

**Registration of a New School
Frequently Asked Questions
(For premises not designed and constructed as a school)**

1. What should be done first in planning to run a school?

A: Potential operators may first seek advice from the School Registration and Compliance Section of Education Bureau (EDB) and attend their briefing sessions. Then carefully select a site for school use. To ensure that the selected premises are suitable for the purposes of a school, applicants should clarify with the Planning Department (PlanD) and the Lands Department (LD) on whether the proposed site contravenes the Town Planning Ordinance / Government Lease conditions. For details, please contact School Registration and Compliance Section of EDB.

2. How long does it take an application for registration to be approved?

A: Apart from the time required by the PlanD and the Land Registry to confirm the suitability of the proposed premises for school use and issue the lease record of the premises concerned respectively, LD, Fire Services Department (FSD), Buildings Department (BD)/ Independent Checking Unit, Office of the Permanent Secretary for Housing (ICU) and EDB will process the applications at the same time. They will provide feedback on initial assessment of the application and issue advice/letter of requirements for applicant's compliance normally within 20 - 22 working days upon receipt of an application. After the applicant has reported compliance with all building and fire services requirements, BD/ICU and FSD require another 14 - 22 working days to conduct re-inspection of the premises and issue safety certificates and notice. When all the required information and documents are received and found in order, EDB will consider approving the application and issuing the Certificate of Provisional Registration within 10 working days. **In fact, the time required for the registration of school varies from case to case depending on the nature and complexity concerned, e.g. how long the applicant takes to comply with various requirements to the satisfaction of relevant departments.**

3. Which government department should applicants approach to register a school?

A: One of the prerequisites for EDB to issue the Certificate of provisional registration is the applicant's submission of documentation attesting the premises' suitability for school use, i.e.

- certification of the suitability of the site against the Town Planning Ordinance and Government Lease conditions (please refer to Question 1)
- safety certificates and notice issued by BD/ICU and FSD.

4. Are there any printed forms for applications for school registration?

A: Yes. There are standard forms, which include -

- (a) Form A1[#] (application for Fire Services Certificate from FSD)
- (b) Form A2 (application for safety certificates and notice from BD/ICU)
- (c) Form L (confirmation of the proposed premises for school use with LD)
- (d) Form P (confirmation with the Secretary of the Town Planning Board on whether the proposed premises contravene the Town Planning Ordinance)
- (e) Form 1 (application for registration as a school with EDB)
- (f) Form 6 (application for registration as a manager with EDB)
- (g) Fee Collection Form (application for collection of tuition fees by a new school with EDB)

The above forms can be obtained from the School Registration and Compliance Section of EDB (Address: 28/F, E-Trade Plaza, 24 Lee Chung Street, Chai Wan, Hong Kong) or downloaded from EDB website as follows-

<https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/sch-admin/sch-registration/about-sch-registration/info-application-sch-registration.html>

#Besides, if applicants wish to submit their application form (Form A1) electronically, they can do so by accessing the designated webpage of “GovHK” Platform through the Fire Services Department Official Website, “iAM Smart” Platform or “GovHK” Platform. (Applicant or relevant party(ies) need an activated “iAM Smart+” account with digital signing function or a valid personal digital certificate for online submission of application.)

5. What actions should be taken if amendment to the proposed layout plan of the school premises is required?

A: The applicant should submit an application letter for “Amendment to layout plan”^{*} together with sufficient copies of revised layout plan to the FSD or BD/ICU for action. A copy of the application letter and the layout plan should be submitted to other departments concerned for record purpose.

** Forms B1 and B2 should be used for amendment to layout plans as required by departments concerned.*

** Forms C1 and C2 should be used for amendment to layout plans proposed by the applicant.*

[Forms B1, B2, C1 and C2 can be downloaded from the EDB’s Homepage or obtained from the School Registration and Compliance Section of EDB]

- 6. How long will it take for the Secretariat of the Town Planning Board to confirm whether the proposed premises are permitted for school use?**
- A: If sufficient details are provided in Form P, the confirmation can be issued within 10 calendar days.
- 7. How long will it take for an application for planning permission to be considered by the Town Planning Board?**
- A: An application for permission under section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance will be considered by the Town Planning Board (the Board) within two months upon receipt of the application. Each application will be considered by the Board on its own merits and the Board may approve the application with or without conditions.
- 8. Would amendments to a previously approved school proposal require planning permission from the Town Planning Board again?**
- A: If the amendments constitute a major deviation from the previously approved scheme, it would require planning permission from the Town Planning Board (the Board) again. The Board has delegated its authority to the Director of Planning and to the Deputy Director of Planning and Assistant Directors of Planning in the District Planning Branch of the PlanD to consider planning applications for minor amendments to approved development proposals. Applicants may refer to the Town Planning Board Guidelines for ‘Class A and Class B Amendments to Approved Development Proposals’ - TPB PG-No. 36B, which is available from the Secretariat of the Board or on the Board’s website (http://www.info.gov.hk/tpb/en/forms/Guidelines/TPB_PG_36.pdf).
- 9. Is there any restriction on the height of the school premises? Can the height restriction be relaxed?**
- A: The premises under application should not be situated at any floor more than 24 meters above ground floor. The height restriction may be relaxed subject to meeting certain criteria such as age of students, number of students and types of courses to be conducted etc. In general, except those used for conducting courses for adults under Education Ordinance, premises which are not designed and constructed as a school shall not be located in any premises situated at a height of 30m above ground level. Each application will be considered on an individual basis.

10. What kind of fire service installations should be provided in the premises?

A: The following fire service installations and equipment should normally be provided:-

- i. portable fire extinguisher(s);
- ii. manual fire alarm system;
- iii. emergency lighting system/unit(s);
- iv. exit/directional sign(s);
- v. automatic fire detection system; and
- vi. automatic sprinkler system (if the gross floor area exceeding 230 square meters).

11. How can applicants comply with the fire services requirements?

A: Applicants should hire a Registered Fire Services Installation Contractor(s) of the appropriate class to comply with the required fire services requirements. *Certificate(s) of Fire Service Installations and Equipment* (FS 251) will be issued by the contractor(s) upon completion. Applicants should then submit copy of the Certificate(s) to the Director of Fire Services.

12. Where can applicants find the list of Registered Fire Service Installation Contractors?

A: Applicants may refer to the latest version of the Special Supplement to the Government of the HKSAR Gazette which is available at all fire stations and Licensing Offices of the Fire Services Department. The list is also available in FSD's homepage (<http://www.hkfsd.gov.hk/home/eng/cert.html>).

13. Where should applicants submit the application for a Fire Services Certificate (i.e. Form A1)?

A: Applicants can submit the application to the Licensing Offices of the Fire Services Department by post or by electronic mail with details as follows:-

Hong Kong Licensing Office

M/F, Sheung Wan Fire Station,
2 Western Fire Services Street,
Sheung Wan, Hong Kong
Tel: 2549 8104
Fax: 2559 3461
e-mail: h_lic_1@hkfsd.gov.hk

Kowloon West Licensing Office

6/F, Tsim Sha Tsui Fire Station,
333 Canton Road,
Kowloon
Tel : 2302 5339
Fax: 2302 5314
e-mail: k_lic_1@hkfsd.gov.hk

New Territories Licensing Office
Room 1809-1810, 18/F.,
Skyline Tower,
39 Wang Kwong Road,
Kowloon Bay, Kowloon
Tel : 3423 9328
Fax : 2443 1411
e-mail: nt_lic_1@hkfsd.gov.hk

Kowloon East Licensing Office
Room 1809-1810, 18/F.,
Skyline Tower,
39 Wang Kwong Road,
Kowloon Bay, Kowloon
Tel: 3423 9332
Fax: 2722 5256
e-mail: k_lic_3@hkfsd.gov.hk

In addition, if applicants wish to submit their application form (Form A1) electronically, they can do so by accessing the designated webpage of “GovHK” Platform through the Fire Services Department Official Website, “iAM Smart” Platform or “GovHK” Platform. (Note: Applicant or relevant party(ies) need an activated “iAM Smart+” account with digital signing function or a valid personal digital certificate for online submission of application.)

14. Is it possible to register a school with a cockloft in its premises?

A: The applicant should ensure the cockloft in the school premises is **not an unauthorized building work**. In this connection, the applicant could apply to the Buildings Department/ICU for viewing the approved building plans of the premises. As a cockloft is normally designed as an ancillary storage area for the G/F premises, substantial alterations and additions work would be required to convert the cockloft into other use. The applicant is strongly advised to enlist the service of an Authorized Person for the alterations and additions work involved.

15. How are unauthorized building works in the proposed premises affecting the application for registration as school known?

A: In general, unauthorized building works (UBW) include (i) any additions or alterations inside the buildings, and building works outside the building without the prior approval of the Building Authority; (ii) small-scale building works that are designated as minor works, but did not follow the simplified requirements of the Minor Works Control System under the Buildings Ordinance (Cap. 123); or (iii) any addition and alteration works that were carried out inside a building NOT involving the structure of the building, but do not comply with the building standards laid down in the Buildings Ordinance and allied regulations

Reference should be made to the private buildings and minor works records kept by the Buildings Department/ ICU to identify any UBW. It is strongly recommended to enlist the services of an Authorized Person (i.e. an architect, engineer or surveyor registered under the

Buildings Ordinance) to ascertain the existence of UBW.

16. If the premises under application were previously registered as a school, could it be registered at once without any upgrading works?

A: Every application is considered on its individual merits after full consideration of the circumstance. In this connection, Buildings Department/ICU will assess the suitability of the premises with the prevailing building safety standards.

17. If the premises and other occupancies are served by common corridors, should any improvement works be carried out in respect of the main entrance door and enclosure walls of the school?

A: Premises used for school purpose should be separated from other occupancies by fire resisting construction. No upgrading work is required if the school premises and the common corridor are built in accordance with the approved plans and all the approved fire resisting doors remain unchanged. However, if the common corridor and the sub-divided units have not been approved by the Building Authority, or the approved common corridor or fire resisting doors have been altered, applicants should provide justifications to the Buildings Department/ICU that the school premises and the common corridor have adequate fire resisting protection. As applicants usually fail to provide the justifications mentioned above, they should avoid choosing premises served by an unprotected common corridor.

18. Is it acceptable to have school premises located in the upper floors of a single-staircase building?

A: School premises located in the upper floors of a single-staircase building are unacceptable unless the requirements in paragraph 6(b)(i) of Appendix 4/5 to “Guidelines for Registration of a New School (For premises not designed and constructed as a school)” are satisfied. However, such requirements are in many cases costly and difficult to comply with.

19. Can glass door, glass wall or door having a glazed panel be used in the school premises?

A: Glass door, glass wall or door having a glazed panel can be used in the school premises subject to the compliance with the requirement of fire resistance period as stipulated in paragraph 5 of Appendix 4/5 to “Guidelines for Registration of a New School (For premises not designed and constructed as a school)”. It is noted that glazing constructions with fire resisting properties are very expensive, and applicants should consider the cost implication.

20. How is the direction of the main entrance's self-closing door determined? Must a classroom have a self-closing door? If 'yes', is/are there any different requirement(s) between the self-closing door of the main entrance and the classroom?

A: If the school premises accommodates more than 30 persons and the main entrance door also serves as an exit, the door should be opened in the direction of exit i.e. open outward but not obstruct the exit route. Whenever the school is required to be separated from the rest of the building by fire resisting enclosure, the main entrance door should be self-closing and have a fire resistance period of not less than half hour. For classrooms within the school premises, it is not necessary for the doors to be self-closing.

21. If two exits are required for a classroom serving over 30 persons, what is the required distance between the two exits?

A: The two door openings should be located such that the direct distance from any point in the room to the two exit doors should form an angle of not less than 30°.

22. What is/are the requirement(s) on the corridors within the school premises?

A: If corridors within the school premises form part of the exit route, they should have a minimum width of not less than 1 050 mm in case the total population of the school is from 4 to 500 persons. Wider corridors will be required for a population of more than 500 persons. These corridors should be kept clear from obstruction.

23. Is it necessary for all exits of the classrooms to have illuminated signs bearing the word and characters "EXIT 出口"?

A: Yes.

24. Can curtains be used for the purpose of room partitioning in the school premises?

A: It is acceptable to have curtains for the purpose of room partitioning. However, the combined room and individual room should be provided with adequate means of escape. Also, all curtains shall be made of fire resistance material which conforms to the standard acceptable to the Director of Fire Services, or shall be brought up to those standards by treating a fire retardant solution acceptable to the Director of Fire Services.

25. How many water closets, urinals and wash hand basins should be provided in a school?

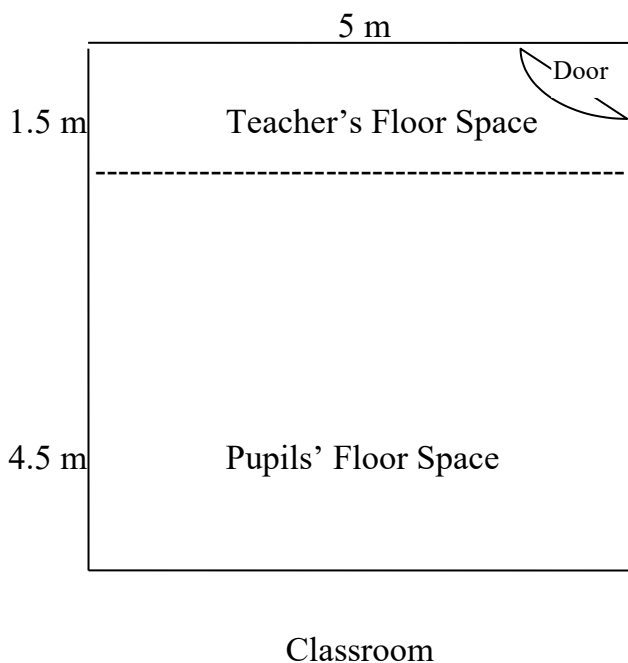
A: The number of sanitary fittings that are connected to flushing system required in a school are as follows:

- For boys - 1 water closet, 2 urinals and 1 wash hand basin for every 30 pupils. Where there are no urinals, 1 water closet shall be provided for every 20 pupils.
- For girls - 1 water closet for every 20 pupils and 1 wash hand basin for every 25 pupils.

26. How is the maximum number of persons that can be accommodated in a classroom calculated?

- A:
- The floor space for the teacher should be at least 1.5 m in width extending along the length of the wall.
 - The floor space for each pupil should be not less than 0.9m².

For example:



The no. of pupils permitted :

$$(4.5\text{m} \times 5\text{m}) \div 0.9 \text{ m}^2 = 25 \text{ pupils}$$

Total no. of persons that can be accommodated:

$$25 \text{ pupils} + 1 \text{ teacher} = 26 \text{ persons}$$

27. What is the class size of different types of schools?

A: According to Regulation 88 of the Education Regulations (Cap. 279A), the maximum number of pupils shall be taught at one time by one teacher is as below:

<u>Types of school</u>	<u>Maximum no. of pupils shall be taught at one time by one teacher</u>
• any school providing nursery / full-day kindergarten education	- not more than 20 pupils
• any school providing kindergarten education	- not more than 30 pupils
• Any school providing primary, secondary or post-secondary education or any other educational course	- not more than 45 pupils

28. What is the maximum number of pupils permitted in each classroom?

A: It should be the one specified in the Certificate of Accommodation.

29. What should I refer to before applying for registration for a new kindergarten?

A: Before applying for registration for a new kindergarten, apart from ‘Guidelines for Registration of a New School, please refer to the ‘Kindergarten Education Curriculum Guide’ and the Operation Manual for Pre-primary Institutions on the following websites for information-

https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/major-level-of-edu/preprimary/ENG_KGECG_2017.pdf

https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/edu-system/preprimary-kindergarten/about-preprimary-kindergarten/Operation_Manual_eng.pdf

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