

Commission on Children convenes ninth meeting

The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, chaired the ninth meeting of the Commission on Children held online today (January 28).

At the meeting, the Education Bureau briefed the Commission on the enhancement measures to support both students and teachers in establishing an inclusive education environment in kindergartens as well as primary, secondary and special schools to prepare non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students for further studies and work, with a view to integrating them into the local community. Members noted that support for NCS parents had also been enhanced to deepen their understanding of the need to expose their children to the Chinese language and the multiple pathways available to their children.

In addition, members took note of the Government's arrangements on the suspension of face-to-face classes in the current school year as well as the related health protection and support measures amid the COVID-19 epidemic. Members had an extensive discussion and expressed views on a range of issues, including exploring alternative modes of teaching and learning as well as necessary support for students and parents.

The Commission noted the work progress of its working groups. Members noted that the first public engagement session this year on supporting children with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD) had been conducted online last Saturday (January 23). Some 40 representatives of parents and carers of children with AD/HD or relevant symptoms shared their views and experiences on issues such as children's development and learning needs, support services at different stages and community participation. The Commission will hold similar sessions of different themes every quarter to communicate with stakeholders related to the development and advancement of children and listen to their views. The next session on the subject of child abuse will tentatively be conducted in April. Members also noted that the public engagement exercise of the consultancy study for developing a central databank on children would commence later this month and last till April.

The Commission approved 28 applications from child care groups, non-governmental organisations and schools seeking support of about \$9.3 million from the Funding Scheme for Children's Well-being and Development. In view of the ongoing epidemic, some applications sought to produce play kits or multimedia materials for parents and children to use at home, while contingency plans are in place in some other applications to cope with the evolving epidemic situation.