

Education Bureau Circular No. 3/2016
Arrangements for Green Lunch and Reduction of Food Waste in School

[Note : This circular should be read by-

- (a) Supervisors and Heads of all primary and secondary schools and kindergartens for necessary action, and
- (b) Heads of Sections for information.]

SUMMARY

This circular serves to provide schools with practical guidelines on green lunch and reduction of food waste in school. This circular supersedes Education Bureau (EDB) Circular No. 18/2009 dated 3 September 2009 and should be read in conjunction with Education Bureau Circular No. 17/2009 on Meal Arrangements in School.

DETAILS

2. Appropriate green lunch arrangements in school are conducive to promoting an environmentally friendly lifestyle among students. To realize the concept of green lunch, schools should follow the principle of reducing waste and minimizing wastage at all times.
3. Schools are requested to adopt/continue with the following practices:
 - (a) To use reusable food containers and cutlery;
 - (b) To facilitate students to bring and use reusable cutlery given to them. If spare sets of cutlery are provided to students who have forgotten to bring their own, they should also be reusable;
 - (c) To implement on-site meal portioning as far as practicable. If situation of the school does not allow students to take meal in a designated dining area, students taking their meal portioned in classrooms should be considered as an alternative where appropriate;
 - (d) To portion out food in a flexible manner. If on-site portioned meal service is adopted, schools should avoid serving excessive food to

students at the beginning, and give additional serving only on request. If food is pre-packed in lunch boxes, consideration should be given to ordering food/lunch boxes in different sizes to provide students with a choice; and

- (e) To encourage students to bring their own lunches. Lunches could be prepared by parents and brought to schools by either students or parents. Schools should also encourage students to have their packed lunches in reusable containers and to remind parents to prepare the suitable amount of food for their children to avoid food waste.

4. Successful implementation of green lunch and reduction of food waste in school relies on the concerted efforts of different stakeholders. Schools should draw up plans on implementation of green lunch, implement measures to reduce food waste as far as possible and work with parents, suppliers and students to monitor the provision of green lunch on an ongoing basis so that improvement measures can be taken promptly by suppliers. Schools are advised to refer to the Guidelines on How to Promote Green Lunch in Schools issued by the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) (Website: https://www.wastereduction.gov.hk/en/schools/green_lunch.htm). The Guidelines compare the meal arrangements commonly adopted in schools from the environmental protection perspective. It also gives recommendations for school management on how to implement green lunch in schools and reduce food waste and the use of disposable food containers and cutleries.

5. As an effective means of green lunch practice, schools are encouraged to adopt on-site meal portioning. To facilitate schools without the necessary facilities to implement on-site meal portioning, government schools may apply for funding from the minor building works block vote of the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) to carry out the necessary alteration/improvement works for adopting on-site meal portioning. Upon approval, ArchSD will take up the necessary alteration/improvement works. The application forms of Minor Building Works can be downloaded from the Central Cyber Government Office Webpage (<http://archsd.host.cngo.hksarg/mbw/>). Government schools may also contact ArchSD's officers of Property Services Branch for enquiries. Other schools can apply for funding support from the Environment and Conservation Fund (ECF) for conducting the basic conversion works and installing the necessary facilities. Applications can be made under the category of "On-site Meal Portioning Projects in Schools" under the ECF. Please refer to ECF's website (<http://www.ecf.gov.hk/en/application/index.html>) for details. Schools which are considered not feasible for installation of the necessary facilities or have encountered difficulties to implement on-site meal portioning may adopt meal portioning in classrooms, which is also an effective means to minimize food wastage in meal

arrangement. Cooked food could be delivered to classrooms by lunch suppliers and portioned to students as appropriate. Besides, to keep track of the improvement in food waste reduction, schools may keep measuring their per student per lunch food waste quantities. Schools are advised to refer to the Guidelines of Food Waste Measurement issued by EPD for detailed information (Website:https://www.wastereduction.gov.hk/sites/default/files/en/materials/school/FoodWasteMeasurementGuideline_3.2016_EN.pdf).

6. To ensure effective use of resources, schools with tuck-shop-cum-central-portioning area as part of the standard provision of school facilities should practise on-site meal portioning unless there are exceptional circumstances with justifiable reasons acceptable to EDB.

7. The Government has also launched the Food Wise Hong Kong Campaign in May 2013 to address the imminent waste problem in Hong Kong. The campaign aims to promote public awareness of food waste problems in Hong Kong and instill behavioural changes in various sectors of the community, with a view to reducing food waste generation. To encourage various sectors in adopting measures to reduce food waste generation and to recognize their waste reduction efforts, the Food Wise Hong Kong Campaign has introduced a Food Wise Charter. Schools are encouraged to consider signing the Charter to show support and determination to help reduce food waste. The Food Wise Charter's statement and form are available on the Food Wise Hong Kong Campaign Webpage (<http://www.foodwisehk.gov.hk/en/food-wise-charter.php>).

8. Besides, to promote food waste reduction in school, the Food Wise Hong Kong Campaign has issued the Food Waste Reduction Good Practice Guide for Educational Sector for schools' reference. Schools are encouraged to obtain the relevant information on the webpage of the Food Wise Hong Kong Campaign (http://www.foodwisehk.gov.hk/pdf/School_GPG_ENG.pdf). Schools wishing to contribute in food donation are also encouraged to refer to the relevant webpage (<http://www.foodwisehk.gov.hk/en/channels-for-food-donation.php>) for detailed information.

ENQUIRIES

9. For enquiries on green lunch arrangements at school, please contact EPD Customer Service Hotline at 2838 3111. For enquiries on "On-site Meal Portioning Projects in Schools" under the ECF, please contact the Waste Reduction Projects Vetting Sub-committee Secretariat at 2835 1337. For enquiries on participation in

the Food Wise Hong Kong Campaign, please contact EPD at 3529 2910. As for enquiries about the implementation details of green lunch arrangements at school, please contact the respective Senior School Development Officers.

Ms SO Yuen-yi
for Secretary for Education