

Integration into Hong Kong Society and School Life

For school children who have recently moved to or are about to move to Hong Kong, adapting to the city's fast-paced life comes with the challenge of adjusting to a new school and learning environment. The following information will support parents' and students' early familiarisation with Hong Kong's education system, language and culture.

Education System

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) provides 12 years of free primary and secondary education (i.e. 6-year primary, 3-year junior secondary and 3-year senior secondary education) for eligible children through public sector schools. Under the existing legislation, it is compulsory for children aged between 6 and 15 to attend school. They may enrol in public sector mainstream or special schools, Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) schools, private schools, or international schools. On completion of junior secondary education, students may proceed to Secondary 4 or undertake other training programmes.

Education Bureau
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Kindergarten Education	Children normally start kindergarten education at the age of 3, although those who reach the age of 2 years and 8 months by 1 September may also enrol. Eligible children aged 5 years and 8 months as at 1 September can proceed to primary schools through the Primary One Admission (POA) System.
Primary Education	Children normally start their 6-year primary education at the age of 6. On completion of primary education, eligible students may proceed to secondary schools through the Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA) System.
Secondary Education	Children normally start secondary education at around the age of 12. On completion of Secondary 6, students can take the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE), and apply for admission to local universities or post-secondary institutions using their HKDSE results.
Post-secondary Education	A number of universities and post-secondary institutions are established in Hong Kong, offering full-time and part-time programmes at sub-degree, undergraduate, taught postgraduate and research postgraduate levels.
Vocational and Professional Education and Training (VPET)	The Vocational Training Council (VTC) and other VPET providers offer full-time and part-time VPET programmes at various levels to equip individuals of different academic qualifications for employment or further studies.



Placement Assistance Services



Profile of Kindergartens and Kindergarten-cum-Child Care Centres



Primary School Profiles



Secondary School Profiles



Designated webpage for Secondary 6 Students

School Admission

All kindergartens (KGs) in Hong Kong are privately run and are categorised either as non-profit-making or private independent KGs. Parents may contact the KGs of their choice directly to apply for admission.

Regarding school admission, children who are eligible to enrol in Primary One (P1) and Secondary One (S1) in the coming school year may submit applications to the Education Bureau (EDB) for school place allocation. The EDB will handle the POA and SSPA applications made by dependants of applicants whose applications for talent admission schemes are pending approval from the Immigration Department in a flexible manner. The EDB has provided new migrant talents concerned, through the Hong Kong Talent Engage (HKTE), with information of the above-mentioned flexible arrangement.

For children not enrolling in P1 or S1, they can seek a school place as follows:

1. Parents may contact schools directly to apply for admission. Schools will consider applications based on school-based circumstances, such as the availability of school places.
2. The EDB provides school placement support services for all children aged 6 to 18 who are eligible to enrol in public sector schools. Parents can apply by:
 - a. completing the online form and sending it to the Placement and Support (PS) Section of the EDB; the PS Section will contact parents upon receipt of the form to provide school placement assistance; or
 - b. visiting the nearest Regional Education Offices of the EDB with their children, bringing along originals and photocopies of the children's identity documents, proof of attained academic qualifications and proof of residential address to register for the services.



Admission Arrangements
for Nursery (K1) Classes
in KGs



School Places Allocation
Systems



'Education Services
in the HKSAR' Form



Regional Education
Offices

Integrating into the Local Learning Environment and Community

1. Support Services Provided by the EDB

Initiation Programme

Newly-arrived children can choose to attend the full-time 6-month Initiation Programme before joining mainstream schools. This programme aims to provide these children with a learning experience in a real classroom environment, help them adjust to the local society, and foster their personal development. The programme content includes English and Chinese languages, learning and study skills, personal development, and social adaptation. The EDB provides placement assistance to mainstream schools for children who complete the programme.



Initiation Programme

Induction Programme

If newly-arrived children choose to enrol in mainstream schools direct, they can attend the Induction Programme in parallel during their spare time. Run by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) with subventions from the EDB, this 60-hour programme aims to help newly-arrived children navigate the initial challenges and learning difficulties they may encounter in the local education system. The programme content includes introductions to the local community and culture, acquisition of basic learning skills, and lessons in traditional Chinese characters and basic English.



Induction Programme

School-based Support Scheme (SBSS) Grant

The EDB provides public sector and DSS schools with the SBSS Grant, with which schools can arrange school-based support programmes and activities, such as supplementary lessons, orientation, guidance/extra-curricular activities, and visits for newly-arrived children. Parents may contact schools to learn more about these activities and encourage their children to participate.



SBSS Grant

2. Support Programmes and Activities in the Community

District Offices of the Home Affairs Department and NGOs have long been providing a wide range of activities and services for new arrivals, including familiarisation courses, employment seminars, language classes, experience sharing and visits. Quarterly bulletins with consolidated information on activities and services available in different districts are regularly uploaded to the designated webpage. Parents and students are encouraged to browse this webpage for current activities and services and to participate actively.



HAD website

3. Resources for Self-learning

The EDB provides schools and students a variety of quality learning and teaching resources under different Key Learning Areas, subjects and curriculum areas, such as theme-based reading materials, supplementary Chinese learning materials (including materials on character learning, audio storybooks, and the learning of Cantonese pronunciation), supplementary English learning materials (including online self-learning platforms, audio e-books, online games on sayings of wisdom, a treasury of literary classics, and a guide on self-directed learning), interactive quiz games and animated short videos, as well as related reference materials in support of students' self-directed learning.

- EDB One-stop Portal for Learning and Teaching Resources (EDBOSP)
- EDB Educational Multimedia (EMM) website



EDBOSP



EMM website

4. Support for Newly-arrived Non-Chinese Speaking (NCS) Students

The Government ensures that all eligible children, including NCS children, regardless of their races, have equal opportunities for admission to public sector schools. The Government is committed to encouraging and supporting the integration of NCS students into the community, including facilitating their early adaptation to the local education system and mastery of the Chinese language. The EDB has implemented various measures, providing NCS students with all-encompassing learning support from the pre-primary to secondary levels.



Education Services for NCS students

Home-School Co-operation and Parent Education

Support for Newly-arrived Parents

Every year, the EDB and the Committee on Home-School Co-operation organise a wide range of activities on home-school co-operation and parent education, alongside providing a variety of online resources. These activities and resources, which highlight key parental concerns, education policies and trends, help parents understand their children's developmental needs and enhance their knowledge and skills in parenting. Beneficial to all parents in Hong Kong, these initiatives also aid newly-arrived parents in integrating more swiftly into Hong Kong society and supporting their children more effectively as they adapt to the new learning environment.



CHSC website



Smart Parent Net

Integration into Hong Kong Society

Hong Kong Talent Engage (HKTE), an office under the Labour and Welfare Bureau of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, is committed to promoting Hong Kong's advantages, opportunities, and various talent admission schemes in different global markets while providing comprehensive one-stop support services for incoming talents to facilitate their settlement and integration into the new environment for long-term development.



HKTE website