Information Leaflet on the Secondary School Places Allocation System
2018/2020 Cycle
Admission to Secondary One in September 2020

- Application period is from 2 January to 16 January 2020
- No restriction on districts, but apply to **NOT MORE THAN TWO** participating secondary schools
- Students should apply to the preferred secondary school(s) direct
- Admission criteria and weightings set by schools
- Participating secondary schools will notify parents of successful applicants of their children’s inclusion in the Successful Lists for Discretionary Places on 7 April 2020

Wish to be Allocated a Subsidised S1 Place

Requirements:
- Being a Hong Kong resident
- Studying in a primary school participating in the SSPA System
- Never been allocated an S1 place

Participate in SSPA System

To Apply for a Discretionary Place

- Will be allocated according to a student’s allocation band, parental choice of schools and random number
- Will not be centrally allocated a place if already secured a discretionary place

Fill in Choice of Schools Form

Part A: Unrestricted School Choices
Part B: Restricted School Choices

Central Allocation

- Refer to the Handbook for Unrestricted School Choices and the Secondary School List
- Submit the Form to the Education Bureau in early May through the primary school
- Should complete and submit the Form no matter whether application for a discretionary place has been made or not (for students who have been notified as successful discretionary places applicants by participating secondary schools, their parents only have to cross out the parts on school choices and sign on the Forms)

Release of SSPA Results (7 July 2020)

Registration (9 and 10 July 2020)
Secondary School Places Allocation System

The Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA) System is divided into two stages: Discretionary Places (DP) and Central Allocation (CA).

Discretionary Places Stage

- All secondary schools participating in the SSPA System are allowed to reserve not more than 30% of their Secondary 1 (S1) places as DP for admission of students*.
- All participating secondary schools accept applications within the same period. The application period for this cycle is from 2 January to 16 January 2020.
- The Education Bureau (EDB) will distribute two copies of Application Form for Secondary One Discretionary Place to each Primary 6 (P6) student in early December 2019. As regards the lists of participating secondary schools accepting application for S1 DP, parents may refer to the Handbook for Application for Secondary One Discretionary Places or visit EDB’s Homepage (www.edb.gov.hk) or use the fax service of EDB’s 24-hour Automatic Telephone Enquiry System (Tel. 2891 0088) to obtain the lists.
- DP application is not subject to restriction on districts. However, each student may apply to NOT MORE THAN TWO participating secondary schools listed in the Handbook for Application for Secondary One Discretionary Places, otherwise his/her chance of acquiring a DP will be forfeited.
- Each student is given two copies of Application Form for Secondary One Discretionary Place, one of which carries Order of School Preference 1 and the other Order of School Preference 2. Order of School Preference 1 stands for the first choice and Order of School Preference 2 stands for the second choice.
- Parents should fill in the name of the secondary school applied to on all parts of the Application Form for Secondary One Discretionary Place according to their order of preference. They should first tear off the part containing the Order of School Preference for retention before submitting the form to the school direct. Parents should receive from the school the Parent’s Copy bearing the school chop, school name and school code as acknowledgement after submitting the form.
- Schools may admit suitable students according to their educational philosophy and characteristics. However, they must make public the admission criteria and weightings prior to admission. Schools may arrange interviews, but no written test should be conducted.
- Participating secondary schools will notify parents of successful applicants of their children’s inclusion in the Successful Lists for Discretionary Places on 7 April 2020. 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 notifications.
- If the parents who receive notifications from participating secondary schools have also successfully applied for a school place in a non-participating Direct Subsidy Scheme (NDSS) secondary school for their children, they may decide whether to accept the offer on or before 16 April 2020. If parents decide to retain the school place, they should disregard the notifications from participating secondary schools. If they decide to decline the offer from the NDSS secondary school, they may notify the NDSS secondary school concerned and retrieve the signed undertaking and the original copy of the Primary 6 Student Record Form on or before 16 April 2020 in order to retain the DP which they have successfully obtained.
- EDB will match students’ preferences against schools’ Successful and Reserve Lists. If a student has received notifications of successful DP applications from two participating secondary schools, and has not accepted a school place from any NDSS secondary schools, he/she will be allocated an S1 place based on his/her order of preference.
- Some students (including those who have not received any notification or those who have received notification from the school of their second choice only) may be allocated with an S1 place in schools they have applied to in the DP stage (including schools of their first choice) in the capacity of reserve applicants.
- Successful DP applicants will not be allocated a place again in CA. Those who have not been successful in obtaining a DP will be allocated an S1 place in CA. Hence, parents of successful DP applicants do not need to fill out the Choice of Schools Forms at the CA stage. They only have to cross out the parts on school choices and sign on the Forms.
- The results of DP and CA will be released at the same time on 7 July 2020.
- Before applying to a school, parents should fully consider all aspects of the school such as its educational philosophy, culture, admission criteria, class structure, development and operation, as well as their child’s abilities, inclinations and interests so as to make a suitable school choice. Once submitted, the Application Form for Secondary One Discretionary Place cannot be retrieved or changed.
- Parents may also seek advice from teachers and make reference to available information about the school(s), or contact the school(s) concerned direct for enquiries.

* Participating Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) secondary schools may reserve more than 30% of their S1 places as DP.
Central Allocation Stage

- After the deduction of repeater and discretionary places, the remaining places in a secondary school are used for CA. Of the CA places, 10% are for unrestricted school choices, and the remaining 90% are for restricted school choices.
- In line with the administrative districts, the whole territory is divided into 18 school nets. In principle, the secondary school net to which a student belongs is determined by the physical location of the primary school the student attends.
- Each school net comprises all the participating primary and secondary schools in the district and a number of secondary schools in other districts providing school places for the net. The number of secondary schools and school places provided from other districts may vary from year to year according to the demand and supply situation.
- If change of school net is necessary, parents may submit an application for cross-net allocation to EDB through the primary school their child is attending before early March. A successful applicant will be allocated an S1 place in the new school net for which he/she is approved.
- CA is based on a student’s allocation band, parental choice of schools and random number.

Allocation Band

- Students’ internal assessment results will be used for the calculation of allocation bands and other education-related purposes.
- Students’ internal assessment results at the end of Primary 5, and both in mid-year and at the end of P6 will be standardised. The average of the sampled results of the Pre-Secondary One Hong Kong Attainment Test 2016 and 2018 will be used to scale students’ internal assessment results. Since the Pre-Secondary One Hong Kong Attainment Test results will not have a direct bearing on the students’ own allocation results, drilling for the test is not required.
- The scaled marks of all students in the territory will be put into an order of merit. Then the students will be equally divided into three Territory Bands, each consisting of 1/3 of the total number of primary students in the territory. Territory Bands are only for allocation of places for unrestricted school choices.
- As regards allocation of school places in the school nets, the scaled marks of all students within the same net will be put into an order of merit. Then the students will be equally divided into three Net Bands, each consisting of 1/3 of the total number of primary students in the school net. Net Bands are only for allocation of places for restricted school choices.

Choice of Schools

- In early April 2020, EDB will distribute to each P6 student a Secondary One Choice of Schools Form and a Secondary School List of the school net he/she belongs to. As regards the lists of schools for unrestricted school choices, parents may refer to the Handbook for Unrestricted School Choices distributed to the primary schools. Parents may also visit EDB’s Homepage (www.edb.gov.hk) or use the fax service of EDB’s 24-hour Automatic Telephone Enquiry System (Tel. 2891 0088) to obtain the lists.
- Before making school choices, parents may seek advice from teachers and make reference to available information about the school(s), or contact the school(s) concerned direct for enquiries.
- The Secondary One Choice of Schools Form is divided into:

  Part A : Unrestricted School Choices
  - Parents should refer to the Handbook for Unrestricted School Choices. Based on their preference, they should choose a maximum of three secondary schools from any school nets including the one to which their child belongs, and place them in order of preference in the form.

  Part B : Restricted School Choices
  - Parents should refer to the Secondary School List of the net to which their child belongs. Based on their preference, they should choose a maximum of 30 secondary schools and place them in order of preference in the form.

- Allocation of school places is based on parents’ school choices, and conducted through a computerised allocation process.

  In view of the impact of the novel coronavirus infection, schools do not need to conduct the internal assessment at the end of P6 or submit the scores in this cycle. The allocation bands of individual P6 students will then be determined by their scaled internal assessment scores obtained at the end of Primary 5 and the mid-year of Primary 6.
Random Number

- The random number is generated by the computer before running the central allocation program. It is used to determine the order of allocation within the same allocation band.
- If the demand for school places of a certain secondary school exceeds the supply, the student possessing a smaller random number within the same allocation band will be allocated a place first.
- The random number has no connection with the Student Reference Number or the student's personal data.

Allocation Process

- The Unrestricted School Choices in Part A will be processed first, to be followed by the Restricted School Choices in Part B.
- When processing the Unrestricted School Choices in Part A, the computer will first allocate school places to students in Territory Band 1 according to their order of preference of school choices. After screening the school choices of all these students, the computer will follow the same procedure to process the school choices of students in Territory Band 2 and finally those of Territory Band 3 students.
- Students successful in obtaining a place in Part A will not be allocated a place in Part B. If a student is not allocated a school place in Part A after all his/her school choices have been exhausted, he/she will be allocated a place in Part B.
- When processing the Restricted School Choices in Part B, the computer will first allocate school places to students in Net Band 1 according to their order of preference of school choices. If a student cannot be allocated a school place even after all his/her school choices have been exhausted, the computer will allocate a place to him/her from the remaining places in the school net.
- After all the students in Net Band 1 have been allocated school places, the computer will follow the same procedure to process the choices of students in Net Band 2 and finally those of Net Band 3 students.

Feeder and Nominated Schools

- In general, after the deduction of repeater and discretionary places, a feeder secondary school has to reserve 85% of the remaining places for its feeder primary school(s), and a nominated secondary school 25% of the remaining places for its nominated primary school(s) at the CA stage.
- A P6 student of a feeder or nominated school is eligible for a reserved place if he/she is in Net Band 1 or 2 and has chosen the feeder or nominated secondary school as his/her first choice in Part B.
- If the number of eligible students exceeds the number of reserved places, the order of priority for allocation will be based on the student's Net Band and random number until all the reserved places are filled. All unused reserved places, if any, will be automatically used as open places for open allocation.
- If a P6 student of a feeder or nominated school is approved for cross-net allocation, he/she will not be eligible for a reserved place of the feeder or nominated secondary school(s).

“Through-train” Schools

- A P6 student of a “through-train” school may choose to proceed to its linked secondary school direct. If the student applies for DP of participating secondary schools or S1 places of NDSS secondary schools (no matter successful or not), or participates in CA, he/she will not be allowed to retain the right to proceed direct to the linked secondary school.
- “Through-train” secondary schools, in principle, are required to reserve not less than 15% of their total number of S1 places for admitting students of other primary schools through DP or CA.

Enquiries

Parents seeking further information may contact the School Places Allocation Section of EDB.

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