sign language database and step up the training of sign language interpreters;
- (o) the Government should promote the use of sign language at the governmental level, especially in respect of the provision of sign language interpretation in the delivery of public services, so that deaf people could integrate into the society; and
- (p) sign language interpretation service should be provided for television news programmes so as to give the deaf easy access to current affairs information.

3. Members agreed that deaf and hard-of-hearing children should have the rights to access an inclusive and quality education and have the options of using sign language, oral language or sign bilingualism in their studies. They urged the Administration to implement sign bilingualism in ordinary schools and promote the use of sign language in the community.

4. On the views and concerns raised by members and deputations at the meeting, the Administration made the following responses:

*Education*

- (a) the Administration had been supporting schools to provide equal and inclusive learning environment to all students. EDB was adopting a "dual-track" approach in special education. Subject to the assessment and recommendation of specialists and the consent of parents,



Action

students with severe or profound hearing loss or those who could not construct knowledge because of inadequate speech abilities, that was, those students who might need to use sign language in communication and learning, would be referred to schools for children with hearing impairment ("HI") to receive intensive support services. Students with less degree of hearing loss would benefit from ordinary schools;

- (b) students with HI suitable to attend ordinary schools, after fitted with assistive hearing devices, could learn and communicate with other people in oral language. EDB had all along been encouraging teachers to adopt the most appropriate mode to teach and communicate with students with HI. With regard to their abilities and needs, teachers would use oral language with the support of visual strategies, contextual cues, body language, written text and gestures, etc. to communicate with these students in teaching. Schools could utilize the additional resources such as the Learning Support Grant and other school resources to arrange support for these students including employing teaching assistants who knew sign language to assist these students in learning;
- (c) if ordinary schools opted to use sign language in providing support for students with HI, schools should have appropriate arrangements, such as formulating the criteria of using sign language by these students, training these students to utilize residual hearing for listening, assisting these students to acquire skills in communicating with people with normal hearing, and arranging subject teachers and teaching assistants to learn sign language, etc. EDB would further enhance the communication with these schools to ensure that schools could provide appropriate support for students with HI;
- (d) EDB took note of deputations' calling for supporting the Co-enrolment Programme. EDB did not find strong empirical evidence confirming that the use of sign language was the major contributing factor leading to the academic attainment of the students under the Programme. Instead, a conglomerate of factors, such as the in-class, pull-out and after-school remedial support, the school-based speech therapy services, the Enhanced Support for Students with HI Attending Ordinary Schools offered by the school for children with HI, etc., rather than solely the use of sign language, contributed to the development of these students;

Action

*Provision of assistive hearing devices*

- (e) children would be referred to HA for further assessment within one to two months once they were identified as deaf or hard-of-hearing. For clinically eligible children with profound hearing loss, they would receive treatment as indicated, including cochlear implant, usually within a few months after assessment. There was further plan to shorten the waiting time for hearing aid prescription and fitting in 2017-2018;
- (f) owing to historical reasons, EDB provided free hearing aids to students with HI with replacement every three years. EDB had been collecting views from parents regarding the provision through questionnaires. From 2012 to 2016, out of some 1 000 questionnaires collected, more than 98% of parents indicated that they were satisfied with the quality of hearing aids provided by EDB, while some parents relayed that their children opted not to use the hearing aids provided by EDB due to personal reasons. EDB welcomed feedback from stakeholders regarding this provision;
- (g) EDB considered that the current outsourced arrangement for the provision of hearing aids by the Government, was in the best interest of students with HI and their parents. The practice would eliminate parents' inconvenience in choosing hearing aids everywhere and the risk of purchasing overpriced hearing aids; and allow EDB more effective monitoring of the quality of hearing aids and related services;

*Other support measures*

- (h) EDB had all along been working with the Rehabilitation Advisory Committee in promoting sign language in the education sector, e.g. the school for children with HI had been organizing the "Inter-school Sign-a-Song Contest" to promote sign language and inclusive culture. The Labour and Welfare Bureau would also explore possible means, such as the production of announcement of public interest, to enhance public understanding of the deaf; and
- (i) the Social Welfare Department ("SWD") provided subvented pre-school rehabilitation services, including the Early Education and Training Centre and Special Child Care Centre, for children from birth to six years old who were identified as deaf or hard-of-hearing. Having regard to deputations' views, SWD would review the information delivered by medical social workers to parents of newly diagnosed deaf or hard-of-hearing children, and enhance the training

Action

of its front-line staff to offer timely and appropriate assistance to these parents.

5. The Chairman requested the Administration to provide the following information:

- (a) information kit delivered by medical social workers to parents whose children were identified as deaf or hard-of-hearing; and
- (b) additional resources offered by EDB to support ordinary schools to use sign language in teaching in the past five years.

*(Post-meeting note: The Administration's written information was issued to members vide LC Paper CB(4)1457/16-17(01) on 24 July 2017.)*

Motion

6. The Chairman referred members to the two motions moved by the Deputy Chairman and Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung respectively (wording of the motions at **Annex II**).

7. The Chairman put to vote the motion of the Deputy Chairman. All members present voted for the motion. The Chairman declared that the motion was passed unanimously.

8. The Chairman then put to vote the motion of Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung. All members present voted for the motion. The Chairman declared that the motion was passed unanimously.

9. The Administration was asked to provide a written response to the motions passed.

*(Post-meeting note: The Administration's written response to the motions was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)1393/16-17(01) on 12 July 2017.)*

**II. Any other business**

10. Members agreed in principle to seek the approval of the House Committee to extend the period of the work of the Subcommittee for six months until May 2018, and suggest items for future discussion.

Action

*(Post-meeting note: Members were invited to suggest items for future discussion vide LC Paper No. CB(4)1287/16-17 on 22 June 2017.)*

11. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 1:27 pm.

Council Business Division 4  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
20 September 2017

## Subcommittee on Children's Rights

### Proceedings of the ninth meeting on Tuesday, 20 June 2017 at 10:45 am in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex

Time marker	Speaker(s)	Subject(s)	Action required
<i>Agenda Item I - Support measures for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing children</i>			
001137 - 001804	Chairman Dr KWOK Ka-ki	Opening remarks  Members' views on seeking the approval of the House Committee to extend the period of work of the Subcommittee	
001805 - 002220	Chairman Mr GUO Ning	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(4)1273/16-17(01)]	
002221 - 002731	Chairman Miss LAU Hiu-tung	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(4)1242/16-17(02)]	
002732 - 003104	Chairman Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong	Presentation of views	
003105 - 003456	Chairman Mr Mario SO	Presentation of views	
003457 - 004146	Chairman Mr Aaron WONG Yiu- leung	Presentation of views	
004147 - 004554	Chairman The Democratic Party	Presentation of views	
004555 - 004851	Chairman Miss CHAN Tsz-yan	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(4)1273/16-17(02)]	
004852 - 005212	Chairman Ms WONG Yuet-on	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(4)1273/16-17(03)]	
005213 - 005653	Chairman Mr LAI Ka-yau	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(4)1273/16-17(04)]	
005654 - 010121	Chairman Miss TAM Tsz-yan	Presentation of views	
010122 - 010500	Chairman Miss CHU Man-him	Presentation of views	
010501 - 011203	Chairman Ms WONG Hoi-yan	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(4)1242/16-17(03)]	
011204 - 011637	Chairman Hong Kong Parents Association for the Hearing Impaired	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(4)1273/16-17(05)]	

<b>Time marker</b>	<b>Speaker(s)</b>	<b>Subject(s)</b>	<b>Action required</b>
011638 - 012030	Chairman Advisory Committee of Hong Kong Association of the Deaf	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(4)1273/16-17(06)]	
012031 - 012435	Chairman Mr YIU Kun-man	Presentation of views	
012436 - 012840	Chairman Suen Mei Centre for Children	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(4)1273/16-17(07)]	
012841 - 013218	Chairman Silence	Presentation of views	
013219 - 013347	Chairman Silence Social Enterprise	Presentation of views	
013348 - 013711	Chairman Suen Mei Speech & Hearing Centre	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(4)1273/16-17(08)]	
013712 - 014122	Chairman Mr LO Kai-chun	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(4)1273/16-17(09)]	
014123 - 014533	Chairman Miss Chloe WONG	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(4)1257/16-17(02)]	
014534 - 014930	Chairman Hong Kong Association of the Deaf	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(4)1257/16-17(01)]	
014931 - 015231	Chairman Ms CHOI Tsz-wan	Presentation of views	
015232 - 015602	Chairman Miss WONG Suet-ying	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(4)1273/16-17(10)]	
015603 - 015932	Chairman Dr WONG Chi-tak	Presentation of views	
015933 - 020332	Chairman Hong Kong Paediatric Foundation	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(4)1273/16-17(11)]	
020333 - 020552	Chairman Deputy Chairman Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung	Motions moved by the Deputy Chairman and Mr LEUNG	
020553 - 021615	Chairman Education Bureau ("EDB") Social Welfare Department ("SWD") Hospital Authority	The Chairman's remarks and the Administration's response to the views of the deputations	

<b>Time marker</b>	<b>Speaker(s)</b>	<b>Subject(s)</b>	<b>Action required</b>
021616 - 021944	Chairman Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung EDB	Mr LEUNG's views on the provision of assistive hearing devices to deaf and hard-of-hearing children, and the implementation of sign bilingualism in ordinary schools	
021945 - 022340	Chairman Dr Helena WONG EDB SWD	Dr WONG's concerns about the information delivered by medical social workers to parents of newly diagnosed deaf or hard-of-hearing children, and the feasibility of issuing vouchers to deaf and hard-of-hearing children for purchasing hearing aids	Paragraph 5 of the minutes refers
022341 - 022804	Chairman Mr Alvin YEUNG EDB	Mr YEUNG's enquiries on the Administration's stance on and the timeline for the implementation of sign bilingualism in ordinary schools	
022805 - 023235	Chairman Mr IP Kin-yuen EDB	Mr IP's calling for the Administration to maintain communication with stakeholders regarding support measures for deaf and hard-of-hearing children	
023236 - 023728	Chairman Deputy Chairman Labour and Welfare Bureau	The Deputy Chairman's views on issues relating to the provision of assistive hearing devices to deaf and hard-of-hearing children, and the initiatives to enhance public understanding of the deaf	
<i>Agenda Item II – Any other business</i>			
023729 - 024122	Chairman	The Chairman's request for information regarding additional resources offered by EDB to support ordinary schools to use sign language in teaching  Closing remarks	Paragraph 5 of the minutes refers

兒童權利小組委員會  
Subcommittee on Children's Rights

在2017年6月20日會議上  
就議程項目"對聾／弱聽兒童的支援措施"通過的議案  
Motion passed under the agenda item  
"Support measures for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing children"  
at the meeting on 20 June 2017

**議案措辭**

根據2014年政府統計署第62號專題報告書－殘疾人士及長期病患者的資料顯示，香港整體人口25.5%可接受大專教育，但只有6.1%聾生／弱聽人士可接受大專教育。本委員會促請教育局立即檢視現時教育系統內(包括小學、中學、職業訓練學校、大學)的手語授課情況，並加強對聾／弱聽學生的實質支援。

(邵家臻議員動議)

**Wording of the Motion**

(Translation)

According to the information in the "Special Topics Report No. 62 – Persons with disabilities and chronic diseases" published by the Census and Statistics Department in 2014, 25.5% of the total population in Hong Kong may receive tertiary education, but only 6.1% of deaf and hard-of-hearing persons may do so. This Subcommittee urges the Education Bureau to immediately review the situation of teaching by sign language under the existing education system (including primary and secondary schools, vocational training schools and universities), as well as strengthen the provision of substantial support for deaf and hard-of-hearing students.

(Moved by Hon SHIU Ka-chun)



## **議案措辭**

本委員會認為政府須全面檢討及改善為聾童提供的耳機、耳窩等設備的支援外，更應檢視手語及口語的雙語共融教育，為聾童提供更多及更適切的學習環境。

(梁議忠議員動議)

## **Wording of the Motion**

(Translation)

This Subcommittee takes the view that while the Government must comprehensively review and enhance the support for deaf children in relation to the provision of equipment such as hearing aids, cochlear, etc., it should also review the adoption of sign bilingualism (to learn with both sign and spoken languages) and co-enrolment in deaf education, in order to provide deaf children with enhanced and more suitable learning environment.

(Moved by Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung)