

SWD launches Child Care Centre Special Grant

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) today (February 27) launched a Child Care Centre Special Grant to provide assistance to aided and non-aided child care centres (CCCs) to help tide over financial difficulties arising from the suspension of their services due to the COVID-19 epidemic. The special grant is one of the items approved yesterday by the Anti-epidemic Fund Steering Committee.

In view of the prolonged suspension of service or provision of limited service of CCCs as part of the strategy to contain the COVID-19 epidemic since late January, coupled with financial hardships that some parents may face under the current economic situation, there is concern that parents may choose to withdraw their children from CCCs' service. Some CCCs may not be able to sustain their operation due to the significantly reduced revenue from service fees. To help CCCs tide over the financial difficulties, the SWD launched the special grant. CCCs are encouraged to correspondingly adjust downwards the monthly fee to alleviate parents' financial burden.

The special grant would be given to aided and non-aided CCCs, including CCCs attached to kindergartens for children aged 0 to 3. The amount of grant per CCC will be based on the size of its enrolment (i.e. number of children) as at January 15, 2020, and whether its service is a full-day or half-day operation. The SWD has issued emails to aided and non-aided CCCs today to invite them to apply for the special grant.

Once the application is confirmed, the first payment covering the months of February and March will be arranged in March 2020, and the payments for April and May 2020 will be made on a monthly basis. The arrangement beyond May 2020 will be subject to the epidemic and to CCCs' operational conditions nearer the time.