

Secondary School Places Allocation System 2023/2025
Notes for Parents on Application for Secondary One Discretionary Places

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 Education Bureau (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)



3. 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 distributed by primary schools. 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

4. 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**.

5. The Handbook is published by EDB and will be provided to primary schools for parents' reference on the day when the Application Forms and Notes for Parents are distributed. Parents may also 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.

6. Apart from making DP applications to not more than two participating secondary schools, students may also apply to Jockey Club Ti-I College¹ and Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) secondary schools not participating in the SSPA System (NDSS secondary schools)² for an S1 place.

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.

¹ The application period for S1 admission to Jockey Club Ti-I College is from 2 January (Thursday) to 20 January 2025 (Monday). If students are successful in their application to Jockey Club Ti-I College, they will not be allocated a DP or a place in Central Allocation (CA) under the SSPA System. If they are unsuccessful in their application, they can still go through the SSPA System for allocation of an S1 place.

² NDSS secondary schools have their own application period. Please contact the schools concerned direct for details. As there is no limit to the number of NDSS secondary schools that a student may apply to, he/she may be accepted by several NDSS secondary schools. However, when a parent surrenders the signed Parent's Undertaking and the original of the Primary 6 Student Record Form to one of the schools making the child an offer, then that will serve as confirmation of acceptance of the S1 place offered by the NDSS secondary school concerned and agreement to give up any other subsidised S1 places (including the S1 places of participating secondary schools and Jockey Club Ti-I College) to be allocated through the SSPA System. The school will notify EDB of the parent's decision by late April 2025. On receiving the Successful Lists of Participating Students from NDSS secondary schools, EDB will not allocate the students on the list to other secondary schools through the SSPA System. As regards the List of DSS Secondary Schools Not Participating in SSPA 2023/2025, parents may approach their children's primary schools. Parents may also 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.

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-Platform³. 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)⁴ (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.



³ In case of discrepancies between the information shown on the SSPA e-Platform and that on your child’s identity document, please notify the attending primary school immediately for rectification.

⁴ 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 applications 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). Each participating Primary 6 student receives two Application Forms through the primary school attending.

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
- Primary School Attending

13. After collecting the Application Form and the Primary 6 Student Record Form⁵, parents are requested to check immediately whether the following pre-printed information is the same as the personal particulars on their child’s identity document:

- Name of Student
- Sex
- Date of Birth

In case of discrepancies, parents should notify their child’s primary school immediately for rectification. The primary school would make amendments and endorse them with the school chop. 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.

⁵ The Primary 6 Student Record Form is used as an identity document in applications for S1 admission to Jockey Club Ti-I College and NDSS secondary schools.

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 direct 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 school chop of the primary school
- 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 all successful applicants of their children's inclusion in the Successful Lists for Discretionary Places by letter and phone on **31 March 2025**⁶. 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. If parents who receive notifications from participating secondary schools have also applied for a school place in an NDSS secondary school for their children and is successful in their application, they should decide whether to retain the school place offered by the NDSS secondary school **on or before 8 April 2025**. If parents decide to retain the school place offered by the NDSS secondary school, they should disregard the notifications from participating secondary schools. If they decide to decline the offer from the NDSS secondary school, they should notify the NDSS secondary school concerned and retrieve the signed Parent's Undertaking and the original of the Primary 6 Student Record Form **on or before 8 April 2025** in order to retain the DP which they have successfully obtained. The retrieval of relevant documents will serve as confirmation that the parents concerned have surrendered the S1 school place previously offered by the NDSS secondary school.

20. Based on the Successful Lists for Discretionary Places submitted by participating secondary schools, EDB will provide each participating primary school with its respective list of students notified as successful DP applicants (which will not show the names of the secondary schools concerned and whether students are selected as successful applicants by one or two secondary schools) in early April 2025.

21. The arrangements in paragraphs 18 to 20 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, and has not accepted a school place from any NDSS secondary school, he/she will be allocated an S1 place of his/her first-choice school based on his/her order of school preference.

22. Students who are successful in the DP application will not be allocated a school place again in CA. Those who have not been successful in obtaining a DP will be allocated a place in CA. 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.

⁶ 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.

23. Parents who have not applied for a DP for their children, or have not received notification from participating secondary schools of their children's inclusion in the Successful Lists for Discretionary Places should submit the duly completed Secondary One Choice of Schools Form (Choice Form) to EDB in early May 2025 through their primary schools. This is to ensure that students will still be allocated S1 places through CA if their DP applications have not been successful. **Parents who are notified by participating secondary schools of their children's inclusion in the Successful Lists for Discretionary Places do not need to make school choices. They only have to tick the respective box, cross out the parts on school choices, sign on the Choice Form after filling in the contact information, and return the Choice Form to the schools their children attend. The results of DP and CA will be released at the same time on 8 July 2025⁷.** Parents need not make enquiries to the schools they apply to before the announcement of results⁸.

Application for Replacement of Application Form

24. Replacement of damaged or lost Application Forms can be obtained in person at the School Places Allocation (SPA) Section. The original of the identity documents showing the applicant's Student Reference Number should be produced at the time of replacement for checking. 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

25. For further enquiries, parents may consult their children's primary schools or contact the SPA Section (SSPA) of EDB at 2832 7740 or 2832 7700.

School Places Allocation Section
Education Bureau
December 2024

⁷ The date for primary schools to collect the allocation results is 7 July 2025. If EDB announces the closure of schools in the morning of that day owing to the issuing of the Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal Pre-No.8/ No.8 or above, the collection of allocation results will be postponed to 8 July 2025. The announcement of allocation results will be postponed from 8 July 2025 to 9 July 2025 accordingly. If in the morning of the day of the announcement of allocation results (i.e. 8 July 2025), EDB announces the closure of schools owing to the issuing of the Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal Pre-No.8/ No.8 or above or Red or Black Rainstorm Warning Signal, or the Government announces "extreme conditions", the announcement of allocation results will be postponed to the next school day.

⁸ 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.