

EDUCATION BUREAU CIRCULAR MEMORANDUM NO. 17/2022

From : Permanent Secretary for Education

To : Supervisors and Heads of Kindergartens,
Kindergarten-cum-Child Care Centres and
Schools with Kindergarten Classes joining
the Kindergarten Education Scheme

Ref. : EDB(KGA2-1)/GRANT/5

Date : 3 January 2022

Kindergarten Education Scheme Enhancement Measures on Professional Development of Kindergarten Teachers

Purpose

The purpose of this circular memorandum is to inform kindergartens, kindergarten-cum-child care centres and schools with kindergarten classes (collectively referred to as “KGs” hereafter) joining the kindergarten education scheme (“Scheme”) in the 2021/22 school year of the details about a new 5-week refresher course for KG middle leaders and a one-off Professional Capacity Enhancement Grant (“the Grant”). This circular memorandum should be read in conjunction with Education Bureau (“EDB”) Circular No. 8/2018 dated 8 June 2018 on “Enhancing Professional Competency of KG Principals and Teachers”.

Background

2. The Government has implemented the Scheme starting from the 2017/18 school year. One of the major objectives of the Scheme is to enhance the quality of KG education. Among others, professional competency of KG teachers (including principals) is most crucial. To facilitate continuous professional development (“CPD”) of principals and teachers, as stated in EDB Circular No. 8/2018, they should participate in 60 hours of CPD activities according to their needs in every three-year cycle starting from the 2018/19 school year. At individual KG level, the EDB has specified the following training targets in respect of training on catering for students with diverse needs:

- (a) Regarding the support to students with special needs, each KG joining the Scheme (“Scheme-KG”) should have at least one teacher completed the Basic Course as recognised by the EDB by the end of the 2020/21 school year.
- (b) On the support for non-Chinese speaking (“NCS”) students, all Scheme-KGs admitting NCS students (irrespective of the number) should have at least one teacher completed the Basic Course recognised by the EDB before the end of the 2020/21 school year.

3. The above training targets have been implemented smoothly. Scheme-KGs should be mindful about any staff changes/deployment which might affect fulfilment of the aforesaid training targets, hence they need to arrange teachers to attend the training again. The EDB will continue to monitor the status of Scheme-KGs in meeting the above training targets.

4. The EDB commenced a review on the implementation of the Scheme in mid-2019. The review was completed and the relevant report was released in August 2021. To take forward the recommendations made in the report, the EDB will continue to support the sustainable development of KGs in various aspects. In regard to professional development of KG teachers, the recommendations include (i) organising short-term Thematic courses on top of the existing Basic and Advanced Courses when providing training in catering for students' special needs in future; (ii) providing structured learning programmes of a longer duration for experienced teachers, senior teachers or teachers aspiring for senior posts; and (iii) providing a one-off grant for Scheme-KGs in the 2021/22 school year for enhancing the capacity and professional development of KG teachers. On (i), the EDB issued a letter to all Scheme-KGs on 2 December 2021, encouraging them to arrange teachers to attend the Advanced and Thematic Courses for supporting students with special needs. For (ii) and (iii), details are at paragraphs 5 to 19 below.

Details

In-service 5-week course for KG middle leaders

5. To further strengthen the support for middle leaders in KGs, the EDB will provide structured learning programmes of a longer duration for experienced teachers, senior teachers or teachers aspiring for senior posts, for in-depth study on various KG education issues. In this regard, the Education University of Hong Kong ("EdUHK") has devised a new in-service 5-week course for KG middle leaders as one of the Professional Development Programmes ("PDPs") starting from the 2021/22 school year. Details of the course will be uploaded to the Training Calendar System of EDB website in due course. To facilitate KGs arranging teachers to attend this course, a supply teacher grant will be provided for Scheme-KGs concerned starting from the 2021/22 school year. The basic principles stipulated in paragraphs 14 to 16 of EDB Circular No. 8/2018 in relation to supply teacher grant are also applicable to this new 5-week course. In the 2021/22 school year, the rates of the grant are \$991 per day¹ for supply teachers possessing a Certificate in Early Childhood Education (C(ECE)) or above qualifications and \$377 per day¹ for supply teachers with other qualifications.

¹ Calculation of the grant rate is based on the salary range of basic rank teachers. The current salary ranges for teaching staff will be adjusted annually in accordance with the civil service pay adjustment. The grant rate for KG supply teachers possessing C(ECE) or above qualifications will then be adjusted accordingly thereafter with reference to the adjustment of the salary ranges. For supply teachers with other qualifications, the rate will be adjusted annually based on the changes in Composite Consumer Price Index.

6. KGs applying for the supply teacher grant in the 2021/22 school year should complete and submit the application form for the aforesaid PDP (a sample is at **Annex 1a**)² to the EDB together with the original of the salary payment receipt signed by the supply teacher (at **Annex 1b**) and a copy of his/her qualification document. The supply teacher grant will be disbursed to eligible KGs on a reimbursement basis. All applications should reach the EDB on or before 31 August of the respective school year.

Professional Capacity Enhancement Grant

7. Separately, a one-off Professional Capacity Enhancement Grant will be provided to Scheme-KGs for enhancing the capacity and professional development of KG teachers that facilitates the sustainable development of KGs. KGs will be provided with the Grant on application basis. The Grant is a three-tiered subsidy with the rates at \$100,000, \$150,000 and \$200,000 respectively. Each tier will be determined by the number of half-day (“HD”) students³ eligible for subsidy for September 2021⁴ of individual KGs. Details are as follows:

Tier	Number of HD students³	Grant rate
1	less than 220	\$100,000
2	220 to 330	\$150,000
3	331 or above	\$200,000

8. KGs may use the Grant from the 2021/22 to 2023/24 school years, i.e. up to 31 August 2024, to plan and implement school-based programmes.

Usage

9. KGs should ensure the effective use of the Grant, and deploy the Grant solely for enhancing the capacity and professional development of KG teachers to facilitate the sustainable development of KGs. KGs are encouraged to use the Grant to benefit more teachers as far as possible. The Grant can be used to cover the following:

- To hire outside services to enhance teachers’ capacity (e.g. by arranging professional development programmes for teachers);
- To hire consultancy services in establishing learning circle in the school, enhancing curriculum, and/or arranging school-based programmes relating to the professional development of teachers to raise the quality of teaching or support to students;

² The daily rates for supply teacher grant in Annex 1a will be updated annually in accordance with the arrangements in EDB Circular No. 8/2018. The revised Annex 1a for subsequent years will be uploaded to the EDB website for use of KGs.

³ One whole-day / long whole-day student is counted as two half-day students.

⁴ The EDB will determine the amount of grant for each KG according to the number of students eligible for subsidy for September 2021 based on the result of the 1st Adjustment verified by the school.

- For KGs which have formed “Sister KGs” with counterparts in the Greater Bay Area (“GBA”) by signing formal agreements, to arrange professional exchange activities⁵ (such as visits to “Sister KGs”, seminars, lesson demonstration, lesson evaluation, video conferencing and experience sharing) with these “Sister KGs”, to cover expenses related to visits to “Sister KGs”, such as package tour service of teachers for visiting their “Sister KG(s)” in the GBA and materials used in exchange visits. As these professional exchange activities are relatively more costly, to ensure that the subsidy would be used for a broader range of professional development activities, the total expenditure on professional exchange activities with “Sister KGs” should not exceed 20% of the Grant; and
- To subsidise teachers to take courses or attend international conferences on KG education which are in line with the school development plan and the Kindergarten Education Curriculum Guide (2017). These courses should be organised or jointly organised by UGC-funded tertiary institutions, or included in the Qualifications Register under the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic & Vocational Qualifications. For attending international conferences, the subsidy should only cover the enrolment and course fees, but not travelling, accommodation and other related costs. The amount of the subsidy should be provided on a co-payment basis between the teacher and the Grant, and capped at 50% of the fee of taking courses or attending international conferences. To ensure that the subsidy would benefit the KG’s teaching force as a whole instead of individual teachers, the total expenditure on subsidising the fees of taking courses or attending international conferences should not exceed 20% of the Grant. In this connection, KGs should devise their own school-based policy in deploying the Grant for such purpose.

10. The Grant **should not be used** to cover the following:

- To pay existing staff to take up extra responsibilities;
- To arrange non-local study tours (except for exchange activities with “Sister KGs” in GBA) which involve high cost but only a small number of teachers directly benefited;
- To employ supply teacher to relieve the teachers for taking courses. For courses with provision of supply teacher (e.g. the specified courses on support to NCS students and students with special needs, and the new 5-week course for KG middle leaders), the expenses on supply teacher should be paid by the designated grant on a reimbursement basis; and
- To subsidise teachers to pursue programmes for personal attainment of academic qualifications in any disciplines, e.g. a bachelor’s / master’s degree, etc.

11. The above list is by no means exhaustive and KGs should prudently deploy the Grant and properly allocate the resources to ensure that the expenditure incurred under each item is in line with the ambit of the Grant.

Application Procedures and Vetting of Applications

12. Scheme-KGs are required to complete and submit the application form at **Annex 2**. When completing the application form, please include a brief initial plan on how the Grant would be used for enhancing the capacity and professional development of teachers in order to sustain the school development, and how the skills and knowledge learned by the teachers can be disseminated to other teachers in the KGs.

⁵ Given the young age of KG students, exchanges with “Sister KGs” should focus on teachers’ professional exchange, instead of visits at student level.

13. Applicant KGs are required to submit the completed application form by post or by fax to Kindergarten Administration 2 Section **on or before 14 January 2022** (Address: Room 2329, 23/F, Wu Chung House, 213 Queen's Road East, Wanchai, Hong Kong; Fax: 3691 8021). The application form (Word format) can be downloaded from the EDB webpage (Home > Education System and Policy > Kindergarten Education > Kindergarten Education Scheme > Circular).

14. When vetting and approving applications, we will take into account the plan submitted by KGs and the operating standard of applicant KGs, e.g. applications from KGs that have been warned in writing by the EDB due to serious management issues or glaring practices will **not be approved**.

Disbursement and Accounting Arrangements

15. The Grant is provided on a per-school basis, that is, application by school registration. A Scheme-KG, regardless of the number of its registered locations under the same school registration, will be counted as one eligible KG. In general, applicant KGs will be informed of the application results by February 2022 and the Grant will be disbursed in March 2022. Successful applicant KGs are required to use the Grant on or before 31 August 2024. Where necessary, KGs can top up the Grant with the portion of the basic unit subsidy for other operating costs (i.e. generally known as the 40% portion) under the Scheme and/or school funds. The surplus of the Grant, if any, should be returned to the EDB. KGs should submit to the EDB an interim evaluation report (**Annex 3**) on the usage of the Grant for the 2021/22 and 2022/23 school years **by 31 December 2023** and a final report (**Annex 4**) **by 31 December 2024**. The interim evaluation report and final report template (Word format) can also be downloaded from the EDB webpage (Home > Education System and Policy > Kindergarten Education > Kindergarten Education Scheme > Circular).

16. KGs using the Grant to procure services to enhance teachers' capacity and professional development are required to follow the procurement procedures as stipulated in the Guidelines on Procurement Procedures in Kindergartens issued by the EDB.

17. KGs are also required to follow the established mechanism regarding accounting procedures stipulated in Chapter 4 of the Kindergarten Administration Guide issued by the EDB, keep separate ledger account to properly record all income and expenditure of the Grant, and report these income and expenditures in the annual audited accounts to be submitted to the EDB. KGs are not allowed to transfer the funds/unspent balance of the Grant to any other subsidies or accounts. No expenditure item of the Grant should be included in the calculation of school fees in the fee revision exercise. All books of accounts, records of procurement, receipts, payment vouchers and invoices must be kept by KGs for accounting and auditing purposes. As a usual practice, the relevant records should be kept for a minimum period of seven years. The EDB may request KGs to provide relevant documents for examining the use of the Grant, if necessary. KGs are responsible for ensuring the effective use of the Grant, all of which should be used for expenses related to the enhancement of teachers' professional development with a view to facilitating schools' sustainable development.

18. The EDB will claw back the unspent amount of the Grant as at 31 August 2024. Scheme-KGs are required to return the amount of the Grant they received as specified by the EDB in full to the Government if they are subsequently identified for using the Grant for purposes other than specified and/or are no longer meeting the requirements set out in this circular memorandum.

19. If the KG closes, is revoked of its status as a Scheme-KG, or withdraws from the Scheme by the end of the 2024/25 school year, the Grant should be returned to the Government as requested.

Enquiries

20. For enquiries about this circular memorandum, please contact the EDB as follows:

5-week course for KG middle leaders	2892 6422
Supply teacher grant	3549 3204
Professional Capacity Enhancement Grant	2892 6378 / 2892 6546

Ms Y Y SO
for Permanent Secretary for Education

c.c. Heads of Sections

Attention: Please submit the application and the supporting documents by post or by hand

To: Kindergarten Administration 2 Section,
Education Bureau
14/F, Wu Chung House,
213 Queen's Road East,
Wan Chai, Hong Kong

2021/22 school year
Kindergartens Joining the Kindergarten (KG) Education Scheme

Application Form for Supply Teacher Grant
(Certificate in Professional Development Programme for Kindergarten Middle Leaders)

Name of KG : _____ District : _____ School Code : _____

I wish to apply for Supply Teacher Grant¹ for the teacher(s) listed below participating in the above course organised by the **Education University of Hong Kong** (EdUHK) with the details as follows:

Teacher(s) participating in the professional development programme	Training period		Name of supply teacher	Whether the supply teacher possesses C(ECE) (Y/N)	Supply Period		No. of working days ²	Daily rate \$	Salary amount applied \$	Remarks (For use of the EDB)	
	From	To			From	To					
Name											
									Total	\$	

Note:

¹ The daily rates for supply teacher grant in the 2021/22 school year are: \$991 per day for supply teachers possessing the Certificate in Early Childhood Education (C(ECE)) or above qualifications and \$377 per day for teachers with other qualifications.

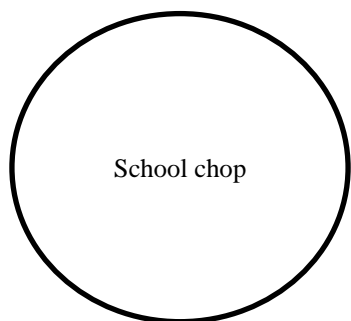
² The number of working days should exclude Sunday, Saturday (except for long whole-day kindergartens), public holidays and school holidays.

I confirm that the salary has been paid to the supply teacher according to the appropriate daily rate and no repeated application has been made.

The following supporting document(s) is/are enclosed:

- Qualification document(s) of the supply teacher(s)
- Original copy of the salary payment receipt(s) of the supply teacher(s)
- Copy of EdUHK's certificate of completion* of the teacher(s) participating in the above named course

* The Scheme-KG should submit this application form first for processing application for supply teacher grant **on or before 31 August** of the respective school year if the certificate of completion is not yet available. A copy of EdUHK's certificate of completion should be provided to the EDB once available for further processing and the supply teacher grant will be reimbursed to the eligible Scheme-KG.



Signature of Supervisor/School Head : _____

Name of Supervisor/School Head : _____

Date of Application : _____

Contact Person : _____

Telephone Number : _____

(January 2022 Version)

Application for Professional Capacity Enhancement Grant

(To be returned on or before 14 January 2022 by post or by fax)

To: Permanent Secretary for Education (Attn: Kindergarten Administration 2 Section Address: Room 2329, 23/F, Wu Chung House, 213 Queen's Road East, Wanchai, Hong Kong (Fax: 3691 8021))

School information

Name of School: (Chinese) _____ (English) _____
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School Registration No.: _____

Declaration

I/We: (a) confirm all the information provided in the application form is factually correct; and (b) will ensure proper use of the Professional Capacity Enhancement Grant (the Grant), and undertake as appropriate to follow the EDB's requirements as stipulated in paragraphs 15 to 19 in EDBCM No. 17/2022 to return the Grant to the EDB.

Signature of Supervisor: _____	(School chop)
Name of Supervisor: _____	
Date: ____ / ____ / ____	

Contact person (Name): _____ (Post): _____ Tel. No.: _____
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A. Details of the Proposed Plan

(Please put a “✓” in the appropriate boxes . KG may choose more than one option.)

Proposed measure(s)	Percentage of the Grant to be disbursed
<input type="checkbox"/> (i) Hire outside service(s) to enhance teachers’ capacity (e.g. to arrange professional development programmes for teachers)	
<input type="checkbox"/> (ii) Hire consultancy services in establishing learning circle in the school, enhancing curriculum, and/or arranging school-based programmes relating to the professional development of teachers to raise the quality of teaching or support to students	
<input type="checkbox"/> (iii) Cover expenses related to professional exchange with “Sister KGs”, such as package tour service of teachers for visiting their “Sister KG(s)” in the GBA and materials used in exchange visits. (Only for Scheme-KGs which have formed “Sister KGs” with counterparts in the GBA by signing formal agreements.)	(Not exceeding 20% of the Grant)
<input type="checkbox"/> (iv) Subsidise teacher(s) to take courses or attend international conferences on KG education (capped at 50% of the fee of taking courses or attending international conferences) which are in line with the school development plan and the Kindergarten Education Curriculum Guide (2017), with details as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of the course(s) / international conference(s) to be subsidised: _____ • The above course/international conference is in line with the school development plan and the Kindergarten Education Curriculum Guide (2017) in the following ways (e.g. enhance support to NCS students / students with special needs, strengthen school curriculum development): _____ _____ 	(Not exceeding 20% of the Grant)
<input type="checkbox"/> (v) Others (please specify): _____ _____	
Total:	100%

B. Please briefly describe the plan on how the skills and knowledge learned by the teacher(s) can be disseminated to other teachers in the school:

**Interim Evaluation Report
Usage of Professional Capacity Enhancement Grant
for the 2021/22 to 2022/23 school years**

(To be returned on or before 31 December 2023 by post or by fax)

(Please put a “✓” in the appropriate boxes .)

To: Permanent Secretary for Education
(Attn: Kindergarten Administration 2 Section
Address: Room 2329, 23/F, Wu Chung House, 213 Queen’s Road East, Wanchai, Hong Kong
(Fax: 3691 8021))

Our school has spent the Professional Capacity Enhancement Grant (“the Grant”) according to the requirements stipulated in EDBCM No. 17/2022 to implement school-based professional capacity enhancement programme(s) in the 2021/22 to 2022/23 school years.

1. Our school has implemented the following measures to enhance teachers’ professional capacity:

2. Our school plans to implement the following measures to enhance teachers’ professional capacity in the 2023/24 school year:

3. Our school received the Grant of \$100,000 / \$150,000 / \$200,000* (*Delete whichever is inapplicable*) in total in March 2022. As at 31 August 2023, the amount of the Grant

- is fully depleted;
- has a balance of \$ _____ to be deployed in the 2023/24 school year.

Declaration	
I/We confirm that:	
<p>(a) our school has kept separate ledger account for the Grant to properly record all income and expenditure of the Grant and will report these items in the annual audited accounts for submission to the EDB. All books of accounts, records of procurement, receipts, payment vouchers and invoices will be kept for at least 7 years by the school for accounting and auditing purposes. If the actual balance of the annual audited accounts does not match with the above, the school will notify the EDB as soon as possible for follow up; and</p> <p>(b) if our school fails to provide relevant documents for examination, use the Grant outside the ambit as stated in this Circular Memorandum, or fails to comply with the respective requirements under the Grant, the amount of the Grant received will be fully returned to the Government.</p>	
Name of School: (Chinese) _____ (English) _____	
School Registration No.:	(School chop)
Signature of Supervisor:	
Name of Supervisor:	
Date: ____ / ____ / ____	
Contact person (Name): _____ (Post): _____ Tel. No.: _____	

Final Report

Usage of Professional Capacity Enhancement Grant

(To be returned on or before 31 December 2024 by post or by fax)

(Please put a “✓” in the appropriate boxes . KG can choose more than one option.)

To: Permanent Secretary for Education
(Attn: Kindergarten Administration 2 Section
Address: Room 2329, 23/F, Wu Chung House, 213 Queen’s Road East, Wanchai, Hong Kong
(Fax: 3691 8021))

Our school has spent the Professional Capacity Enhancement Grant (“the Grant”) according to the requirements stipulated in EDBCM No. 17/2022 to implement school-based professional capacity enhancement programme(s) in the 2021/22 to 2023/24 school years.

1. Subsequent to the interim report submitted in _____ (mm/yyyy), our school has implemented the following measures to enhance teachers’ professional capacity:

2. The skills and knowledge learned by the teachers will be/ have been disseminated to other teachers in the school through:

- establishing learning circle in school
- arranging sharing sessions to disseminate good practices to other teachers in school
- arranging collaborative lesson planning and/ or peer observation
- Others: _____

3. Please briefly describe the effectiveness of the use of the Grant:

- strengthening teachers’ knowledge in _____ (topic)
- enhancing teachers’ teaching skills and methods
- strengthening the support to students
- enhancing school-based curriculum
- Others: _____

4. As at 31 August 2024, the Grant \$_____ was used;
 has a balance of \$_____ to be returned to the
EDB.

Declaration	
I/We confirm that:	
<p>(a) our school has kept separate ledger account for the Grant to properly record all income and expenditure of the Grant and will report these items in the annual audited accounts for submission to the EDB. All books of accounts, records of procurement, receipts, payment vouchers and invoices will be kept for at least 7 years by the school for accounting and auditing purposes. If the actual balance of the annual audited accounts does not match with the above, the school will notify the EDB as soon as possible for follow up; and</p> <p>(b) if our school fails to provide relevant documents for examination, use the Grant outside the ambit as stated in this Circular Memorandum, or fails to comply with the respective requirements under the Grant, the amount of the Grant received will be fully returned to the Government.</p>	
Name of School: (Chinese) _____ (English) _____	
School Registration No.:	(School chop)
Signature of Supervisor:	
Name of Supervisor:	
Date: ____ / ____ / ____	
Contact person (Name): _____ (Post): _____ Tel. No.: _____	