



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

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11 January 2022

To: Supervisors / Principals of all Secondary Schools, Primary Schools, Special Schools, Schools offering Non-Local Curriculum, Kindergartens and Kindergarten cum-Child Care Centres and Private Schools offering Non-Formal Curriculum

Dear Supervisor / Principal,

**Suspension of Face-to-face classes of Primary schools, Kindergartens and Kindergarten-cum-Child Care Centres until Chinese New Year**

The COVID-19 Omicron variant has a high infectivity and is posing a serious threat. Currently, there is still an invisible chain of transmission within the community and there have been confirmed cases of young children in these few days. Teachers and peers having close contacts with the infected children have to be put under quarantine. There have also been outbreaks of upper respiratory tract infection in kindergartens (KGs) and primary schools in recent months, with symptoms similar to those of COVID-19. KGs and primary school students are young and their self-care capability is relatively lower. In addition, most of them are not yet eligible for vaccination because of the age restriction. We care about students' learning and healthy development, and are at the same time concerned that they have a higher risk of infection. In view of the above, the Education Bureau (EDB) announced today that all primary schools (including primary section of special schools and schools offering non-local curriculum), KGs and kindergarten-cum-child care centres in Hong Kong should suspend face-to-face classes and all on-campus activities (including the cancellation or postponement of examinations and other activities within school premises) on or before 14 January 2022 until the schools' Chinese New Year holidays. Private schools offering non-formal curriculum (commonly known as "tutorial

schools”) should suspend face-to-face classes of related class levels until 7 February 2022. The current arrangements for face-to-face classes for secondary schools (including secondary sections of special schools) will continue.

During the suspension of face-to-face classes, all KGs and primary schools should make the following administrative arrangements:

- (i) schools and boarding sections (applicable to special schools) should remain open to look after students who have to go back to schools because of the lack of carers at home, and schools should maintain adequate social distances amongst students and ensure the environmental hygiene of the school campuses. Schools should arrange staff to be on duty to handle school affairs and answer parents’ enquiries;
- (ii) for schools with face-to-face classes suspended, they should flexibly deploy various learning modes and provide respective support to sustain students’ learning at home. For details, see the following website (<https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/edu-system/primary-secondary/applicable-to-primary-secondary/it-in-edu/flipped.html>);
- (iii) KGs should refrain children from prolonged use of digital screen gadgets. They should also remind children to take appropriate rest for their eyes when using these gadgets. In principle, e-learning in the form of real-time online teaching is not suitable for KGs. That said, KGs can adopt other modes to facilitate children to continue learning at home and help them sustain their curiosity and motivation for learning. The EDB issued a letter to all KGs in May 2020<sup>1</sup> disseminating certain principles and strategies in supporting KG students to learn at home for schools’ reference. Besides, the EDB has been providing additional subsidies to KGs joining the KG education scheme (scheme-KGs) since early 2021, facilitating schools to put in place the two schemes initiated by the EDB to sustain students’ learning at home. These schemes are (i) Gift Book Scheme and (ii) Do It Yourself (DIY) Handicraft and Learning Package Scheme. KGs can continue to make use of these resources to sustain students’ learning at home;

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/edu-system/preprimary-kindergarten/about-preprimary-kindergarten/KG%20Letter%20and%20Annex\\_E\\_20200511\\_Final.pdf](https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/edu-system/preprimary-kindergarten/about-preprimary-kindergarten/KG%20Letter%20and%20Annex_E_20200511_Final.pdf)

- (iv) schools should, in accordance with individual circumstances, activate the established school-based contingency plans (refer to EDBC No. 9/2015 for details), adopt contingency measures and make respective arrangements (including adjustments to activities inside and outside schools, school bus services, etc.) during suspension of face-to-face classes, and should keep close contact with the parents, etc.; and
- (v) if teachers, school staff or students are feeling unwell (even the symptoms are very mild), they must not return to school and should seek medical advice promptly so as to receive appropriate diagnoses and treatments.

Schools should remind parents to take epidemic preventive measures and pay close attention to the health conditions of their children. Students should avoid going to crowded places with poor ventilation. They should maintain a balanced diet, exercise regularly, and take adequate rest in order to strengthen their immunity. During the period of face-to-face class suspension, schools should continue to maintain communication (for instance, schools can make phone calls to students as appropriate) with parents and students to show care for the learning and emotional needs of the students. Schools should also keep the school campuses clean and hygienic all the time. Schools are required to continue to strictly observe the health measures as 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 Centre for Health Protection.”

Schools are one of the key members of our community, and we need your assistance to join hands with other sectors in the fight against the epidemic. We once again urge teachers and school staff, students and parents to get vaccinated as early as possible and hence construct a more effective protective barrier for both schools and the community. Suspension of classes is a difficult decision. We hope that we can effectively control the epidemic with the decisive measures at this critical moment, and that students can return to school with peace of mind as soon as possible. The EDB will closely monitor the situation, take into account the advice from the health experts, and review the related measures (including the arrangements of the “vaccine bubble” and vaccination for students) in a timely manner. We will endeavour to inform schools of the corresponding arrangements as early as possible.

For enquiries, please contact the respective Senior School Development Officers  
/ Senior Services Officers (Joint Office for Kindergartens and Child Care Centres).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Verena LAU', with a large, sweeping flourish on the left side.

(Dr Verena LAU)  
for Secretary for Education