

Secondary School Places Allocation System 2023/2025
Notes for Parents on Application for Secondary One Discretionary Places
(Applicable to **Non-participating** Students)

Parents of Primary 6 students who wish to apply for a Secondary 1 (S1) discretionary place (DP) through the Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA) System 2023/2025 are advised to read carefully this document (Notes for Parents) and make reference to the Application Form for Secondary One Discretionary Place (Application Form) and the Points to Note thereof.

2. The student applicant must be a Hong Kong resident or must hold valid entry identity documents for attending public sector schools in Hong Kong; has never been allocated an S1 place through SSPA; has never studied in any government, aided, caput and Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) secondary schools in Hong Kong; does not study in a primary school participating in SSPA; has never been issued the Application Form for the current allocation cycle; and will have completed primary education by August 2025. Should there be changes as regards any of the status above, the student applicant should contact the School Places Allocation (SPA) Section of the Education Bureau (EDB) immediately, and all his/her related applications for DP may be rendered void.

3. EDB has implemented digitalisation of S1 admission. EDB encourages parents to register with “iAM Smart+” as early as possible for more convenient and faster services throughout the entire S1 application process. Parents may visit the “iAM Smart” thematic website for details on “iAM Smart+” registration or scan the QR code below to download the “iAM Smart” mobile app.

“iAM Smart” Thematic Website

[\(https://www.iamsmart.gov.hk/en/\)](https://www.iamsmart.gov.hk/en/)

(Select: Home > “iAM Smart” Registration > Registration Methods)



4. For parents registered as SSPA e-Platform users and bound their account to “iAM Smart+”, apart from the paper Application Form, they may submit DP applications via the SSPA e-Platform. Parents may scan the QR code below and register for an SSPA e-Platform account with their child’s Student Reference Number as well as the Activation Code issued by the SPA Section of EDB. For SSPA e-Platform account creation and login procedures, please refer to the related videos and Parents’ Guide uploaded to the EDB’s Homepage (www.edb.gov.hk) (Select: Home > Education System and Policy > Primary and Secondary Education > School Places Allocation Systems > Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA) System > Digitalisation of S1 Admission > SSPA e-Platform Parent’s Guide).

SSPA e-Platform
(<https://esspa.edb.gov.hk>)



Requirements

5. Regardless of whether the applications are submitted via the SSPA e-Platform or in paper Application Form, each student may apply to **not more than two** participating secondary schools listed in the Handbook for Application for Secondary One Discretionary Places (Handbook). Otherwise, **the DP applications will be rendered void**. Please note that if parents have submitted an application via the SSPA e-Platform, they should not submit a duplicate application to a secondary school in paper Application Form, and vice versa. If parents submit duplicate applications (i.e. submitting applications bearing the same application number to the same secondary school via both the SSPA e-Platform and in paper Application Form), these applications will be regarded as one application only. Hence, submission of duplicate applications will not increase the chance of a student being allocated to the school. Besides, parents should not submit applications bearing the same application number to two different secondary schools via the SSPA e-Platform and in paper form. Otherwise, **the DP applications of their child will be rendered void**.

6. The Handbook is published by EDB. Parents may visit the EDB’s Homepage (www.edb.gov.hk) (Select: Home > Education System and Policy > Primary and Secondary Education > School Places Allocation Systems > Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA) System) to download the lists or call the EDB’s 24-hour Automatic Telephone Enquiry System at 2891 0088 (Press 2 (English) > 5 (Fax Services) > 04 (Secondary School Places Allocation System: School Lists)) to obtain the lists by fax.

Application Period


7. The DP application period will be the same for all participating secondary schools, starting **from 2 January (Thursday) to 16 January 2025 (Thursday), both dates inclusive**. As for the operating hours of individual schools, enquiries should be made to the schools direct.

Application Procedures

8. Parents may choose whether to apply for a DP. For parents registered as SSPA e-Platform users and bound their account to “iAM Smart+”, apart from the paper Application Form, they may submit DP applications via the SSPA e-Platform.

(a) *Submitting applications via the SSPA e-Platform*

9. If parents decide to make DP applications via the SSPA e-Platform, they should follow the procedures below:

- (i) Login to the SSPA e-Platform¹. For SSPA e-Platform account creation and login procedures, please scan the QR code on the right or visit the EDB’s Homepage (www.edb.gov.hk) (Select: Home > Education System and Policy > Primary and Secondary Education > School Places Allocation Systems > Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA) System > Digitalisation of S1 Admission > SSPA e-Platform Parent’s Guide) and refer to the related videos and Parents’ Guide. 
- (ii) Select “Apply Now” to enter the page for DP.
- (iii) Select the order of school preference (viz. Order of School Preference 1 or Order of School Preference 2) for the secondary schools you intend to apply to.
- (iv) Select/input the “Name of Secondary School Applied to”.
- (v) Fill in the contact information required by the school, including the correspondence address, contact telephone number and email address.
- (vi) Upload a copy of the student’s identity document(s)² (for example, Hong Kong Identity Card, Hong Kong Birth Certificate or other identity documents) (mandatory) for secondary school’s checking.
- (vii) Upload documents required by the secondary school to the corresponding folders based on the document category (for example, Completed School-based Application Form, Copies of Report Cards and Records of Certificates and Awards).
- (viii) Check that the “Name of Secondary School Applied to”, order of school preference and document(s) uploaded are accurate.
- (ix) Acknowledge understanding of the “Points to Note on Application for Secondary One Discretionary Places” as well as the relevant “Personal Information Collection Statement” of EDB and the secondary school being applied to.
- (x) Confirm signing digitally with “iAM Smart+”.
- (xi) After signing digitally with “iAM Smart+”, click “Confirm and Submit” and then “Yes” to complete the application procedures.
- (xii) Check whether the application status for the application of the selected order of school preference has been changed to “Submitted” and the acknowledgement email issued by the SSPA e-Platform has been received.
- (xiii) Repeat steps (iii) to (xii) above to submit an application for the other order of school preference.

¹ In case of discrepancies between the information shown on the SSPA e-Platform and that on your child’s identity document, please notify the SPA Section immediately for rectification.

² The maximum size of files uploaded for applications for Order of School Preference 1 and Order of School Preference 2 is 12.5MB for **each**. The system supports PDF format and common image file formats (GIF, BMP, PNG and JPEG).

10. To efficiently handle the large number of applications, **each login session to the SSPA e-Platform is limited to 30 minutes**. Please complete the application procedures within 30 minutes. If necessary, parents may use the “Save as Draft” function and continue with submitting the application by retrieving the draft in a new login session.

Parents should note that regardless of whether the applications are submitted via the SSPA e-Platform or in paper Application Form, the applications, once submitted, cannot be retrieved or cancelled, and no change can be made to the order of school preference.

(b) Submitting applications in paper Application Form

11. The Application Form is specially designed for students’ use in making DP application to government, aided and caput secondary schools as well as DSS secondary schools participating in the SSPA System (i.e. schools listed in the Handbook)³. Each student receives two Application Forms.

12. Each Application Form consists of four parts: EDB’s Copy (in blue), School’s Copy (in green), Parent’s Copy (in red) and Order of School Preference (Order of School Preference 1 denotes a student’s first choice and Order of School Preference 2 denotes a student’s second choice) (in red). Student particulars have been pre-printed on each part of the Application Form. Take the Parent’s Copy as an example, the pre-printed information includes:

- Allocation Cycle
- Student Reference Number
- Application Number
- Name of Student
- Sex
- Date of Birth

13. If amendments on the personal particulars are needed after the collection of the Application Forms, parents should make the amendments with the assistance of the SPA Section of EDB as soon as possible. Parents should not amend any pre-printed information on the Application Form by themselves. The secondary schools they apply to will not amend the pre-printed information for them at the time of receiving the Application Form either.

³ The Application Form is not applicable to application to Jockey Club Ti-I College and DSS secondary schools not participating in the SSPA System (NDSS secondary schools). The application period for S1 admission to Jockey Club Ti-I College is from 2 January (Thursday) to 20 January 2025 (Monday). As regards the List of DSS Secondary Schools Not Participating in SSPA 2023/2025, parents may visit the EDB’s Homepage (www.edb.gov.hk) (Select: Home > Education System and Policy > Primary and Secondary Education > School Places Allocation Systems > Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA) System) to download the List or call the EDB’s 24-hour Automatic Telephone Enquiry System at 2891 0088 (Press 2 (English) > 5 (Fax Services) > 04 (Secondary School Places Allocation System: School Lists)) to obtain the List by fax. As NDSS secondary schools have their own application period, please contact the schools concerned direct for details.

14. If parents decide to make DP applications in paper Application Form, they should follow the procedures below:

- (i) Fill in the name of the secondary school to be applied to in the spaces provided in all four parts of the Application Form based on preference.
- (ii) Detach the part containing the Order of School Preference for retention and record (Students are not required to disclose their order of preference to the schools they apply to). The other three parts should be kept intact.
- (iii) Submit the EDB's Copy, School's Copy and Parent's Copy that bear the same Application Number (with all three parts intact) in person directly to the secondary school, together with the related documents required by the secondary school (for example, the duly completed school-based application form).
- (iv) Produce the original of the student's identity document to the secondary school for checking.
- (v) Obtain, at last, from the secondary school the Parent's Copy bearing the school chop, school name and school code for retention and record.

Parents should note that the applications, once submitted, cannot be retrieved or cancelled and no change can be made to the order of school preference.

15. If students **apply to only one secondary school**, the Application Form with Order of School Preference 1 should be used. If a student submits both of his/her Application Forms to the same school, EDB will only process the application with Order of School Preference 1, and the application with Order of School Preference 2 will be rendered void. Any unused Application Form is not transferable. Parents may keep or destroy the Application Forms by themselves after the application period.

16. Under the following circumstances, the Application Forms will not be handled by the secondary school:

- Application Forms sent by mail or submitted after the deadline
- Application Forms with amendments to the Allocation Cycle, the Student Reference Number and the Application Number
- Application Forms with amendments to the Name of Student, Sex and Date of Birth but do not bear the chop of EDB
- Duplicate, damaged or incomplete Application Forms

Allocation of School Places

17. Participating secondary schools may draw up their own admission criteria according to their educational philosophy and tradition. They must make public their admission criteria and weightings as well as the number of DP for application by displaying them in a prominent place of the school or providing them to each student applicant in writing prior to the DP application period. Before applying to a school, parents should consider all aspects of a school, e.g. its educational philosophy, tradition, religion, admission criteria and weightings, class structure, development and operation, and their children's characteristics, personalities, abilities and interests so as to make a suitable school choice. Schools may arrange interviews, but no written tests in any forms should be conducted.

18. All participating secondary schools (including Jockey Club Ti-I College) are required to, after processing DP applications, notify parents of successful applicants (including non-participating students) of their children's inclusion in the Successful Lists for Discretionary Places by letter and phone on **31 March 2025**⁴. Schools are required to keep parents well-informed of the notification arrangements, and collect necessary contact information from parents beforehand. These notification arrangements are not applicable to reserve and unsuccessful applicants, **nor are the notifications the allocation results**. The parents concerned do not need to reply to the secondary schools on whether they would accept the offers.

19. The arrangements in paragraph 18 are administrative measures and the existing SSPA mechanism remains unchanged. Each application carries a unique number for identifying a student's order of school preference. EDB will match students' preferences against schools' Successful/Reserve Lists for Discretionary Places. If a student is successful in the applications to both schools to which he/she applies, he/she will be allocated an S1 place of his/her first-choice school based on his/her order of preference. If parents have applied to a secondary school which eventually does not offer S1 places under the SSPA System in this allocation cycle, that application will not be processed.

20. **The results of DP and Central Allocation (CA) will be released at the same time on 8 July 2025**⁵. Parents need not make enquiries to the schools they apply to before the announcement of results. If non-participating students are admitted by participating secondary schools or Jockey Club Ti-I College at the DP stage, the secondary school concerned will call the parents to inform them of the official application results and the related arrangements on 8 July 2025, i.e. the date of announcement of the allocation results. Parents of non-participating students may contact the secondary school(s) to which they have applied on the date of announcement of the allocation results if needed.

⁴ For parents registered as SSPA e-Platform users, they may also view the notifications for successful DP applicants via the SSPA e-Platform starting from 10 a.m. on the same day.

⁵ For parents registered as SSPA e-Platform users, they may also view the allocation results via the SSPA e-Platform starting from 10 a.m. on the same day.

21. **If non-participating students wish to be allocated a public sector S1 place in case their DP applications are unsuccessful, they may visit the SPA Section of EDB during office hours from May to August 2025, bringing along the originals and photocopies of their birth certificate, other identity documents proving that the holders are eligible for admission to public sector schools, graduation or academic proof for the highest level in primary education, and Hong Kong address proof. Places available after CA will be allocated to eligible student applicants by EDB.** The results for the first batch of applications will be announced in early July 2025, the second batch by the end of July 2025, the third batch in mid-August 2025 and thereafter students will be informed individually.

Application for Replacement of Application Form

22. Replacement of damaged or lost Application Forms can be obtained in person at the SPA Section with the original of the student applicant's identity document. A fee of HK\$125 will be levied per replacement. If the Application Form previously claimed lost is found after a replacement copy has been issued, parents should use the replacement copy and destroy the one that has been found. Parents should not use Application Forms bearing the same Order of School Preference for application to more than one secondary school. Otherwise, their children's DP applications will be rendered void.

Enquiries

23. For further enquiries, please contact the SPA Section (SSPA) of EDB at 2832 7740 or 2832 7700.

School Places Allocation Section
Education Bureau
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