



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部教育局

Education Bureau

Government Secretariat, The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
The People's Republic of China

本局檔號 Our Ref: EDB(SDCT)3/PRO/10/1/1
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5 August 2022

To : Supervisors / Principals of all Secondary Schools, Primary Schools, Special Schools, Private Schools offering Non-Local Curriculum, Kindergartens and Kindergarten-cum-child care centres, Private Schools offering Non-Formal Curriculum

Dear Supervisor / Principal,

Arrangements for Face-to-Face Classes for Schools in Hong Kong in the 2022/23 School Year

This letter informs secondary schools, primary schools, special schools, schools offering non-local curriculum, kindergartens/kindergarten-cum-child care centres (collectively referred to as ‘KGs’) and private schools offering non-formal curriculum (PSNFCs) (commonly known as “tutorial schools”) in Hong Kong of the arrangements for face-to-face classes in the 2022/23 school year.

Continuation of Half-day Face-to-face Class Arrangements

Taking into account the latest epidemic situation, the readiness of schools as well as professional advice of health experts, the Education Bureau (EDB) has decided that half-day face-to-face class arrangements will continue in the 2022/23 school year for the time being until further notice. Details are as follows:

Secondary Schools

Schools (including secondary sections of special schools) can arrange for students to attend face-to-face classes or take examinations either in the morning or in the afternoon for no more than half a day, and schools should not arrange students of the same class level to attend face-to-face classes or take examinations for an entire day. In other words, students attending morning and afternoon sessions must be of different class levels.

If individual secondary schools (including secondary sections of special schools) meet the following vaccination requirements, the EDB will, taking into account the actual circumstances of schools, allow them to resume whole-day face-to-face classes:

- (i) all teachers and school staff directly employed by schools (including teaching and non-teaching staff) have met the requirements of “Vaccine Pass”; and
- (ii) 90% or more of the total number of students of the school eligible to receive vaccination have received two doses of vaccine for more than 14 days.

Students who are unfit for vaccination with medical proofs, students who have previously been infected with COVID-19 which render them unable to be vaccinated¹, and those who are not in Hong Kong will not be counted towards the total number of student population eligible to receive vaccination.

If the number of students in the whole of a school has not yet reached the vaccination rate for whole-day face-to-face classes, but the number of such students in an individual class level has reached the above requirements, we can also allow the school concerned to arrange whole-day face-to-face classes and other activities for students for that individual class level.

For a school having fulfilled the above requirements and would like to arrange the whole school or students of an individual class level for whole-day face-to-face classes, after obtaining the endorsement of the Incorporated Management Committee /School Management Committee, the school should duly complete **Annex 1** and notify the respective school development section of the EDB of the class resumption arrangements for the whole-school/individual class level(s) at least four working days before the target commencement date. The EDB will, in general, issue the reply slip within two working days. The school should inform parents, students and related stakeholders of its plan as early as possible, and maintain the vaccination record of its teachers and school staff properly.

As the number of students and the latest situation of vaccination in a school will change in the new school year, all schools (including schools that had resumed whole-day face-to-face classes in the 2021/22 school year) should submit fresh applications with **Annex 1** for whole-day face-to-face class resumption arrangements in the 2022/23 school year. Without making fresh applications, such schools have to resume half-day face-to-face classes in the new school year.

Primary Schools and KGs

Schools (including primary sections of special schools) can arrange for all students to attend face-to-face classes or take examinations for no more than half a day in the morning

¹ In general, persons who have been infected with COVID-19 will need one less dose than others who have not been infected before. If a student has never been vaccinated before infection, within the one month period after recovery, s/he will not be counted in the total number of students eligible to receive vaccination in a school. A person who has received one dose of vaccine before his/her infection, after recovery, will be considered to have completed two doses of vaccine.

only. Schools should not arrange learning or other activities for students of any level for the rest of the day.

For KGs, those operating morning sessions or afternoon sessions can arrange for students to return to school for half-day lessons in the morning or in the afternoon respectively. KGs operating whole-day sessions can arrange for students to attend face-to-face classes either in the morning or in the afternoon for no more than a half day. KGs should not arrange learning or other activities for the same batch of students for the rest of the day.

Primary school and KG students are young and they have lower self-care abilities. In addition, the vaccination rate for students aged between 3 and 11 is still relatively low. Hence, primary schools and KGs will not have arrangements for whole-day face-to-face classes.

Schools offering Non-local Curriculum

Schools offering non-local curriculum should, in principle, make reference to the arrangements for the above types of schools. We will take into account the situation of schools and the needs of students in deciding the detailed arrangements and allow flexibility. We will issue separate announcements to schools regarding the arrangements.

Private Schools offering Non-formal Curriculum

PSNFCs should continue the arrangements for half-day face-to-face classes. The abovementioned whole-day class arrangements are not applicable to PSNFCs.

Arrangements for Extra-curricular Activities

Regarding individual students who have received two doses of vaccine for more than 14 days, schools may arrange these students to stay at school after lessons or the other half-day for non-academic extra-curricular activities (e.g. music and sports activities, school team training, etc.). These students may also participate in some mask off activities (e.g. playing woodwind instruments, “contact” sports such as football and basketball, etc.) at school (including both in-class and after-class activities).

The above arrangements are applicable to both secondary and primary school students who have received two doses of vaccine for more than 14 days. KG students have lower self-care abilities. Even if they are vaccinated, they are not suitable for mask-off activities. Moreover, they generally need to take a nap and can go home to rest after school. Unless there is no one to take care of them at home, it is not appropriate for them to stay at school for the other half day for other activities.

On Saturdays, primary and secondary schools and KGs may also arrange students to participate in half-day non-academic extra-curricular activities without students taking their masks off (for example, music, sports activities, school team training, etc.). If the activities require students to take off their masks, primary and secondary schools should only arrange

students having received two doses of COVID-19 vaccine for more than 14 days to participate in such activities. KGs cannot arrange any mask-off activities.

Care for Students with Other Needs

In order to further protect the health and safety of teachers and school staff as well as students (especially boarders), the following individual groups of students must be vaccinated². The specific requirements are as follows -

- (i) secondary schools: students who need to go back to school outside face-to-face class time should have received two doses of vaccine for more than 14 days;
- (ii) primary schools and KGs : students who need to go back to school to be taken care of should have received two doses of vaccine for more than 14 days. KGs can provide meals for students who remain in school for care services, but they must observe strictly the “Health Protection Measures for Schools” issued by the EDB and put in place adequate anti-epidemic measures to safeguard the health and safety of students; and
- (iii) boarding sections: boarders residing in the boarding sections of schools (including special schools) under the EDB should have received two doses of vaccine for more than 14 days.

Schools should properly register and maintain records of student vaccinations and the list of students who are medically certified to be unfit for vaccination, keep track of the latest announcements by the Government and the EDB, and inform all stakeholders (including all teachers, school staff, school bus operators, school tuck shop operators, parents, nannies and volunteers, etc.) of the latest arrangements in a timely manner.

Undergoing Regular Rapid-Antigen Tests (RATs)

The daily RAT arrangements will continue until further notice. Every teacher, school staff and student has to complete a RAT³ each day before returning to school. RATs should be conducted in the morning and only persons obtaining negative results are allowed to return to school for work/lessons. Students and staff tested positive should not return to school, and should inform the schools of their positive results as soon as possible and stay at home. They should also report to the Department of Health as soon as possible within 24 hours via the “Declaration System for individuals tested positive for COVID-19 using Rapid Antigen Test” (<https://www.chp.gov.hk/ratp/#>).

² Those who are unfit for the vaccination with medical proofs, or have infected with COVID-19 recently which render them unable to be vaccinated, will not be subject to the above restrictions. For students aged 3 years or below, they are required to have received two doses of vaccine for more than 14 days starting from 17 October 2022 onwards.

³ For those recovered from COVID-19, they are not required to be tested within three months from the date of the recovery (except for those with symptoms).

Schools are required to collect from all teachers, school staff and students the test results of RAT each day in the morning in accordance with their school-based mechanism and report positive cases (if any) through the Centre for Health Protection (CHP)'s dedicated website (<https://www.idea.gov.hk/chp-cdb/SCHOOL>) before 10:00 a.m. daily (2:00 p.m. daily for afternoon schools).⁴ Even if there is no case on that day, schools should also report to confirm. The EDB will continue to distribute RAT kits to students with financial needs.

Parents of students are required to report test results on time in accordance with the schools' instructions before students' returning to school. Schools may conduct spot-checks and ask the students concerned to re-test as appropriate. With prior consent of parents, schools may assist students to conduct the tests at school (e.g. by giving a student a RAT kit and ask the student to conduct the test by himself/herself, or having a school staff to assist the student to complete the test). If a test cannot be completed on time, the student concerned cannot attend lessons. The school should inform the parents concerned and arrange the student to go home as soon as possible.

Health Protection Measures for Schools

Schools should continue to strictly put in place the various anti-epidemic measures stipulated in the "Health Protection Measures for Schools" issued by the EDB and the "Health Advice to Schools for the Prevention of COVID-19" issued by the CHP, including having their personnel wearing masks all the time within school campuses and maintaining appropriate social distances. Schools that have resumed whole-day face-to-face classes should properly make meal arrangements for students. Schools should install partitions for dining tables. Students should maintain appropriate social distances among one another and face one direction (avoid face-to-face interactions). Schools can, by taking into account the actual school-based circumstances, consider staggering students' lunch hours to reduce the number of students gathering at canteens/dining places.

Let's Get Fully Vaccinated

Vaccination is the most effective way to protect against COVID-19 and can reduce the risk of severe cases and fatalities. Students (especially the younger ones) is one of the priority protection groups. In this regard, we strongly urge schools to make full use of the various measures offered by the Government to arrange vaccination for their students. If students have already received the first and second doses, we encourage students to receive the third dose of vaccination as soon as possible in accordance with the latest recommendation⁵ of the Government for comprehensive and enhanced protection. We will also continue to keep in

⁴ As the boarding sections of special schools are still in operation during school holidays, schools should require all staff of boarding sections and boarders to undergo RATs every day. If staff of the boarding section or boarders are tested positive for COVID-19, boarding sections of special schools should report to the Central Notification Office (CENO) of the DH as early as possible (Email: group_occ_notification@dh.gov.hk; Telephone: 2477 2772; Fax: 2477 2770), and adhere to the instructions suggested by the CHP to facilitate epidemiological investigation and infection control. Schools may also make reference to the "Health Advice to Schools for the Prevention of COVID-19" issued by the CHP

⁵ For details regarding recommended doses for COVID-19 vaccination, please refer to the following website: <https://www.covidvaccine.gov.hk/en/recommendedDoses>

view whether the corresponding vaccination requirements for whole-day face-to-face classes and extra-curricular activities need to be stepped up.

Regarding details of the facilitative measures for vaccination, please refer to the “Health Protection Measures for Schools”.

If schools have any enquiries on the above arrangements or need any assistance regarding vaccination arrangements, please contact the respective Senior School Development Officers / Senior Services Officers.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Verena LAU', with a stylized flourish at the end.

(Dr Verena LAU)

for Secretary for Education

**Notice of Whole-Day Face-to-Face Classes
for Whole School / Individual Class Level(s)**

To: _____ District School Development Section [Fax no. : _____]

In accordance with the letter issued by the Education Bureau (EDB) on 5 August 2022, we certify that we have fulfilled the conditions for arrangements of whole-day face-to-face classes for the whole school / individual class level(s) (‘✓’ as appropriate in the following box):

- whole-day face-to-face classes for the whole school - (i) all teachers and school staff (including teaching and non-teaching staff) directly employed by the school have met the requirements of “Vaccine Pass” and (ii) the number of students having received two doses of COVID-19 vaccine for more than 14 days has reached 90% of the total number of students of the school eligible to receive vaccination.

- whole-day face-to-face classes for individual class level(s) - (i) all teachers and school staff (including teaching and non-teaching staff) directly employed by the school have met with the requirements of “Vaccine Pass”, and (ii) the number of students having received two doses of COVID-19 vaccine for more than 14 days has reached 90% of the total number of students of _____ (please fill in the class level(s)) eligible to receive vaccination.

With the endorsement of our Incorporated Management Committee / School Management Committee, our school plans to initiate the above-mentioned arrangement from ____ (day) _____ (month) _____ (year) on (_____) (day of the week). We will strictly observe the relevant health guidelines and put in place all necessary health protection measures to keep the school environment clean and hygienic. We have also been keeping parents and other stakeholders informed of the related arrangements.

School Name:	School Chop (if any)
Name of Supervisor / Principal (in BLOCK letters):	
Signature of Supervisor / Principal:	
Date:	
Fax No.:	

