

## Life-wide Learning Grant and Sister School Grant

### Frequently Asked Questions

Resources relevant to promoting life-wide learning and sister school exchange activities	
<b>Q 1 :</b>	<b>Why does the Education Bureau (EDB) launch the new Life-wide Learning and Sister School Grant (LWLSSG)?</b>
<b>A 1 :</b>	<p>For more effective use of public resources, and considering that the existing Life-wide Learning Grant, Grant for the Sister School Scheme and Outdoor Education Camp Scheme subsidy all support schools in organising extended learning activities outside the classroom, which provide students with rich and diversified learning experiences to broaden their horizons and share a common goal of fostering their whole-person development, the newly launched LWLSSG allows schools to deploy the aggregate amount of the grant more flexibly. Schools can organise student learning activities outside the classroom (including Mainland educational exchange activities, local and non-local study tours, and outdoor education camps) and arrange sister school exchange activities to enrich students' learning experiences, help them develop lifelong learning capabilities and achieve the aim of whole-person development. By planning and organising educational exchange activities in the Mainland and sister school exchange activities at different levels, schools may enable teachers and students to gain first-hand experience of different aspects of our country's development from multiple perspectives, thereby deepening their understanding of our country and enhancing their sense of national identity. This also facilitates educational exchange and collaboration between the two places, jointly advancing educational development.</p> <p>With the consolidation of the existing grants and subsidy, schools can deploy the aggregate amount of the LWLSSG more precisely and flexibly within its ambit to promote life-wide learning activities (including outdoor education camps) and exchange activities with Mainland sister schools, without being bound by respective provisions (except for the specified expenditure items subject to allocation limits). Schools are only required to complete one set of the Plan and the Report on the Use of the LWLSSG to reduce administrative work.</p> <p>On the other hand, under the principle of flexible use of the LWLSSG, schools may retain the unspent balance of the grant and carry it forward for use in the subsequent school year/ financial year. Nevertheless, transfer of funds/ unspent balance out of the LWLSSG account is not permitted. The EDB will continually evaluate the use of the LWLSSG by schools and review the related arrangements in a timely manner.</p>
<b>Q 2 :</b>	<b>Apart from the LWLSSG, what other resources are available for schools to promote life-wide learning and sister school exchanges?</b>

A 2 :	To support schools in organising diversified learning activities, the EDB has been providing schools with various resources, such as the Operating Expenses Block Grant/ Expanded Operating Expenses Block Grant. Provided that the principles on the use of relevant funding are observed, schools may flexibly deploy the LWLSSG in conjunction with other suitable resources provided by the EDB (e.g. the Quality Education Fund, Junior Secondary and Upper Primary School Students Exchange Programme Subsidy Scheme: “Understanding Our Motherland” and Senior Secondary School Students Exchange Programme Subvention Scheme) to conduct relevant activities. Besides, schools are encouraged to tap community resources, such as services provided by museums, learning resource centres, uniformed groups, and arts, cultural and sports groups, in arranging appropriate activities for students.
Q 3 :	<b>What kinds of professional support does the EDB provide to schools in promoting life-wide learning and sister school exchanges?</b>
A 3 :	<p>To facilitate schools’ effective use of the LWLSSG, the EDB has held briefing sessions regularly on its implementation details and updates, drawn up guidelines on the use of the LWLSSG, as well as the templates of the Plan and the Report on the Use of the LWLSSG for schools’ adoption.</p> <p>In addition, examples of life-wide learning activities in different Key Learning Areas (KLAs) have been uploaded to the <a href="#">Life-wide Learning Grant webpage of the EDB</a> for schools’ reference. We will continue to disseminate good practices in promoting life-wide learning through professional development programmes and school experience-sharing sessions, and meet school personnel through regular visits to offer them advice as appropriate.</p> <p>For sister schools, the EDB provides professional support to schools joining the Sister School Scheme, for example, coordinating the pairing-up arrangements, organising exchange activities, conducting school visits, setting up <a href="#">the Sister School Scheme website</a>, holding sharing sessions regularly for disseminating good practices of sister school exchanges, with a view to promoting more in-depth professional exchanges and multi-faceted collaboration. Besides, the EDB commissions service contractor(s) to offer advice on the arrangements of exchange activities to schools, assist schools in the organisation of exchange activities, as well as collecting and disseminating good practices, etc.</p>
<b>Subsidy rates and ambit of the LWLSSG</b>	
Q 4 :	<b>Are schools required to apply for the LWLSSG?</b>

A 4 :	Starting from the 2025/26 school year, the EDB will provide the LWLSSG to all public sector schools <sup>1</sup> (including special schools) and Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) schools. Schools are not required to submit applications separately.
Q 5 :	<b>If a school has not formed any sister school pairs with the Mainland counterparts/ reported its Mainland sister schools to the EDB, will it receive the provisions of all the components of the LWLSSG?</b>
A 5 :	<p>The LWLSSG is comprised of the Life-wide Learning Grant component and the Sister School Grant component. The Sister School Grant component will be allocated to each public sector school (including each special school) and DSS school that has formed sister school(s) with the Mainland counterpart(s). Therefore, any schools that have not formed sister school pair(s) or have not reported at least one Mainland sister school to the EDB will not receive the provision of the Sister School Grant component.</p> <p>In accordance with the record of Mainland sister schools as reported by schools and verified by the EDB as of 15 September of each year, the EDB will confirm whether a school will be provided with the provision of the Sister School Grant component for the respective school year. If schools did not receive the Grant for the Sister School Scheme in the 2024/25 school year, or they had no Mainland sister schools in the record of the EDB, they were invited separately to update/ confirm the relevant record in June 2025. In case schools have formed sister schools with their Mainland counterparts on their own initiative later on, they should proactively submit the completed Reporting Form on Mainland Sister Schools (Annex 5 to EDB Circular No. 9/2025) and copies of relevant supporting documents to the EDB. As verification takes time, schools should submit relevant documents as soon as possible, and allow sufficient time for verification to be completed before the deadline.</p>
Q 6 :	<b>A school has already formed sister school pair(s) with its Mainland counterpart(s) and received the provision of the Sister School Grant component of the LWLSSG. If the school subsequently forms a new sister school pair with another Mainland school, is it still required to report this to the EDB?</b>
A 6 :	Yes. The sister school concerned has to be a primary, secondary or special school which is nationally recognised. If a school wishes to use the LWLSSG to conduct exchanges with its newly formed sister school, it should submit in advance the Reporting Form on Mainland Sister Schools (Annex 5 to EDB Circular No. 9/2025) together with copies of relevant supporting documents to the EDB. A subsequent reply will be provided to the school upon receipt of the documents. Nonetheless, a school will receive the same amount of the provision of the Sister School Grant component regardless of its number of sister schools.

<sup>1</sup> Excluding Caritas Chan Chun Ha Field Studies Centre, Ho Koon Nature Education cum Astronomical Centre, and Arts and Technology Education Centre.

<b>Q 7 :</b>	<b>A school has all along been engaging in exchanges with a Mainland counterpart, but the document signed between the two schools does not explicitly indicate that they have formed a “sister school pair”. In this case, will the school be provided with the provision of the Sister School Grant component of the LWLSSG?</b>
<b>A 7 :</b>	The school will be provided with the provision of the Sister School Grant component if it can provide a written confirmation of the relationship with its Mainland counterpart, and that the relevant supporting documents can clearly indicate that the objectives of exchanges and collaboration between the two schools are in line with those of the EDB’s Sister School Scheme. The school should proactively submit the completed Reporting Form on Mainland Sister Schools (Annex 5 to EDB Circular No. 9/2025) and copies of relevant supporting documents to the EDB for verification.
<b>Q 8 :</b>	<b>Is there a cap on the amount of the LWLSSG to be used in each learning area/ theme?</b>
<b>A 8 :</b>	There is no cap on the amount of the LWLSSG for any particular learning area/ theme. In response to the latest educational development and students’ needs, schools may suitably deploy the LWLSSG to enhance the effort in promoting patriotic education, digital education, artificial intelligence, STEAM education, student mental health, etc. Schools should, having regard to their development and students’ needs, engage teachers in the formulation of appropriate objectives and strategies for implementing life-wide learning and sister school exchanges, and aptly allocate resources to benefit as many students as possible, fulfil their learning needs, and promote teachers’ professional development and school development. Schools should use the LWLSSG for enriching students’ learning experiences and organising exchange activities with sister schools in the Mainland at student, teacher and school management levels. Excessive allocation on procurement of resources for activities under the ambit of the LWLSSG and defraying the expenses incurred by teachers for leading student activities should be avoided. Moreover, the use of the LWLSSG should not be confined to a single project/ area or a small number of students.
<b>Q 9 :</b>	<b>Following the consolidation of the relevant grants and subsidy into the LWLSSG, schools can flexibly allocate the aggregate amount of the LWLSSG. Are schools allowed to deploy the entire provision of the LWLSSG for organising life-wide learning activities without arranging any sister school exchange activities?</b>
<b>A 9 :</b>	The Sister School Grant component of the LWLSSG aims to provide resources to support schools in organising exchange activities with sister schools at student, teacher and school management levels. Therefore, schools should deploy the LWLSSG to arrange appropriate sister school exchange activities to benefit students and teachers when drawing up the plan of the activities for each school year. Schools are required to include the planned sister school exchange activities in the Plan on the Use of the

	<p>LWLSSG for the respective school year and submit it to their School Management Committee (SMC)/ Incorporated Management Committee (IMC) for endorsement.</p> <p>If a school is subsequently unable to carry out the sister school exchange activities as planned in the respective school year due to unforeseen circumstances, the school should regularly assess the use of the LWLSSG and report the situation along with valid justifications for not organising sister school exchange activities to the SMC/ IMC.</p> <p>The EDB will understand the implementation of sister school exchanges in individual schools through diversified means including daily communication with schools, school visits, etc. If a school is unable to conduct any sister school exchange activities in the respective school year, the EDB may inquire about the reasons with the school as needed and provide appropriate support if necessary.</p>
<b>Q 10 :</b>	<b>Must every student receive equal funding under the LWLSSG?</b>
<b>A 10 :</b>	<p>Having regard to the needs of school development and student learning, schools are required to formulate appropriate objectives and strategies in accordance with the learning goals of Hong Kong school curriculum recommended by the Curriculum Development Council and curriculum objectives of relevant KLAs/ subjects concerned, and arrange life-wide learning activities that suit the stages of students' cognitive and affective development; and conduct exchange activities with Mainland sister schools at different levels to tie in with the objectives of the Sister School Scheme and schools' development needs.</p> <p>As a matter of fact, students' learning needs vary, and not all activities are suitable for every student. The cost of each activity differs as well. Therefore, every student may not receive equal funding under the LWLSSG or an amount equivalent to the per capita grant rate. In the best interests of students, schools are required to establish a set of open, fair and reasonable principles on subsidising students through the use of the LWLSSG, so as to arrange activities in alignment with the curriculum for students, thereby helping them develop their lifelong learning capabilities and achieving the aim of whole-person development.</p> <p>Schools should aptly allocate resources according to the needs of school development and student learning to benefit as many students as possible, fulfil their learning needs, and promote teachers' professional development and school development. They are required to balance the needs of different students in different areas and avoid confining the use of the LWLSSG to a single project/ area or a small number of students.</p>
<b>Q 11 :</b>	<b>Can schools collect fees from students/ parents for activities subsidised by the LWLSSG?</b>
<b>A 11 :</b>	<p>Under the ambit of the LWLSSG, there is a wide range of activities and their costs incurred vary. When planning and organising activities using the LWLSSG, schools can, having regard to their contexts and students' needs, define the reasonable scope of subsidy and collect fees from students/ parents as needed. For example, schools may</p>

	<p>deploy the LWLSSG to fully cover the admission fees for visits. For non-local study tours/ visits to Mainland sister schools, schools may consider utilising the LWLSSG in conjunction with other resources provided by the EDB to partially subsidise the students, and require students/ parents to bear part of the costs based on the actual circumstances.</p> <p>In accordance with the established practices, schools should formulate clear, transparent, and fair school-based criteria for determining activity fees, and ensure parents and students are informed of the fee arrangements. Meanwhile, schools should consider allocating other resources, such as Student Activities Support Grant (SAS Grant) to support students with financial needs.</p> <p>Provided that the principles and requirements on the use of relevant funding are observed, schools may use the LWLSSG in conjunction with other resources provided by the EDB (such as Junior Secondary and Upper Primary School Students Exchange Programme Subsidy Scheme: “Understanding Our Motherland” and Senior Secondary School Students Exchange Programme Subvention Scheme) to organise appropriate school-based activities.</p>
<b>Q 12 :</b>	<b>Can the LWLSSG be deployed to subsidise some students’ participation in fee-charging activities conducted by external organisations?</b>
<b>A 12 :</b>	<p>If the school has confidence in an external organisation and ensures that the activities organised by the organisation (e.g. programmes/ activities/ competitions organised by post-secondary institutions, sports associations and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department) are in line with the learning goals, the LWLSSG can be deployed to subsidise students’ participation in relevant activities. That said, schools should avoid confining the use of resources to a small number of students. For students with financial needs, schools may also utilise the SAS Grant to subsidise their participation in relevant activities to foster their whole-person development.</p>
<b>Q 13 :</b>	<b>As the SAS Grant is available for supporting financially needy students to participate in activities outside the classroom, is it true that the LWLSSG is not applicable to them? Can schools deploy the LWLSSG and the SAS Grant on the same learning activities?</b>
<b>A 13 :</b>	<p>The LWLSSG aims to support schools in organising experiential learning activities in different curriculum areas which are in line with the learning goals and curriculum objectives, and suit the stages of students’ cognitive and affective development. It also aims to promote schools’ exchange activities with Mainland sister schools at different levels. The beneficiaries of the LWLSSG include all students of the school. Schools should, having regard to their development and school-based needs, aptly deploy the LWLSSG to benefit as many students as possible and promote teachers’ professional development and school development. The SAS Grant is supplementary in nature to provide additional support to students with financial needs to participate in life-wide learning or sister school exchange activities. The two grants complement each other.</p>

	While schools can utilise the LWLSSG to organise activities, students/ parents may still need to bear part of the costs. In such circumstances, schools may deploy the SAS Grant to further support financially needy students who cannot afford the costs.
<b>Q 14 :</b>	<b>Can schools use the SAS Grant to subsidise students to take part in life-wide learning and sister school exchange activities that tie in with patriotic education, STEAM education and student mental health?</b>
<b>A 14 :</b>	Schools may deploy the SAS Grant to provide additional support for students with financial needs to take part in life-wide learning and sister school exchange activities. The principles and ambit of the use of the SAS Grant are in line with those of the LWLSSG. The two grants complement each other to create favourable conditions for schools to promote activities in response to the latest educational developments and students' needs.
<b>Q 15 :</b>	<b>Are there any points to note when schools deploy the LWLSSG to purchase equipment or learning resources for implementation of activities under the ambit of the LWLSSG? Why is there a cap of 15% of the allocation of the LWLSSG for the respective school year?</b>
<b>A 15 :</b>	<p>In deploying the LWLSSG to purchase equipment or learning resources, schools should ensure that they are necessary for the implementation of life-wide learning and sister school exchanges. Procurement of equipment for schools' general purposes, such as computer equipment in classrooms or computer rooms, e-payment systems and online platforms for school administration or student management, is not under the ambit of the LWLSSG.</p> <p>Aided schools (including special schools) and caput schools are required to follow the procedures in the EDB Circular No. 4/2013 on <i>Procurement Procedures in Aided Schools</i> and the "<i>Guidelines on Procurement Procedures in Aided Schools</i>". DSS schools are also required to follow the procurement procedures for aided schools or any school-based procurement policy and procedures approved by the SMC/ IMC concerned, and documented for information of stakeholders.</p> <p>The equipment or items purchased by deployment of the LWLSSG (e.g. sports equipment or musical instruments) are school property. Schools may lend the items to students based on school contexts and students' learning needs. If so, schools are required to devise a fair borrowing mechanism and keep proper loan records. Schools should make use of their existing resources/ equipment. In case there are genuine needs to deploy the LWLSSG for related procurement, schools should plan the usage prudently and ensure that the equipment can be fully utilised for activities under the ambit of the LWLSSG. When using the LWLSSG, schools should ensure that all items or equipment purchased are essential for participation in activities under the ambit of the LWLSSG, exercise fiscal prudence and avoid extravagance. In addition, schools may deploy the SAS Grant to support financially needy students.</p>

	<p>In deploying the LWLSSG on the procurement of equipment, apparatus, instruments (including repair and maintenance fees), consumables (such as STEAM learning kits, virtual reality tools), mobile applications or software, devices, and learning resources necessary for the implementation of activities under the ambit of the LWLSSG, excessive procurement should be avoided and the annual total expenditure should not exceed 15% of the allocation of the LWLSSG for the respective school year.</p> <p>The EDB has been providing schools with various resources and each initiative has its designated ambit. Given the broad ambit of the LWLSSG, schools are advised to deploy purpose-specific grants first to procure suitable resources, so that all kinds of funding can be utilised more effectively. Taking promotion of reading as an example, schools should first make use of the Promotion of Reading Grant for buying books and organising different types of school-based reading activities.</p>
<b>Q 16 :</b>	<b>Can schools use the LWLSSG to subsidise a small number of gifted and high-achieving students in their participation in subject-based Olympiad programmes or competitions or other gifted education programmes?</b>
<b>A 16 :</b>	<p>Having regard to the priorities of school development and the learning needs of students, schools may utilise the LWLSSG and other suitable resources to organise activities appropriate for students with different aptitudes and abilities. For example, schools may nominate gifted students to undertake programmes offered by the Hong Kong Academy for Gifted Education (HKAGE) or other organisations for broadening their experience. When using the LWLSSG, schools should balance the learning needs of different students and avoid confining the use of resources to a single project/ area or a small number of students.</p> <p>In organising or nominating students to participate in gifted education or enrichment programmes, schools should impose stringent requirements for careful selection of training contents and instructors to ensure that the programmes or activities achieve the stated goals. Take Mathematics as an example. While expecting students to master advanced Mathematics, the Mathematical Olympiad programmes also place emphasis on students' thinking, communication and collaboration abilities. The enrichment programmes of the HKAGE and the International Mathematical Olympiad Hong Kong Committee are rigorously organised, in such a way that all participants are carefully selected and instructors are either experienced lecturers or secondary school teachers in Mathematics, to which those commercial courses in the market merely emphasising drilling students for competitions are not comparable. Schools should particularly note that many costly Mathematical Olympiad programmes in the market are open to all children, regardless of whether they have talent in Mathematics. With drilling students for competitions as the focus, such programmes can neither effectively enhance students' mathematical thinking and problem-solving skills nor arouse their interest in Mathematics. Worse still, students who are not extraordinarily gifted in Mathematics may find such training stressful and they are deprived of the time to develop their</p>

	interests or potential. Such programmes or activities are not in line with the objectives and principles on the use of the LWLSSG.
<b>Q 17 :</b>	<b>When deploying the LWLSSG to support students in joining exchange activities taking place outside Hong Kong, what criteria should be adopted by schools for selecting destinations?</b>
<b>A 17 :</b>	<p>Schools may deploy the LWLSSG to organise more expeditions and exchange programmes in the Mainland and countries and regions along the Belt and Road, so as to enhance students' understanding about the development and policies of our country. In fact, the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (the Greater Bay Area) is one of the most important national development strategies. Amid the ongoing enhancement of the transport networks, there are closer connections among cities in the Greater Bay Area, creating more opportunities for communication, cooperation and development among people in the Greater Bay Area. Through more expeditions and exchange activities in the Greater Bay Area, schools may enhance students' understanding of national context and latest developments in areas of economy, science and technology of our country. The Belt and Road Initiative is another important national development strategy for which Hong Kong can leverage its unique advantages. Schools can organise exchange activities to countries and regions along the Belt and Road to enhance students' understanding of the Belt and Road Initiative, so that students will be equipped to grasp the opportunities it generates.</p> <p>As for study tours in other countries/ regions, schools may deploy the LWLSSG, in conjunction with other resources (e.g. Quality Education Fund), provided that these programmes are considered by schools to be necessary for promoting the school-based curriculum and facilitating student learning, and that approval from the SMC/ IMC has been obtained. In any event, schools should prudently deploy the LWLSSG under the principle of openness, fairness and reasonableness, and should avoid excessive allocation of resources to one single project/ area or a small number of students.</p>
<b>Q 18 :</b>	<b>In organising Mainland exchange activities, can schools use the LWLSSG in conjunction with EDB's Mainland exchange programmes for students?</b>
<b>A 18 :</b>	Each support measure provided by the EDB has its respective beneficiary and ambit. For Mainland exchange activities that comply with the requirements of the EDB's Mainland exchange programmes for students, schools may consider deploying the LWLSSG to meet the costs not covered by the programmes. Schools must maintain proper records of grant expenditures for inspection purposes.
<b>Q 19 :</b>	<b>If a school wishes to organise a Mainland exchange tour, in which both sister school exchange activities and non-sister-school-related activities will be held to make optimal use of time, can the school deploy the LWLSSG to cover the expenses of the entire exchange tour?</b>

A 19 :	<p>Schools may deploy the LWLSSG to conduct Mainland educational exchange activities for students and sister school exchange activities at different levels (students, teachers and school management). Therefore, relevant expenses incurred by schools in organising Mainland exchange tours for students can be covered by the LWLSSG.</p> <p>For Mainland exchange tours which target teachers/ school management and include both sister school exchange activities and non-sister-school-related activities, the LWLSSG can only be used to meet the expenses relating to sister school exchange activities. Schools should make use of other grants/ resources to cover all the expenses not related to sister school exchange activities.</p>
Q 20 :	<p><b>Given that the LWLSSG must not be used to employ teaching or non-teaching staff for organising activities under the ambit of the LWLSSG and sharing the workload of school personnel, how should schools address the issue?</b></p>
A 20 :	<p>Under the existing arrangements, schools are given sufficient flexibility in meeting operating expenses with the Expanded Operating Expenses Block Grant/ Operating Expenses Block Grant, including procurement of external services and employment of staff to help with the administrative work in light of the actual needs. Besides, starting from the 2019/20 school year, the Government has been providing public sector and DSS schools with additional resources to strengthen administrative support for schools and their SMCs/ IMCs. For details, please refer to <a href="#">EDBCM No. 37/2019</a>.</p> <p>Though the LWLSSG must not be used for employing teaching staff (including supply teachers) and non-teaching staff nor outsourcing the overall planning and implementation work for life-wide learning and sister school exchanges, the consolidation of the three existing grants and subsidy would reduce the related clerical work for schools, and the templates of the Plan and the Report on the Use of the LWLSSG have been streamlined. Schools are only required to prepare one set of simplified and concise Plan and Report on the Use of the LWLSSG for each school year. On the other hand, schools may procure services from external organisations or professionals/ coaches to assist in organising activities under the ambit of the LWLSSG (e.g. training on multiple intelligences, physical and aesthetic training, life planning activities).</p>
Q 21 :	<p><b>Can the LWLSSG be deployed to cover the expenses incurred by teachers for leading student activities?</b></p>
A 21 :	<p>The LWLSSG can be deployed to cover the expenses incurred by teachers (for special schools, relevant teaching and non-teaching staff of the schools may be included as necessary) for leading student activities (including the expenditures approved by the SMCs/ IMCs for teachers to escort students in non-local study tours or sister school exchange activities in the Mainland in relation to the discharge of their duties). Schools are required to observe relevant principles, which include comprehensive financial planning and proper budgeting, in deploying the LWLSSG. The expenses incurred</p>

	should be reasonable, necessary for educational purposes and spent in a cost-effective manner.
<b>Q 22 :</b>	<b>Can the LWLSSG be used for employing supply teachers?</b>
A 22 :	No. The LWLSSG must not be used for employing teaching staff (including supply teachers) or non-teaching staff.
<b>Q 23 :</b>	<b>Can the LWLSSG be deployed to meet the expenses arising from training programmes for teachers?</b>
A 23 :	No, except the expenses incurred by teachers for leading students in non-local study tours or sister school exchange activities in the Mainland, and those for sister school exchange activities at teacher level.
<b>Q 24 :</b>	<b>How can schools deploy the LWLSSG to cover the expenses in relation to sister school exchange activities involving school management and teachers?</b>
A 24 :	<p>For sister school exchange activities which <b><u>involve only</u></b> school management/ teachers, for instance, teachers visiting sister schools for participating in symposiums and members of the school management participating in sister school exchanges in relation to school management, schools can utilise the LWLSSG of the respective school year (bound by the provision for the Sister School Grant component of the respective school year) or the unspent balance previously retained to cover relevant expenses.</p> <p>However, the afore-mentioned requirement does not apply to the expenses arising from school management/ teachers' preparation for sister school exchange activities at student level or participation in sister school contract signing ceremonies. For instance, in preparation for students' visit to Mainland sister school for STEAM-based exchange activities, the responsible teachers have to conduct relevant teaching and research activities and teaching preparation with their Mainland counterparts as well as pre-trip site visits. The LWLSSG can be used to meet such expenses incurred by the school management/ teachers in relation to their discharge of duties, without being bound by the above allocation limit.</p>
<b>Q 25 :</b>	<b>Can the LWLSSG be used for conducting ceremonies or purchasing gifts or souvenirs for activities?</b>
A 25 :	The LWLSSG must not be used for conducting promotional and publicity activities, social events or celebrations (e.g. graduation dinners and parties), nor for meeting banquet- or courtesy-related expenses (e.g. crystal pedestals, pennants and flower baskets). While schools can deploy the LWLSSG to purchase gifts and medals for activities under the ambit of the LWLSSG (e.g. competitions), they should make sure that the expenses incurred are necessary and cost-effective, and avoid extravagance.

<b>Q 26 :</b>	<b>Can schools deploy the LWLSSG to cover expenses incurred by Mainland sister schools in relation to exchange activities taking place in Hong Kong?</b>
A 26 :	Yes, provided that the relevant expenses on sister school exchange activities taking place in Hong Kong do not include the travelling, boarding or lodging expenses for the school personnel and students of Mainland sister schools on their visits to Hong Kong.
<b>Q 27 :</b>	<b>Can the LWLSSG be deployed to cover food and beverage expenses in relation to life-wide learning and sister school exchange activities?</b>
A 27 :	<p>The meal expenses included in the activity fees (such as those included in the fees of outdoor education camps, training camps and non-local study tours, tour fares of sister school exchanges), expenses on food and beverage for reception in relation to exchange activities with Mainland sister schools taking place in Hong Kong, as well as expenses on breakfasts/ lunches/ dinners of school principals and teachers in relation to their discharge of duties in sister school activities organised in the Mainland are under the ambit of the LWLSSG, and schools may defray such expenses with the LWLSSG. For social events or celebrations without explicit learning objectives, the expenses incurred should not be covered by the LWLSSG as they are not in line with the principles on the use of the grant.</p> <p>Schools should note that when deploying the LWLSSG to meet the expenses on food and beverage for reception in relation to exchange activities with Mainland sister schools taking place in Hong Kong, the annual total expenditure should not exceed 5% of the provision for the Sister School Grant component for the respective school year. The expenses on breakfasts/ lunches/ dinners of school principals and teachers in relation to their discharge of duties in sister school activities organised in the Mainland are bound by the limits of such expenses per occasion and per head quoted in the “Expanded Operating Expenses Block Grant User Guide for Aided Schools which have established an Incorporated Management Committee”/ “Operating Expenses Block Grant User Guide for Aided Schools”. Schools are required to avoid lavishness and make prudent decision in meeting such expenses.</p>
<b>Q 28 :</b>	<b>Can the LWLSSG be deployed to cover the expenses on food and beverage for reception in relation to exchange activities with Mainland sister schools taking place in Hong Kong?</b>
A 28 :	In principle, the LWLSSG should be used for enriching students’ learning experiences or conducting exchange activities with Mainland sister schools. However, considering that general reception is essential for sister schools’ visit to Hong Kong, the EDB has relaxed the relevant principles to allow schools to deploy the LWLSSG to cover the expenses on food and beverage for reception (including refreshments) for on-site exchange activities with Mainland sister schools taking place in Hong Kong. The purpose of offering general reception is not to subsidise the meal expenses for the school personnel and students of sister schools on their visits to Hong Kong. Therefore,

	schools are required to avoid lavishness and make prudent decisions in meeting such expenses to ensure the expenses are in proper use and well-justified. Furthermore, the annual total expenditure on such expenses should not exceed 5% of the provision for the Sister School Grant component for the respective school year, to ensure the LWLSSG is primarily used for exchange activities.
<b>Q 29 :</b>	<b>Can the LWLSSG be used to cover the activity expenses of parents who assist in leading special school students in their out-of-classroom activities?</b>
A 29 :	No. The LWLSSG can only be used to cover the expenses incurred by teaching and non-teaching staff of special schools for leading student activities.
<b>Q 30 :</b>	<b>Can schools deploy the LWLSSG to cover expenses incurred by school managers or parents in sister school exchange activities?</b>
A 30 :	<p>Schools may deploy the LWLSSG to arrange exchange activities with their Mainland sister schools based on their development needs at student, teacher and school management levels. Since school supervisors and school managers are members of the school management, schools may use the LWLSSG to cover their expenses incurred in relation to sister school exchange activities. However, there is a cap on the use of LWLSSG on sister school exchange activities which <b><u>involve only</u></b> teachers/ school management, i.e. schools can utilise the LWLSSG of the respective school year (bound by the provision for the Sister School Grant component of the respective school year) or the unspent balance previously retained. For details, please refer to EDB Circular No. 9/2025.</p> <p>Regarding parents, unless they are school managers who participate in sister school exchange activities in the capacity of school management, the LWLSSG should not be used to cover their expenses.</p>
<b>Q 31 :</b>	<b>Can schools deploy the LWLSSG to cover the expenses incurred in relation to attending student exchange activities taking place outside the Mainland and Hong Kong (e.g. Macao) together with their Mainland sister schools?</b>
A 31 :	<p>Provided that the principles and requirements on the use of the LWLSSG are observed, schools can deploy the LWLSSG to subsidise their students' participation in exchange activities taking place outside the Mainland and Hong Kong (e.g. Macao). [Internal note: The term "local students" is not used/ emphasized when mentioning the use of the LWLSSG on non-local exchange activities in general in the Circular. For the sake of alignment, it is suggested using a milder term "their students", which also specifies the schools' own students as the beneficiary. Grateful for your consideration, please.]</p> <p>One of the objectives of the Sister School Scheme is to deepen students' understanding of the Mainland/ Hong Kong. Therefore, before deploying the LWLSSG to organise</p>

	sister school exchange activities for students, schools should thoroughly consider whether the activities concerned align with the objectives of the Sister School Scheme, and ensure that the LWLSSG is deployed primarily for sister school exchange activities held in the Mainland or Hong Kong.
<b>Accounting and financial arrangements of the LWLSSG</b>	
<b>Q 32 :</b>	<b>How is the LWLSSG for DSS schools calculated? Is it subsumed in the DSS unit subsidy rates? How is the cap determined?</b>
<b>A 32 :</b>	<p>DSS schools share the same principles on the use of the LWLSSG, ambit, accounting and financial arrangements, etc. with public sector schools. In other words, the LWLSSG is not subsumed in the DSS unit subsidy rates.</p> <p>To enhance transparency, DSS schools, as with public sector schools, are required to inform their stakeholders of the use of the LWLSSG, prepare the Plan on the Use of the LWLSSG in accordance with its stipulated objectives, and incorporate the Plan for the school year into the Annual School Plan for endorsement by their SMC/ IMC. Schools are also required to regularly monitor the use of the LWLSSG, attach the Report on the Use of the LWLSSG, consisting of the details of the activities, expenses and evaluation results, to the School Report of the school year concerned, and submit it to their SMC/ IMC for endorsement. The Plan and the Report on the Use of the LWLSSG endorsed by the SMC/ IMC should be uploaded to the school website by the end of November every year. For details of the calculation, accounting and financial arrangements of the LWLSSG, please refer to EDB Circular No. 9/2025.</p> <p>Following the same arrangements for public sector schools, the amount of the LWLSSG for each DSS school is capped at the total sum derived from the level of the Life-wide Learning Grant (i.e. the school-based provision plus the product of approved number of operating classes in the 2024/25 school year and the class-based provision) and that of the Grant for the Sister School Scheme for the 2024/25 school year.</p>
<b>Q 33 :</b>	<b>If schools cannot fully utilise the provision of the LWLSSG at the end of the respective school year/ financial year, can the unspent balance be carried forward for use in the next school year/ financial year?</b>
<b>A 33 :</b>	<p>As the LWLSSG is a recurrent grant, schools should optimise its use in the respective school year/ financial year by organising diversified life-wide learning activities (including outdoor education camps) for students and sister school exchange activities at different levels, so as to benefit as many students as possible, promote teachers' professional development and school development.</p> <p>Under the principle of flexible use of the LWLSSG, schools may retain the unspent balance and carry it forward for use in the subsequent school year/ financial year. Nevertheless, retention of excessive surplus should be avoided and transfer of funds/ unspent balance out of the LWLSSG account is not permitted. The EDB will</p>

	continually evaluate the use of the LWLSSG by schools and review the related arrangements in a timely manner.
<b>Q 34 :</b>	<b>Are schools required to submit the invoices and receipts of expenses for life-wide learning and sister school exchange activities to the EDB?</b>
A 34 :	No. Nevertheless, schools should ensure that all expenditure items incurred comply with the principles and guidelines as stipulated in the relevant EDB circulars. All records of incomes and expenditures as well as related invoices/ receipts should be kept properly for at least 7 years, and made available to the EDB for inspection when necessary.
<b>Q 35 :</b>	<b>If there is an increase/ a decrease in the number of students of a school after September, will the EDB adjust the amount of the LWLSSG disbursed to the school?</b>
A 35 :	No. The Life-wide Learning Grant component of the LWLSSG is calculated based on the result of head counts in September every year. Even if there is a change in the number of students in the respective school year, the amount of the said component will not be adjusted accordingly.
<b>Q 36 :</b>	<b>How will the EDB monitor the use of the LWLSSG by schools to ensure proper use of public funds?</b>
A 36 :	<p>To ensure proper use of public funds, schools are required to observe the established principles and requirements on the use of public funds as promulgated by the EDB when using the LWLSSG, and are held accountable for its proper use. In line with the principle of school-based management, schools in receipt of the LWLSSG are required to prepare the Plan on the Use of the LWLSSG in accordance with its stipulated objectives, and incorporate the Plan for the school year into the Annual School Plan for endorsement by their SMC/ IMC. Schools are also required to regularly monitor the use of the LWLSSG, attach the Report on the Use of the LWLSSG, consisting of the details of the activities, expenses and evaluation results, to the School Report of the school year concerned, and submit it to their SMC/ IMC for endorsement. To enhance transparency and in accordance with the established practices, schools are required to upload the Plan and the Report on the Use of the LWLSSG endorsed by their SMC/ IMC to the school website.</p> <p>In addition, the EDB will understand the use of the LWLSSG by schools through daily communication and school visits, and organise teacher professional development programmes or sharing sessions regularly to enhance professional capacity of schools.</p>
<b>Q 37 :</b>	<b>Schools were required to reserve camp places and submit application forms according to the application procedures of the Outdoor Education Camp Scheme</b>

	<b>previously. What are the procedures for using the LWLSSG to organise the outdoor education camps?</b>
A 37 :	<p>Having regard to their school-based needs, schools may flexibly select different activity periods and outdoor education programmes to provide opportunities for students to gain valuable life experiences in the natural environment to put classroom learning into practice.</p> <p>In accordance with the principles on the use of the LWLSSG and schools' established procurement procedures, schools may deploy the LWLSSG directly for hiring suitable campsites and procuring services from instructors/ coaches. Schools are not required to submit a separate application to the EDB for reimbursement of the relevant expenses.</p>
<b>Promotion of the latest educational developments with the use of the LWLSSG</b>	
<b>Q 38 :</b>	<b>How should schools deploy the LWLSSG to promote patriotic education?</b>
A 38 :	<p>In response to the latest educational developments and students' needs, schools are encouraged to deploy the LWLSSG to take forward the promotion of patriotic education, with a view to deepening students' understanding of our country and national affairs, cultivating proper values and attitudes, as well as strengthening their cultural confidence, sense of national identity and patriotism. National education and national security education in Hong Kong have included elements and spirit of patriotic education. As an integral part of the school curriculum, it covers national history, national affairs, Chinese culture, national geography and the Constitution and the Basic Law education, which have been incorporated in various KLAs and related subjects at different levels, and is intertwined with values education and life-wide learning. Meanwhile, teachers and students can deepen their understanding of the Mainland and its development in various aspects such as history and culture, and enhance their sense of belonging to our country through sister school exchanges.</p>
<b>Q 39 :</b>	<b>How should schools deploy the LWLSSG to promote digital education, artificial intelligence (AI) and STEAM education?</b>
A 39 :	<p>In accordance with the principles on the use of the LWLSSG, schools may organise/ arrange the following activities or tasks for stepping up the promotion of digital education, AI and STEAM education and innovation and technology (I&amp;T) learning for all:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ organising STEAM/ I&amp;T learning day</li> <li>➤ procuring STEAM/ I&amp;T materials/ kits/ reading materials, subscription to applications/ accounts for implementation of related learning activities</li> <li>➤ conducting visits, study trips, learning activities/ competitions on STEAM-related themes (e.g. National Aerospace Technology/ Earth Science/ Space Science/ I&amp;T related themes)</li> <li>➤ subsidising students' participation in visits, study trips, learning activities on environmental education and nature conservation (e.g. relevant learning activities</li> </ul>

	<p>offered by education venues or organisations, including theme parks and Hong Kong Wetland Park)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ subsidising students' participation in exhibitions for showcasing their STEAM learning outcomes, and participating in related internship programmes offered by post-secondary institutions/ professional bodies</li> <li>➤ organising or participating in STEAM-related exchange programmes/ study tours/ competitions in the Mainland</li> <li>➤ conducting thematic exchanges on STEAM/ I&amp;T with Mainland sister schools</li> </ul>
<b>Q 40 :</b>	<b>How should schools deploy the LWLSSG to promote student mental health?</b>
A 40 :	<p>Schools may refer to the details of the <i>4Rs Mental Health Charter</i> as stipulated in <a href="#">EDBCM No. 60/2024</a>, and adhere to the principles on the use of the LWLSSG to organise activities relating to the promotion of student mental health (e.g. activities for positive classroom management, voluntary work, exchanges on positive education between sister schools in Hong Kong and the Mainland, adventure-based training and programmes on life education or mindfulness) or procure related services or materials (including repair and maintenance fees) and learning and teaching resources.</p>
<b>Unspent balance and clawback arrangement of the Life-wide Learning Grant and the Grant for Sister School Scheme after the 2024/25 school year</b>	
<b>Q 41 :</b>	<b>How should schools handle the unspent balance of the Life-wide Learning Grant and the Grant for the Sister School Scheme after the 2024/25 school year?</b>
A 41 :	<p>With the consolidation of the existing Life-wide Learning Grant, Grant for the Sister School Scheme and the Outdoor Education Camp Scheme subsidy (collectively referred as “the original grants”) into the LWLSSG, the original grants will cease after the end of the 2024/25 school year.</p> <p>The unspent balance of the Life-wide Learning Grant and the Grant for the Sister School Scheme can be used in the 2025/26 school year, in accordance with the stipulated principles and requirements on the use of the respective grants, for flexible implementation of life-wide learning or sister school exchange activities. Schools are not required to prepare additional plans and reports on the use of the original grants, but the unspent balance should be kept in the original ledgers. Under no circumstances shall the unspent balance be transferred to the newly set up LWLSSG account/ other accounts.</p> <p>When the 2025/26 school year ends (i.e. as of 31 August 2026), the EDB will claw back any unspent balance of the original grants from aided schools (including special schools) and caput schools based on their annual audited accounts. The above clawback arrangement also applies to the unspent balance of the Grant for the Sister School Scheme for DSS schools.</p>

	The clawback arrangements for government schools are basically the same as those for aided schools and caput schools. Any unspent balance of the original grants in the designated user codes as of 31 August 2026 will lapse.
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## **Education Bureau**

*This English translation is for reference only. In case of discrepancy between the English version and the Chinese version, the Chinese version shall prevail.*