



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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26 October 2018

Ms Angel WONG
Clerk to Panel
Legislative Council Panel on Education
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central
Hong Kong

Dear Ms WONG,

Panel on Education
Follow-up of the Meeting on 1 June 2018

I refer to your letter dated 5 June 2018. Our response to the motion passed at the agenda item "Development of Quality Assurance in the Kindergarten Education" is provided at Annex as requested.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Suk-fan'.

(Mrs CHAN SIU Suk-fan)
for Secretary for Education

Encl.

Wording of the Motion

“After the Administration has promulgated the Kindergarten Education Curriculum Guide (“the Guide”), drilling still exists in some kindergartens (“KGs”), which affects the physical and psychological well-being of young children. This Panel requests the Administration to study the formulation of specific penalties in order to step up monitoring over KGs’ implementation of the Guide and curb the excessive drilling culture. If drilling in KGs is not reduced upon the introduction of penalties, this Panel requests the Administration to draw reference from overseas experiences (such as Finland and Macao) and explore the feasibility of establishing objectives of early childhood education by legislative means, so as to strengthen its regulation over the quality of early children education and to rectify the unhealthy drilling culture.”

Response of the Education Bureau

Quality kindergarten education lays good foundation for children’s lifelong learning. When formulating the kindergarten education policy, the Government has taken into account the implementation strategies and experiences in different regions and countries, as well as the situation and needs of Hong Kong, and adopts a practical approach in policy implementation. On learning and teaching in kindergartens, we emphasise that an integrated approach should be adopted, using real-life themes to connect various learning areas to match the developmental characteristics of children, and “learning through play” is an effective strategy. This is also a common practice in various regions of the world. As regards how to roll out the curriculum framework and monitor its implementation (for instance, whether the curriculum goals and framework should be established through legislative means), practices vary with regions or countries. Given that ordinances, regulations, administrative systems and social contexts are different, experiences in other regions and countries may serve as reference, but inappropriate for direct application to Hong Kong. We appreciate the community’s call for curbing excessive drilling and will strengthen the monitoring on the quality of kindergarten education so that malpractices can be rectified.

We have pointed out clearly in the updated Kindergarten Education Curriculum Guide (2017) that kindergartens should not ask K1 children to hold a pencil to write, or ask K2 and K3 children to do mechanical copying and calculation drills, and should not arrange homework that is excessive, frequent or too difficult, so as to avoid unnecessary pressure and drilling. It is also reiterated in the “List of Dos and Don’ts for Kindergartens” on the Education Bureau (EDB) website and

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other relevant documents that kindergarten curriculum design should cover the domains of ethics, intellect, physique, social skills and aesthetics, and not to place undue emphasis on a particular area or merely concentrating on imparting knowledge. The curriculum contents should meet the experience, ability and interest of children, and should not be excessive and too difficult.

We adopt diversified modes of control mechanisms to monitor curriculum implementation at school level and provide schools with appropriate support. All kindergartens joining the kindergarten education scheme are subject to the Quality Assurance Framework comprising School Self-evaluation of kindergartens and Quality Review of EDB, both are conducted on the basis of Performance Indicators. It is stated clearly in the refined Performance Indicators announced in December 2017 that:

- In line with the development of children, homework should not be too much, too frequent or too difficult for children, for example not requesting K1 children to write, or K2 and K3 children to do mechanical copying exercises or calculation drills.
- The parent-child activities should be within children's abilities. Parents should play an assisting role, for example, accompanying children to conduct interesting and relaxing tasks or games so as to cultivate their interest in learning and hence foster parent-child relationship.
- Children's development in various aspects should be assessed through continuous observations and records. Schools should not assess children's abilities by means of dictations, tests and examinations. The assessment should cover children's values and attitudes, skills and knowledge.

Quality Review teams of EDB make professional judgement on overall school performance based on the Performance Indicators. If kindergartens are found to have arranged curriculum or homework that is not in line with the abilities and developmental needs of children (for example, by asking children to do excessive or too difficult homework, or mechanical copying), we will urge them to stop such practices immediately and make improvement accordingly. The undesirable homework arrangement will also be recorded in the Quality Review reports to be uploaded onto the EDB website for public information. So far, kindergartens generally have acted on the advice of EDB and made improvement accordingly. We will continue to monitor the situation through school visits, so as to ensure that the kindergartens have ceased to arrange mechanical activities for their students or adjusted the content of homework appropriately.

The collaboration of parents is also very important. In this connection, we strive to promote parent education in order to enhance parents' understanding of children's development and avoid doing harm to children's learning inadvertently through activities that are beyond their abilities. We seek to enhance parents'

understanding of the goals of kindergarten education through seminars and pamphlets. We have also produced a series of short film under the theme “Joyful and Balanced Development for Young Children Education”, which include videos on parent education (namely “New Milestone of Young Children Education”, “Moral Development”, “Learning through Play”, “Language Learning”, “Interface between Kindergarten and Primary One” and “Building an Inclusive Culture for Parents”) that aim at helping parents learn more about kindergarten education and solicit their co-operation and concerted efforts for providing quality learning experience to young children. The videos have been uploaded onto the EDB website.

We launched the parent education framework at kindergarten stage in June this year. It covers a series of themes, for instance, “Curriculum promoting children’s balanced development”, “Learning through play”, “Success is not determined at the scratch line” and “Do not compare children with each other”. We encourage kindergartens to draw reference to these themes when organising school-based parent education activities. We also have commissioned the Hong Kong Education University to organise a series of territory-wide parent education talks in the 2018/19 school year. Furthermore, as announced by the Chief Executive in the Policy Address in October 2018, to foster parent education and home-school co-operation, the Government will increase recurrent funding by about \$30 million to provide additional resources to Federations of Parent-Teacher Associations and Parent-Teacher Associations of schools for organising more community-based and school-based parent education programmes or activities.

We appreciate that the community attaches importance to kindergarten education, and we will closely monitor the quality of kindergartens and continue to listen to the views of different sectors, so as to promote the sustainable development of quality kindergarten education and joyful learning of our children.