

Criteria and Conditions for Admission of Aided Primary Schools to the Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS)

Aided schools' applications¹ for admission to DSS will be considered in accordance with a set of criteria and conditions, as well as with reference to the applicant school's track record of performance. Quality and sustainability are the prime concerns.

Applications shall fulfil the following criteria and conditions for operation under the DSS.

Admission Criteria

The applicant school must be able to demonstrate its readiness, capability and viability to provide quality education services in the four domains, viz. Management and Organization, Learning and Teaching, Student Support and School Ethos, as well as Student Performance under the DSS, the criteria of which include the following:

1. Policy Objective of Injecting Diversity to the School System

The applicant school should be able to prove in the Proposed School Plan that it could realize its vision and mission to operate a school with uniqueness through utilizing the flexibilities under the DSS to provide characteristic curriculum and diversified educational services for students as well as to implement flexible resources management systems, which would have much limitation, if not impracticable, to be achieved under the aided school regime.

2. Prevailing Educational Standards

The applicant school should demonstrate in the Proposed School Plan that the education services to be provided are of a necessary standard of quality for the purpose of operating a school under the DSS and can meet at least the prevailing educational standards² in respect of school management, curriculum and medium of instruction, class size, teacher to student ratio, facilities, teacher qualifications, staffing, etc.

3. Track Record of the School Performance

The applicant school's readiness, capability and viability to provide quality education under the DSS are also to be proven through its track record of performance in respect of Management and Organization, Learning and Teaching, Student Support and School Ethos, and Student Performance with reference to assessment in the External School Reviews, Focused Inspections, other school inspections, academic and non-academic performance, financial management, etc.

¹ Each applicant school has to submit a Proposed School Plan for application for admission to DSS. Please refer to [P/S Section 3](#) of the DSS Explanatory Notes for Primary Schools for the information required to be contained in it.

² Please refer to the details in [P/S Section 6](#) for the basic standards which DSS primary schools are required to maintain.

4. Financial Viability

The applicant school should demonstrate sound financial viability in operating the proposed school with details supporting the implementation of its proposed initiatives under the DSS in the 6-year financial budget³. The accumulated operating reserve in the budget of the proposed DSS school should be sufficient to meet at least 2 months of operating expenses after the school has joined the DSS for 5 years to ensure the applicant school's long-term financial viability. The school sponsoring body (SSB) of the applicant school has to ensure the school's compliance with the requirement.

5. Support from Stakeholders

The applicant school should be able to obtain clear indication of support from wide involvement of all types of stakeholders for the plan for conversion to DSS through formal consultation. This is to be demonstrated through obtaining at least 65% support rate from respondents of each of the major stakeholder groups, viz. parents of applicant school, teachers, non-teaching staff, etc. as well as the alumni's expressed clear support. The applicant school should also achieve to reach and involve the participation of significant population (50% or above) of each group of major stakeholders (i.e. parents, teachers, non-teaching staff, etc.) as well as active involvement of alumni in the process of consultation. Furthermore, the applicant school should prove that the concerns of the major stakeholders on the conversion to DSS have been duly addressed.

Fundamental Conditions

In addition to the criteria above, the following conditions of admission have to be met:

1. Supply and Demand of School Places

The supply of public sector school places should be sufficient to meet the demand in the district(s) concerned/ territory if the application is approved.

2. Service Agreement with the Government

After the application for joining the DSS has been approved in principle by the Education Bureau, the SSB of the applicant school is required to enter into an SSB Service Agreement with the Government before the applicant school is officially admitted to the DSS.

³ Please refer to [P/S Section 3](#) for the template for preparing a detailed 6-year financial budget under the DSS.