

EDUCATION BUREAU CIRCULAR MEMORANDUM NO. 49/2022

From: Permanent Secretary for Education To: Supervisors and Heads of
Kindergartens/ Kindergarten-cum-
Child Care Centres and Schools with
Kindergarten Classes – for necessary
action

Ref.: EDB(JOKC)COR/16

Date: 1 March 2022

Ventilation Assessment and Improvement Measures of Kindergartens

Purpose

The purpose of this circular memorandum is to inform kindergartens, kindergarten-cum-child care centres and schools with kindergarten classes (collectively referred to as “KGs” hereafter) on matters related to ventilation assessment and improvement measures in KG premises, and the details of the one-off Grant for Procurement of Ventilation Assessment Service and Grant for Procurement of Air Purifiers to be provided by the Education Bureau (EDB) to KGs joining the kindergarten education scheme (“Scheme”).

Background

2. The COVID-19 variant has been widely spreading in Hong Kong recently. Since children’s self-care capability is relatively lower and there have been outbreaks of upper respiratory tract infection in KGs occasionally, schools should heighten vigilance and put in place anti-epidemic measures. As stipulated in the “Health Protection Measures for Schools” guidelines, all KGs are required to keep doors/windows of school halls, classrooms and special rooms open in order to increase flow of fresh air, minimise having air blowing directly from one person to another, clean dust-filters regularly, etc. KGs are also required to pay attention to and strictly follow the relevant guidelines issued by the Department of Health to maintain good indoor ventilation.

Details

3. In view of the persistent and recent worsening trend of COVID-19, KGs should flexibly deploy resources to conduct ventilation assessment of school premises to ensure that proper ventilation measures have been adopted and adequate ventilation facilities are equipped in KGs. Schools should adopt proper measures based on the assessment results and recommendations, such as opening doors and windows, installing exhaust fan and retrofitting ventilation duct. If the improvement measures cannot be completed within a short period, schools should install air purifiers that comply with relevant standards to improve the school’s indoor ventilation situation as soon as possible. Ventilation assessment of KGs should be

conducted by registered professionals or contractors. Hence, KGs should procure ventilation assessment service from service providers included in the “Register of Specialist Contractors (Sub-register of Ventilation Works Category). Schools can obtain the related information by selecting “Register type: RSC(V) Register of Specialist Contractors (Sub-register of Ventilation Works Category)” and then click “Search” on the website of the Buildings Department (Website: <https://www.bd.gov.hk/en/resources/online-tools/registers-search/registrationsearch.html>).

4. To facilitate schools to procure related assessment service from professionals, the template of service specifications, checklist, template of ventilation assessment report, and certificate on ventilation system have been uploaded onto the EDB website (Home > Education System and Policy > Kindergarten Education > [Kindergarten Education Scheme](#)). In gist, the scope of ventilation assessment service should include:

- (i) related professionals to conduct on-site assessment of the ventilation situation of the school premises according to the checklist provided by the EDB;
- (ii) related professionals to provide the KG with a written assessment report which should include details and results of assessment, and make concrete recommendations for improvement, if needed; and
- (iii) after the KG has completed the improvement measures (if applicable), issue the certificate to confirm that remedial actions have been taken to improve the ventilation situation according to the recommendations for improvement in the reports.

5. If schools need to procure air purifiers, they may refer to the website of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (Website: https://www.fehd.gov.hk/english/licensing/guide_general_reference/Information_air-changes_purification.html) for “Information on air purifiers meeting specified specifications applicable to catering business” to choose air purifiers with high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) device.

6. Please note that installing air purifiers that comply with relevant standards can be the short-term measures to improve ventilation situation. Nonetheless, schools are still required to implement long-term improvement measures as soon as possible based on the recommendations for improvement in the ventilation assessment report. After completing the ventilation assessment and receiving the Certificate on Ventilation System for Kindergarten issued by the service providers, KGs joining the Scheme (Scheme-KGs) are required to submit a copy of the certificate to respective Senior School Development Officers / Senior Services Officers. KGs should keep the original report of ventilation assessment and certificate for a minimum period of seven years. The EDB may request KGs to provide the relevant documents for examination, if necessary.

7. To ensure that schools are equipped with sufficient ventilation facilities for protecting the safety of staff and students, the EDB advises the KGs NOT joining the Scheme to make reference to the related information, documents and templates mentioned in paragraphs 2 to 6 above to procure service from related professionals to conduct ventilation assessment of school, and adopt appropriate measures according to the assessment results and recommendations.

Grants provided to Scheme-KGs

8. As for Scheme-KGs, to alleviate schools' financial burden in this regard, the EDB will provide the following two one-off grants to help KGs improve the ventilation situation.

- (i) *Grant for Procurement of Ventilation Assessment Service* --- the EDB will provide all Scheme-KGs with a one-off Grant for Procurement of Ventilation Assessment Service capped at \$15,000 to assist KGs to procure professional service for ventilation assessment of school premises. For details, please refer to paragraph 4 above.
- (ii) *Grant for Procurement of Air Purifiers* --- If the total number of half-day students¹ is 66 or less (one whole-day student to be counted as two half-day students), the grant is \$20,000 and the grant for those with 67 or more students is \$35,000.

Use and Disbursement of Grants and Accounting Arrangement

9. In deploying the two grants, KGs may collaborate with other KGs (for example, other KGs under their SSBs or KGs in the vicinity) to jointly invite quotation/tender after taking into consideration the actual situation of schools or the benefit of cost-effectiveness. One of the KGs should be responsible for carrying out the procurement exercise. The co-operation details should be agreed among all KGs concerned. Apportionment of expenditure should be broadly based on the proportional size of individual premises. Each KG should pay to the service provider directly in accordance with the agreed apportionment ratio of expenditure. Transfer of funding from one KG to another KG for payment is not allowed.

10. The one-off grants are supplementary in nature, with a view to alleviating schools' financial burden in procuring ventilation assessment and air purifiers. Hence, KGs must ensure that the grants are used for the procurement of ventilation assessment service and air purifiers. The Grant for Procurement of Ventilation Assessment Service and Grant for Procurement of Air Purifiers cannot be used in combination, but KGs can top up the grants with any portion of the Scheme's basic unit subsidy other than teaching staff salary and/or school funds. Disbursement will be credited directly to Scheme-KGs' bank account in **March 2022**. KGs **must** conduct ventilation assessment and purchase air purifiers as necessary (if applicable). KGs are required to start related work immediately and complete them on or before **31 December 2022**. A report (Appendix) on the use of the grants has to be submitted to the EDB on or before 28 February 2023. The EDB will claw back the unspent amount of the grants as at 31 December 2022. In case of special circumstances of schools, the EDB will consider on a case-by-case basis.

¹ The EDB will use the number of eligible students (excluding students in child care centres) for calculating the Provisional Unit Subsidy for February 2022 as the basis for disbursement of the grant. The amount of the grant disbursed will remain unchanged even if there are subsequent changes in the number of eligible students.

11. KGs are required to follow the established mechanism regarding accounting procedures stipulated in Chapter 4 of the “Kindergarten Administration Guide” issued by the EDB, keep separate ledger accounts to properly record all income and expenditure of the two grants, and report these income and expenditures in the annual audited accounts to be submitted to the EDB. All books of accounts, records of procurement, receipts, payment vouchers and invoices must be kept by KGs and made available to the EDB when requested. As a usual practice, the relevant records should be kept for a minimum period of seven years. The EDB may request KGs to provide relevant documents for examining the use of the grants, if necessary. The grants or their surpluses, if any, should not be transferred to any other subsidies or accounts. KGs are required to return the full amount of the two grants to the EDB if they are subsequently identified for using the grants for other purposes, and/or no longer meeting the requirements set out in this circular memorandum. KGs are reminded to observe the established principles and requirements on the use of public funds as promulgated by the EDB when using the grants, including conducting procurement according to fair and transparent procedures in line with the “Guidelines on Procurement Procedures in Kindergartens”.

12. KGs may deploy, where necessary, any portion of the Scheme’s basic unit subsidy other than teaching staff salary and/or school funds to pay for the expenditure of subsequent maintenance/replacement of the related equipment.

Enquires

13. For enquiries, please contact the respective Senior School Development Officers / Senior Services Officers.

Ms Y Y SO
for Permanent Secretary for Education

c.c. Heads of Sections

**Report on the Use of Grant for Procurement of Ventilation Assessment Service and
Grant for Procurement of Air Purifiers**

To: Permanent Secretary for Education
(Attn: _____ District School Development Section / Joint Office for
Kindergartens and Child Care Centres*)

**Please delete as appropriate*

*(To be completed and returned to the respective District School Development Section / Joint Office for Kindergartens and Child Care Centres **on or before 28 February 2023** by post or fax)*

(Please put a “✓” in the appropriate boxes)

1. Our school has spent the relevant grants according to the EDB’s requirements as stipulated in EDBCM No. 49/2022 for the following purpose:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Procurement of Ventilation Assessment Service
<input type="checkbox"/>	Procurement of Air Purifiers

2. As at _____, the relevant grants

is fully depleted;

has a balance of

Procurement of Ventilation Assessment Service: \$ _____ ;

Procurement of Air Purifiers: \$ _____ .

I confirm that:

- (a) our school has kept separate ledger accounts for the Grant for Procurement of Ventilation Assessment Service and the Grant for Procurement of Air Purifiers to properly record all income and expenditure and will report these items in the annual audited accounts for submission to the EDB. All books of accounts, records of procurement, receipts, payment vouchers and invoices will be kept for at least 7 years and school shall provide documentary proof in accordance with the request by the EDB for auditing purposes by the EDB. If the actual balance of the annual audited accounts does not match with the above, the school will notify the EDB as soon as possible for follow up; and
- (b) if our school fails to provide relevant documents for examination, use the two grants for other purposes, or fails to comply with the respective requirements according to the requirements as stipulated in this circular memorandum, the amount of the grants received will be fully returned to the EDB.

Full Name of School
in English

(must be identical to
the school chop)

Supervisor (Signature): _____

Supervisor (Name): _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

(school chop)