School Partnership Scheme  
in Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs  
for the 2013/14 and 2014/15 School Years

SUMMARY

The purpose of this circular memorandum is to announce the details of the School Partnership Scheme (the Scheme) and invite ordinary primary and secondary schools to participate in the Scheme for the 2013/14 and 2014/15 school years.

DETAILS

2. The Scheme is an integral part of the system support for ordinary schools in catering for student diversity. Under the Scheme, special schools and ordinary schools are invited to serve as Special Schools cum Resource Centres (SSRC) and Resource Schools on Whole School Approach (RS-WSA) respectively. They form partners with ordinary schools and share with them their knowledge and practices in supporting students with special educational needs (SEN) with an aim to empowering schools in catering for students’ diverse needs through cross-fertilization of expertise and networking.

3. In the 2013/14 and 2014/15 school years, 10 SSRC and 14 RS-WSA (comprising 8 primary and 6 secondary schools) will provide support services under the Scheme. The SSRC have proficient teaching experience and expertise in supporting students with SEN, particularly those with intellectual disability, physical disability, and emotional and behavioural difficulties. They will work in close collaboration with their partner schools in enabling knowledge/skill transfer. RS-WSA have proficient experience in adopting the WSA in different domains, including Management and Organization, Learning and Teaching, Student Support and School Ethos. They will share with their partner schools good practices in the implementation of the WSA to integrated education and measures to cater for the individual learning needs of students, including those with SEN. The lists of the SSRC and RS-WSA with their respective areas of support service are at Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 respectively.
Modes of support service

4. The support services provided by the SSRC and RS-WSA include:

(a) School-based support
Each SSRC/RS-WSA will provide intensive school-based support for a minimum of three ordinary schools. Support services may take the form of on-site consultation, lesson observation and review sessions, case conferences, school-based workshops/sharing, web-based consultation and sharing of resource materials, etc. Participating ordinary schools will generally be served for one school year, subject to an extension to a maximum of two school years on mutual agreement.

(b) District-based/ Regional/ Territory-wide sharing
SSRC and RS-WSA will also provide network support through sharing of experience and strategies on supporting students with SEN in district-based/ regional/ territory-wide seminars and workshops.

(c) Short-term attachment programme
Individual SSRC will provide short-term attachment programme for a maximum of five ordinary school students in a school year. The target students are those with intellectual disability who experience severe adjustment difficulties in ordinary schools. They will be attached to an appropriate SSRC for three to six months. Apart from providing short-term placement and support for the target students, teachers of the SSRC will also provide training and consultation for teachers of ordinary schools so as to enhance their professional capacity in supporting these students when they re-integrate into the ordinary classroom after the attachment programme. Teachers of the ordinary schools are required to participate actively in these professional development activities and collaborate with the SSRC in designing Individual Education Plan and reviewing the progress of the students. SSRC that offer such programme are marked in Appendix 1.

Role of participating schools

5. The main focus of SSRC/RS-WSA is to assist ordinary schools develop confidence and strategies in handling students with SEN and to establish support networks for continuous professional development. Participating schools must commit to partnering with the SSRC/RS-WSA and participating actively in all professional activities mentioned above. In this regard, the steer and support of the school head is of
utmost importance. They are required to deploy suitable teachers and give them appropriate non-contact time to facilitate collaboration and to achieve the objective of empowerment and capacity building for the teachers.

Application

6. Ordinary schools that are interested in getting school-based support service in the 2013/14 and/or 2014/15 school years should approach individual SSRC or RS-WSA direct to discuss their support plans before 15 October 2013 and 15 October 2014 respectively. In approaching SSRC or RS-WSA, they should make clear their expectations, areas of concerns, expected outcome and mode of support required, etc. For good utilization of resources, each ordinary school should be supported only by one SSRC or RS-WSA at one time. Taking into account the nature of the service required and the resources available, SSRC/RS-WSA will work out with individual ordinary schools the detailed support programme and then submit the plan to the Education Bureau (EDB).

7. For district-based/ regional/ territory-wide activities on sharing of expertise organized by SSRC/RS-WSA, schools will be informed of the details in due course by the respective SSRC/RS-WSA.

8. Ordinary schools wishing to refer students with intellectual disability experiencing severe adjustment difficulties in ordinary schools to the short-term attachment programme run by the SSRC may approach their respective Educational Psychologists or special education inspectors/Special Education Support Officers of EDB who are serving the school for recommendation anytime in the school year. Upon their recommendation, the school should obtain parental consent and send the completed referral form at Appendix 3 to Special Education Support 1 (SES1) Section of EDB. (The referral form is also available at the EDB website http://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/edu-system/special/support-subsidy/special-school/school-partnership-scheme/attachmentform_en2013.pdf). The SES1 Section will refer the student to an appropriate SSRC for support. The SSRC concerned will approach the school direct to discuss detailed arrangements.

Evaluation

9. To evaluate the effectiveness of the Scheme, participating ordinary schools will be required to complete an evaluation questionnaire on the service delivery and give suggestions for improvement. Inspectors from EDB will also visit schools to observe
school-based support activities and collect views on the services rendered.

ENQUIRY

10. For enquiries on the SSRC/RS-WSA, please contact the following officers:

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Name of officer</th>
<th>Telephone no.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SSRC</td>
<td>Mr LO King-hang</td>
<td>3509 7473</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Miss NG Mo-jing</td>
<td>3509 7471</td>
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<tr>
<td>RS-WSA (Secondary)</td>
<td>Ms KWAN Wai-fan</td>
<td>2307 0442</td>
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<td>RS-WSA (Primary)</td>
<td>Ms FUNG Man-lan</td>
<td>3698 3707</td>
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Ms Hera Chum
for Secretary for Education

c.c. Head of Sections - for information