

Education and Manpower Bureau Circular Memorandum No.194/2003

From: Secretary for Education
and Manpower

To: Supervisors/Heads of all Primary
and Secondary Schools (excluding
ESF Schools and International
Schools)

Ref: EMB(ERC)3/021/02 III

Date: 6 August 2003

Arrangements for Implementing “Through-train” Mode

Summary

This circular memorandum invites applications from primary and secondary schools complying with the three guiding principles to form “through-train” schools and announces the updated arrangements for implementing “through-train” mode in the areas of deployment of teachers and the requirement to submit internal assessment results under the Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA) System. It supersedes Circular Memorandum No. 23/2002 dated 24 January 2002 on the same subject.

Background

2. The “through-train” mode was one of the reform proposals put forward by the Education Commission (EC) in its Report on Reform Proposals for the Education System in Hong Kong published in September 2000 and subsequently accepted by the Government as announced in the Chief Executive’s Policy Address in October of the same year.

3. Schools were informed of the arrangements for implementing “through-train” mode in Circular Memorandum No. 23/2002 issued on 24 January 2002. Taking into consideration schools’ feedback in the course of implementing the “through-train” mode, some of the arrangements have been revised as attached to reflect the latest development.

Details

Guiding Principles for Application

4. Aided and government primary and secondary schools complying with the following three guiding principles are invited to form “through-train” schools:

- (i) the primary and secondary schools should have the same philosophy and aspiration for education and must strive to enhance continuity in primary and secondary education;
- (ii) the number of S1 places in the secondary school must exceed the number of P6 graduates of the linked primary school so as to allow admission of all P6 graduates; some S1 places should also be reserved so that P6 pupils of other primary schools could still have a chance to be admitted; and
- (iii) the primary and secondary schools must have the same mode of financing to ensure consistency in admission criteria.

To form “through-train” is a **school-based** decision made by the primary and secondary schools concerned. Before submitting an application, the schools concerned are advised to refer to the arrangements for implementing “through-train” mode detailed at **Appendix 1**.

5. Schools are requested to note that the “through-train” mode does **not** apply to kindergartens which have full discretion in admitting pupils and their mode of financing is different from that of aided and government primary and secondary schools. Allowing kindergartens to form “through-train” with primary and secondary schools would advance the pressure of competing for entry into popular primary and secondary schools to the early childhood education stage. Pupils who cannot afford the school fees charged by the linked kindergartens will be denied access to their linked primary and secondary schools. **Therefore, only primary and secondary schools are allowed to form “through-train”. Kindergartens are excluded.**

Timetable for Application

6. The timetable applicable to different types of schools for making applications is set out below:

School Type	Timetable for Application
Feeder / nominated schools <u>complying with the “through-train” principles</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools should indicate on or before 31.5.2005 whether they intend to form “through-train”. Schools with such an intention should submit their applications at the same time. The effective date depends on the date of approval. • Schools should adopt the “through-train” mode for their P1 intake in the 2006/07 school year at the latest if they decide to form “through-train”.
Feeder / nominated schools <u>currently not complying with the “through-train” principles</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools should indicate on or before 31.5.2012 whether they intend to form “through-train”. Schools with such an intention should submit their applications at the same time. The effective date depends on the date of approval. • Schools should adopt the “through-train” mode for their P1 intake in the 2013/14 school year at the latest if they decide to form “through-train”.
Non-feeder / non-nominated aided and government schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools may submit their applications at any time to adopt the “through-train” mode. The effective date depends on the date of approval.
Newly-built schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School sponsoring bodies intending to apply for new premises to operate “through-train” schools may justify their intention in the school plan for the consideration of the School Allocation Committee. Subsequent to the allocation of school premises to operate as “through-train” schools, the schools concerned should submit their applications to adopt the “through-train” mode.

7. Under the Primary One Admission (POA) System, applications for Primary 1 (P1) discretionary places (DP) are normally invited in September each year. Schools which have been approved to form “through-train” should make known to parents their “through-train” mode of operation when they invite applications for P1 DP. Schools can then start to adopt the “through-train” mode from P1 in September the following year. The direct S1 admission

mechanism will be applicable to these pupils when they graduate from the linked primary school six years later. If a school which has been approved to form “through-train” wishes to advance the effective date for the direct S1 admission mechanism to pupils already studying in its linked primary school, the agreement of all the parents concerned should be obtained in advance. At the same time, the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB) should be informed of the changes.

Procedure for Application

8. Applicants should complete the Application Form at **Appendix 2** and submit their collaboration plan explaining the mode and mechanism of collaboration between the linked primary and secondary schools. The plan should include ways to enhance continuity in primary and secondary education through school management, curriculum design, teaching strategy as well as student learning and development for approval by the EMB.

9. The completed Application Form and the collaboration plan should be forwarded to the Education Reform Co-ordination Section of the EMB in Room 1138, 11/F, Wu Chung House, 213 Queen’s Road East, Wan Chai, Hong Kong.

Enquiries

10. For enquiries, please contact the Education Reform Co-ordination Section of the Education Commission and Planning Division at 2892 6466.

Mrs Fanny K. F. LAM
for Secretary for Education and Manpower

c.c. Heads of Kindergartens and Sections – for information

Arrangements for Implementing “Through-train” Mode

The arrangements for implementing the “through-train” mode are detailed below under the following areas:

- *Rationale of “through-train” mode*
- *Collaboration between “through-train” primary and secondary schools*
- *Modes of linkage for “through-train” schools*
- *Flexibility under the existing mode of operation*
- *Secondary One admission mechanism*
- *Arrangements for feeder / nominated schools to adopt “through-train” mode*
- *Arrangements for feeder / nominated schools to discontinue their linkage*

Revisions will be made to the arrangements for implementing the “through-train” mode as and when required to tie in with the latest developments.

Rationale of “through-train” mode

2. The rationale of “through-train” mode is to strengthen collaboration between primary and secondary schools having the same philosophy and aspiration for education. It aims to enhance continuity in curriculum, strengthen the school’s understanding of and attention for its students and alleviate students’ adaptation problems upon their promotion to the secondary school.

Collaboration between “through-train” primary and secondary schools

3. The linked primary and secondary schools should work closely together to develop the following characteristics:

- (a) To plan and design a coherent curriculum for the primary and secondary schools to reflect a shared vision

To illustrate, schools can articulate connections between the interface of upper primary and junior secondary education in curriculum objectives and curriculum decisions, including planning, organization, implementation and evaluation. Schools can also put in place a mechanism to maintain comprehensive records of student progress and achievement throughout the different learning stages.

- (b) To provide students with coherent, all-round and balanced learning experiences so as to develop their potential to the full

To illustrate, schools can arrange coherent and progressive learning activities to cater for the needs of students at different learning stages. Take the school orchestra for instance, primary pupils having learnt some basic instrument playing may continue their training in the linked secondary schools. Better still, the orchestra can comprise both primary and secondary students. Such arrangement may also be applied to sports, art, moral education and other learning areas.

- (c) To enhance the professional growth and development of teachers to ensure that they have the capacity to cater for the diverse needs of their students

To illustrate, the sharing of up-to-date professional knowledge and informed practice through organized staff development programmes and the sharing of good teaching practices facilitate the building up of a shared vision which optimizes the all-round development of every student for his/her benefit.

- (d) To have an overall planning of support services for students throughout their primary and secondary education

To illustrate, schools can provide cross-level enrichment programmes for talented pupils and remedial measures for pupils with learning difficulties. Besides, senior secondary students may lead primary pupils to participate in school activities. Such arrangements allow students to learn from each other and enrich their experience.

Modes of linkage for “through-train” schools

4. Four possible modes of linkage for “through-train” schools are described below:

- “one-to-one” mode : one secondary school is linked to one primary school
- “one-to-many” mode : one secondary school is linked to several primary schools
- “many-to-many” mode : several secondary schools are linked to several primary schools
- “many-to-one” mode : several secondary schools are linked to one primary school

5. It is considered more appropriate and feasible to adopt the “one-to-one” mode, that is, one secondary school to link up with one primary school to facilitate close collaboration between them. If schools have good reasons to believe that other modes of linkage are more suitable in their own context, they should ensure full compliance with the “through-train” principles as detailed in paragraph 4 of Circular Memorandum No. 194/2003 as well as close collaboration and co-ordination between the linked primary and secondary schools. Under the “many-to-one” mode, **the P6 pupils would have more than one linked secondary schools to choose. S1 places should then be allocated according to parental choice on a random basis** in order to comply with the principle that a “through-train” secondary school must admit all P6 pupils of its linked primary school without selection.

Flexibility under the existing mode of operation

6. At present, **primary and secondary schools forming “through-train” are still considered as separate entities with respect to funding arrangements and staffing establishment.** Like ordinary primary and secondary schools in the public sector, “through-train” primary and secondary schools are governed by the Education Ordinance and its subsidiary regulations, the Codes of Aid for Primary and Secondary Schools and the instructions issued by the Secretary for Education and Manpower (SEM) from time to time. The “through-train” primary and secondary schools basically follow the existing mode of operation for primary and secondary schools.

7. A progressive approach based on the present system has been adopted in developing the “through-train” mode. **Schools are encouraged to make use of the flexibility allowed under the present school-based management (SBM) framework to enhance collaboration between the linked primary and secondary schools.** To illustrate, the linked primary and secondary schools would best be managed by the same School Management Committee (SMC). By the same token, **the linked primary and secondary schools can flexibly deploy teachers if the SMCs of the linked schools consent to the arrangement and provided that the teachers concerned are kept within the approved establishment of their respective schools.** For instance, students would benefit if they have the same class teachers for P6 and S1, and teachers of Chinese, English and Mathematics would have more opportunities for cross fertilization if they are deployed to teach senior primary classes and junior secondary classes alternately.

8. In making use of such flexibility, the rationale of “through-train” should always be the guiding principle. The purpose is to promote mutual understanding so as to enhance coherence and continuity in curriculum design, teaching strategy, student learning and development in primary and secondary education, with the ultimate aim of providing students with a coherent and comprehensive learning experience.

Secondary One admission mechanism

Admission of P6 pupils of other primary schools to “through-train” secondary schools

9. All “through-train” schools are required to comply with the principle that the number of S1 places in a linked secondary school must exceed the number of P6 graduates in its linked primary school so that pupils of other primary schools can still be admitted through the discretionary places (DP) or central allocation (CA) process.

10. “Through-train” secondary schools, both existing and newly-operated, should in principle reserve **not less than 15% of their total number of S1 places** for admitting pupils of other primary schools through DP or CA after deducting 5% of the S1 places for repeaters. After a “through-train” secondary school admits all P6 graduates of its linked primary school, it should make use of **half of the remaining S1 places for DP** and offer **the other half for CA** under the Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA) System. However, the proportion of DP to the total number of S1 places in each linked secondary school should not exceed the prevailing 20% applicable to non-through-train aided and government schools under the short-term SSPA mechanism. As an interim review of the short-term mechanism would be conducted in the 2003/04 school year, the arrangements for admitting P6 pupils of other primary schools to “through-train” secondary schools in or after the 2005/06 school year would be considered.

11. “Through-train” secondary schools should in principle reserve not less than 15% of their total number of S1 places for admitting pupils of other primary schools through DP or CA. Under the modes of linkage involving several secondary schools as described in paragraph 4 above, the same principle should apply to **each** secondary school involved. In exceptional cases, the EMB may exercise discretion to allow schools which cannot meet the 15% requirement to form “through-train” on condition that not less than 7% of their total number of S1 places (excluding the 5% reserved for repeaters) should be set aside for admitting pupils of other primary schools.

S1 admission arrangements for P6 pupils in “through-train” schools

12. **A P6 pupil of a “through-train” school may choose to proceed to its linked secondary school direct or apply for a DP of another secondary school. If he/she decides to apply for a DP of another secondary school but his/her application is rejected, he/she can only participate in CA and will not be allowed to retain the right to an S1 place in the linked secondary school.**

Submission of internal assessment results to the Education and Manpower Bureau

13. Under the SSPA System, all participating primary schools are required to submit the P5 Second Term (P5/2), P6 First Term (P6/1) and P6 Second Term (P6/2) internal assessment (IA) results of their pupils to the School Places Allocation (SPA) Section of the EMB for the purpose of deciding the allocation bands of pupils in the same school net. **If one or more P6 pupils of a “through-train” school choose to participate in CA, the linked primary school is still required to submit the P5/2, P6/1 and P6/2 IA results of all its P6 pupils.**

Interim arrangements of waiving the requirement to submit internal assessment results to the Education and Manpower Bureau

14. **If all of the P6 pupils of a “through-train” school choose to proceed to its linked secondary school, the requirement to submit the IA results under the SSPA System would be waived. However, the linked primary school would still have to submit the P5/2, P6/1 and P6/2 rank orders of all of these pupils to the SPA Section for the purpose of deciding the allocation bands of all P6 pupils in the same school net.** It should be noted that the agreement of **all** the parents concerned to the above arrangements must be obtained in advance. Briefing session should be held in October for parents of P5 pupils. Towards the end of the first term of P5, the parents should then be requested to indicate in writing to the “through-train” primary school if they would opt for their children to proceed directly to its linked secondary school, and the decision made is irrevocable. **The arrangements outlined in this paragraph are interim as they will apply only to P5 pupils in the 2003/04 school year.** The arrangements for submission of IA results for P5 pupils in or after the 2004/05 school year would be subject to the interim review of the short-term SSPA mechanism to be conducted in the 2003/04 school year.

Arrangements for feeder / nominated schools to adopt “through-train” mode

15. Feeder / nominated schools should refer to the **Annex** to observe the deadlines and actions to be taken when they decide whether or not to form “through-train”.

Arrangements for feeder / nominated schools to discontinue their linkage

16. If existing feeder / nominated schools eventually decide not to form “through-train” schools, they should announce their decision to discontinue their linkage. However, they should ensure that the delinking process **will not affect pupils already studying and those who have applied for admission to the feeder / nominated primary schools.** In other words, the linkage can only be discontinued after these primary pupils have entered secondary schools.

17. It is important to note that pupils have to apply for P1 DP in September one year before their admission. If a feeder / nominated primary school announces that the linkage¹ with its secondary school has been discontinued before September in a particular year, pupils admitted to P1 in the following school year will be allocated S1 places according to the admission mechanism of non-feeder / non-nominated schools when they reach P6.

18. Feeder / nominated schools may follow the feeder / nominated school arrangements under the existing SSPA System for admitting S1 students before forming “through-train” schools or discontinuing their linkage. Some primary and secondary schools may have established ties with several schools under the present feeder / nominated school system. They may have to, for various reasons, discontinue their linkage with some of their linked feeder / nominated schools. In such cases, schools intending to form “through-train” have to fully consult their linked feeder / nominated schools and the parents affected, and the SMC should make the final decision after taking into account the views of different stakeholders.

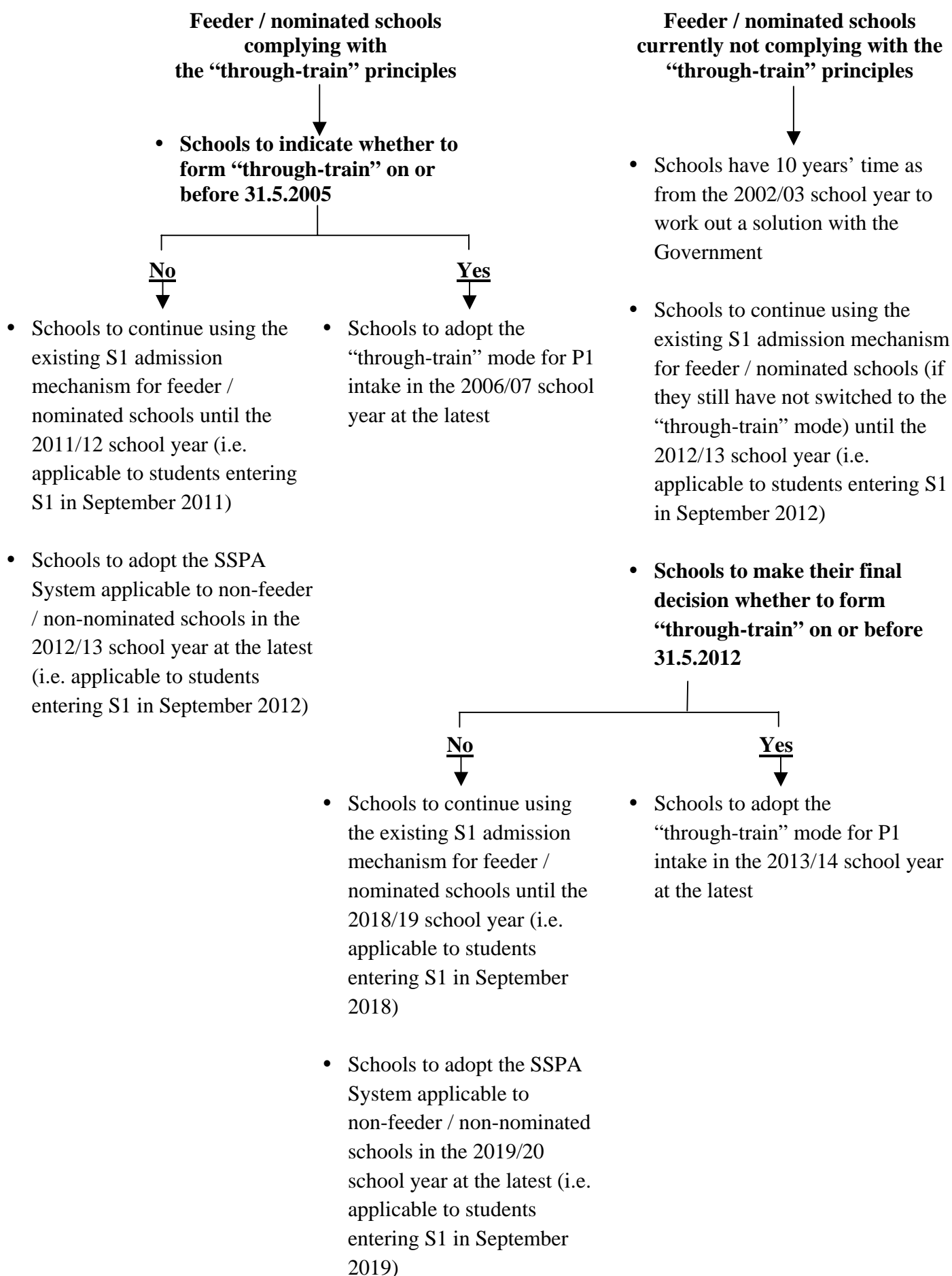
Education and Manpower Bureau
6 August 2003

¹ Discontinuing the linkage of feeder / nominated schools

For example, if a pair of feeder primary and secondary schools decides on 31.5.2004 not to form a “through-train” school, they should announce immediately that pupils admitted to P1 in the 2005/06 school year will be allocated S1 places according to the admission mechanism of non-feeder / non-nominated schools. Pupils admitted to P1 of the feeder / nominated primary school in September 2004 will be the last batch of pupils entering S1 according to the existing admission mechanism of feeder / nominated schools.

Feeder / nominated schools complying or not complying with the “through-train” principles have to decide whether to form “through-train” schools by 31.5.2005 and 31.5.2012 respectively. Therefore, if the existing feeder / nominated schools choose to announce their delinking just before the deadline, then pupils admitted to P1 in the 2006/07 school year (for schools complying with the principles) and in the 2013/14 school year (for schools not complying with the principles) will be allocated S1 places according to the admission mechanism of non-feeder / non-nominated schools.

Arrangements for Feeder / Nominated Schools to Adopt “Through-train” Mode



Application Form

To: Secretary for Education and Manpower
 [Attn: Senior Education Officer (Education Reform Co-ordination)]
 Room 1138, 11/F, Wu Chung House
 213 Queen's Road East
 Wan Chai, Hong Kong]

“Through-train” Mode

Our primary and secondary schools intend to apply to adopt the “through-train” mode for pupils of P1 / P2 / P3 / P4 / P5 / P6* in the _____ / _____ school year. The “through-train” S1 admission mechanism will be applicable to these pupils when they reach P6. The collaboration plan is attached* / will be submitted shortly* for your approval.

Name of Secondary School: _____ _____	Name of Primary School: _____ _____
Signature of Supervisor: _____	Signature of Supervisor: _____
Name of Supervisor: _____	Name of Supervisor: _____
Name of Principal: _____	Name of School Head: _____
Telephone Number: _____	Telephone Number: _____
Faxline Number: _____	Faxline Number: _____
Address: _____ _____ _____	Address: _____ _____ _____
Date: _____	

* Please delete whichever is inappropriate.