

Forms for S1 discretionary places available for collection tomorrow

Primary schools participating in the 2019/2021 Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA) System will receive application forms for Secondary One (S1) discretionary places (DPs) tomorrow (December 3) for distribution to the parents of Primary Six (P6) students.

A spokesman for the Education Bureau (EDB) said today (December 2), "In light of the latest development of the COVID-19 epidemic, all schools in Hong Kong will stop face-to-face classes until the beginning of the Christmas break. The EDB appeals to schools to send application forms to parents by post."

For students not studying in primary schools participating in the SSPA System (including newly arrived children who are eligible for participating in DP), the parents concerned can obtain the application forms from the EDB's School Places Allocation Section via appointment by phone. Details are available on the bureau's homepage (www.edb.gov.hk).

"Parents wishing to apply for S1 DPs in government, aided, caput and Direct Subsidy Scheme schools participating in the SSPA System have to complete the application forms for their children and submit the forms with other necessary documents directly to the schools concerned during school office hours between January 4 and 18, 2021," the spokesman said.

"This year's DP applications can also be submitted via post in order to maintain social distancing and avoid the gathering of people. Parents should find out in advance what documents are required by the secondary school they intend to apply to, and post the completed application form and the required documents to the secondary school between January 4 and 18, 2021 (the postmark date should not be later than the prescribed deadline). The secondary school concerned will post the Parent's Copy of the application form back to the parents for retention," the spokesman added.

"The schools to which parents apply for DPs are not restricted by districts. Parents are strongly advised to consider the schools in all respects, such as their educational philosophy, tradition, admission criteria, development and operation, as well as their children's abilities, inclinations and interests, so as to make a suitable school choice."

One of the two application forms carries Order of School Preference 1 and the other carries Order of School Preference 2. Order of School Preference 1 stands for the student's first choice school and Order of School Preference 2 stands for the student's second choice school.

Primary and secondary schools should under no circumstances ask the students to disclose their order of preference. Applicants and their parents

should not indicate their order of preference to the secondary schools.

In addition, parents should not submit applications to more than two schools participating in the SSPA. Otherwise, the DP applications of their children will be rendered void.

The spokesman reminded parents that the secondary schools concerned are required to make public their admission criteria and weightings, their number of S1 DPs for application as well as any documents required by them. If necessary, schools may arrange interviews where feasible, and would notify applicants of the interview arrangements.

"Students who are successful in the DP application will not be allocated a school place in central allocation (CA). Parents should, therefore, apply to school(s) of their preference. The EDB will match students' preferences against schools' Successful/Reserve Lists for Discretionary Places. If a student is successful in both schools to which he or she has applied, allocation will be based on the student's order of preference," he said.

Parents may refer to the Handbook for Application for Secondary One Discretionary Places for the list of government, aided and caput as well as Direct Subsidy Scheme schools accepting DP applications and the number of DPs for application. The Handbook will be distributed to primary schools tomorrow, when it will also be available through the bureau's homepage (www.edb.gov.hk) and 24-hour Automatic Telephone Enquiry System on 2891 0088.

The spokesman also reminded parents that under the notification arrangements implemented from the last SSPA cycle, if students are included by participating secondary schools in their Successful Lists for Discretionary Places, their parents will receive notifications from the schools on March 31, 2021. The parents concerned do not need to reply to the schools if they would accept the DP offers.

He added, "For students notified as successful DP applicants by participating secondary schools who have also been successfully admitted by a non-participating Direct Subsidy Scheme (NDSS) secondary school, their parents should decide whether to accept the offer from the NDSS secondary school concerned as soon as possible. If the parents concerned decide to decline the offer from the NDSS secondary school, they should notify the NDSS secondary school concerned and retrieve the signed undertaking and the original copy of the Primary 6 Student Record Form on or before April 12, 2021, in order to retain the DP successfully obtained."

The allocation results of DP and CA will be released at the same time on July 6, 2021. If parents have enquiries about the DP application, they are advised to consult their children's primary schools or approach the secondary schools directly.

General enquiries may be directed to the EDB's School Places Allocation Section (Tel: 2832 7740 and 2832 7700; address: Office 2, 2/F, Manulife Financial Centre, 223 Wai Yip Street, Kwun Tong, Kowloon).