

29 April 2019

**Education Bureau Circular No. 10/2019**

**Relief Measures for Facilitating Sustainable Development of Primary Schools**

[Note : This circular should be read by –

- (a) Supervisors and Heads of all aided primary schools (excluding special schools) – for necessary action; and
- (b) Heads of government primary schools and Heads of Sections – for information.]

**Summary**

This circular announces the targeted relief measures to facilitate the stable development of aided primary schools, with effect from the 2019/20 school year, in response to the changes in Primary One (P1) school-age population in the coming few years.

**Background**

2. According to the current projections of P1 school-age population, the overall demand for P1 places in public sector schools will drop significantly in the 2019/20 school year and progress to a stable level afterwards. Since the P1 enrolment has increased in the past few years, it is expected that the overall number of primary students, approved classes and teaching posts on the approved staff establishment of public sector primary schools will remain generally stable in the next few years.

3. As individual schools may be affected by the diminishing demand for school places in their respective districts and parental choices, the Education Bureau (EDB) engaged the sector in discussions regarding the related follow-up measures as early as January 2018 with a view to maintaining a stable teaching force and facilitating the sustainable development of schools in the coming few years.

## Details of the Relief Measures

4. The EDB will implement targeted relief measures to help the schools in need in the coming few years. Details are as follows:

***(a) Toleration of redundant teachers<sup>1</sup> arising from class reduction for the next school year due to the decline of P1 student population***

5. In order to maintain the stability of the teaching force, aided primary schools are allowed to apply on an annual basis for retaining their redundant teachers on the approved teaching staff establishment arising from class reduction for the next school year due to the decline of P1 student population for the period from the 2019/20 to 2024/25 school years, up to a maximum of three school years for each cohort, providing that before the commencement of the next school year, their redundant teachers cannot be absorbed through the prevailing mechanism for handling redundant teachers, or are unable to secure a teaching post in another school. For details of the prevailing mechanism for handling redundant teachers, please refer to the latest relevant circular memorandum on arrangements for redundant teachers of aided primary schools<sup>2</sup>.

6. The above relief measure is only applicable to redundant teachers on the approved teaching staff establishment arising from class reduction for the next school year due to the decline of P1 student population for the period from the 2019/20 to 2024/25 school years. In other words, the redundant teachers eligible for retention must be appointed as regular teachers on the approved staff establishment before the school is notified of class reduction for the next school year, or before the student headcount in September of the school year (only applicable to the schools which fail to enrol sufficient P1 students to retain the pre-approved number of classes as a result of the student headcount)<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> This arrangement on toleration of redundant teachers is not applicable to government primary schools where teacher redundancy situation, if any, will be resolved through internal redeployment.

<sup>2</sup> Please refer to EDB Circular Memorandum No. 50/2019 on Arrangements for Redundant Teachers of Aided Primary Schools for details.

<sup>3</sup> Please note that the teachers described as follows are not eligible for retention under this relief measure:

- (i) Redundant teachers resulting from other reasons, and not arisen because of the class reduction for the next school year due to the decline of P1 student population (For example, for redundant teachers arising from the lapse of Intensive Remedial Teaching Programme and Integrated Education Programme, please refer to EDB Circular No. 6/2019 on Learning Support Grant for details.);
- (ii) Temporary teachers or supply teachers (regardless of whether they are paid out of Salaries Grant or not);
- (iii) Teachers holding the additional time-limited Assistant Primary School Master/Mistress (APSM) post (which is provided to schools adopting small class teaching and temporarily allocated with more students per P1 class); or
- (iv) Teachers employed by a time-limited aided primary school or by an existing aided primary school for the additional classes operated in its time-limited extension (regardless of whether they are paid out of Salaries Grant or not).

7. During the period of retaining the redundant teachers, schools should make best use of the extra but time-limited manpower to strengthen their school-based governance, teaching effectiveness and support to students. In this connection, schools are required to devise a plan for deployment of the extra manpower, which is approved by the Incorporated Management Committee (IMC) / School Management Committee (SMC) in advance. For aided schools with IMC, the Teacher Relief Grant (TRG) provision, including the Annual Recurrent Cash Grant, will be withheld according to the prevailing arrangement. Besides, schools may claim reimbursement of daily-rated supply teachers or employ monthly-paid temporary teachers only if the number of teachers on leave for three or more consecutive days at the same time exceeds the number of redundant teachers.

8. Please note that schools should take appropriate measures to reduce the number of redundant teachers and rectify the redundant teacher situation as soon as opportunity arises. Since schools have to rectify the redundant teacher situation by the end of the third school year of each cohort, they must, in the third school year at the latest, set priority for redundant teachers leaving the school upon the end of the toleration period.

9. The schools concerned should review their redundant teacher situation and submit their applications on an annual basis, if necessary, for a maximum of three school years for each cohort of redundant teachers. The applications for retaining redundant teachers should be submitted by the schools concerned, on or before 7 August each year. For applications on retention of redundant teachers for the 2019/20 school year, schools are required to return the completed reply slip at the Annex to the respective Senior School Development Officers on or before **7 August 2019**.

***(b) Relaxation of criteria for approving classes in case of class reduction in headcount***

10. Under the existing policy, the EDB conducts student headcount for schools on a specified date in September each year and adjusts the number of approved classes in that school year according to the actual enrolment on the date of headcount and the basis for calculating the number of approved classes applicable to that level in that school year.

11. To stabilize the primary school sector, starting from P1 in the 2019/20 school year, the basis for calculating the number of approved classes of aided and government primary schools will be adjusted downward from the existing 25 students per class to 23 students per class if the school has redundant teachers arising from reduction of classes according to the student headcount in September. The adjusted basis will be extended progressively to Primary Six together with that cohort of students.

### **Enquiry**

12. For enquiries, please contact your respective Senior School Development Officers.

K K LEE  
for Secretary for Education

Please return the completed form to the respective Senior School Development Officer by 7 August of each year.

To: \_\_\_\_\_ District School Development Section, EDB  
[Attn: SSDO ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) ]

### Application for Retaining Redundant Teacher(s) Arising from Class Reduction Due to the Decline of P1 Student Population

School Name: \_\_\_\_\_

The School would like to apply for retaining the redundant teacher(s)<sup>Note 1</sup> on the approved teaching staff establishment arising from class reduction due to the decline of P1 student population in the coming school year (i.e. 20\_\_\_/\_\_\_ school year) as detailed below-

#### Part A Estimated Number of Redundant Teacher(s) to be Applied for Retention

Please fill in the figures in the boxes below.

<b>(1) Number of regular teachers serving in the School in the current school year<sup>Note 2</sup> (as at the date of application)</b> i.e. Number of regular teachers on the approved staff establishment (including the school head) counted on the basis of full-time teacher equivalent. Redundant teachers who have been retained (if any) should also be included.	(a)
<b>(2) Total number of teaching posts on the approved staff establishment for the coming school year</b> (Please refer to the Approval Letter on Class Organization and Staff Establishment for the coming school year.)	(b)
<b>(3) Number of vacant teaching posts arising from various reasons (e.g. retirement or resignation of teachers) for absorbing redundant teachers in the School</b>	(c)
<b>(4) Number of redundant teachers who have been absorbed by or redeployed to other school(s) under the same school sponsoring body (SSB)</b>	(d)
<b>(5) Number of redundant teachers <u>not required / not eligible</u> to be retained</b> (including the redundant teachers who have been retained for three consecutive school years)	(e)
<b>(6) Estimated number of redundant teachers to be retained in the coming school year</b> $(f) = (a) - (b) - (c) - (d) - (e)$ (Please provide the personal particulars of the redundant teachers by filling in Part B.)	(f)

Note 1 The redundant teachers eligible for retention must be appointed as regular teachers on the approved staff establishment before the school is notified of class reduction for the next school year, or before the student headcount in September of the school year (only applicable to the schools which fail to enrol sufficient P1 students to retain the pre-approved number of classes as a result of the student headcount).

Note 2 The number of regular teachers serving in the School **should not include** the teachers described as follows who are **not** eligible for retention:

- (i) Redundant teachers resulting from other reasons, and not arisen because of the class reduction for the next school year due to the decline of P1 student population (For example, for redundant teachers arising from the lapse of Intensive Remedial Teaching Programme and Integrated Education Programme, please refer to EDB Circular No. 6/2019 on Learning Support Grant for details.);
- (ii) Temporary teachers or supply teachers (regardless of whether they are paid out of Salaries Grant or not);
- (iii) Teachers holding the additional time-limited APSM post (which is provided to schools adopting small class teaching and temporarily allocated with more students per P1 class); or
- (iv) Teachers employed by a time-limited aided primary school or by an existing aided primary school for the additional classes operated in its time-limited extension (regardless of whether they are paid out of Salaries Grant or not).

## Part B Personal Particulars of Redundant Teacher(s) to be Retained

Name of Redundant Teacher(s) (in Chinese and English)	Teacher Registration No. / Permitted Teacher Reference No.	Current Rank [Proposed Rank if different from the current rank for the next school year (Note 3)]	Full-time (FT) / Part-time (PT) (Please indicate fraction for part-time teacher)	First school year in which the teacher becomes redundant under this measure (Note 4)
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		[            ]		
		[            ]		
		[            ]		
		[            ]		

Note 3: In principle, all redundant teachers at basic ranks will be accommodated in their original ranks under the relief measure. As for the detailed arrangements of redundant senior teachers who are required to step down and assume an appropriate lower rank and retaining their pay points, please refer to EDB Circular Memorandum No. 50/2019.

Upon the implementation of the all-graduate teaching force policy with effect from the 2019/20 school year, schools may regrade the approved redundant teacher(s) currently at the rank of Certificated Master/Mistress (CM) with recognized degree qualifications to APSM rank during the retention period. For those redundant CM teacher(s) without recognized degree qualifications, they could only be retained in CM rank. Please refer to EDB Circular No. 11/2019 for details. Therefore, please specify the proposed rank after regrading for the redundant teacher(s) at the rank of Assistant Master/Mistress (AM)/CM for the 2019/20 school year in Part B.

Note 4: Under this relief measure, redundant teachers on the approved teaching staff establishment arising from class reduction for the next school year due to the decline of P1 student population in the 2019/20 to 2024/25 school years might be retained up to a maximum of three school years for each cohort.

### Part C Justifications for Application

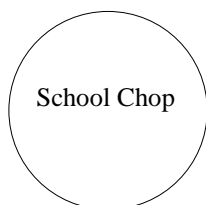
(Please tick '✓' the appropriate box(es). You may choose more than one option.)

The School hereby confirms that the redundant teacher(s) listed in Part B above-

- is/are unable to secure a teaching post for the coming school year;
- cannot be absorbed by or redeployed to other school(s) of the same SSB due to the lack of vacant teaching post(s);
- cannot be absorbed **within this school** due to the lack of vacant teaching post(s);
- cannot be absorbed by or redeployed to other school(s) of the same SSB since the qualifications and/or experience of the redundant teachers cannot meet the requirements of vacant teaching post(s) of the appropriate rank(s);
- other reasons (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

Therefore, the School wishes to apply for retaining the redundant teacher(s) listed in Part B above for the coming school year, and the School confirms that-

- (i) the selection arrangement of redundant teachers stipulated in the relevant circular memorandum and guidelines issued by the EDB has been observed. The School has worked out a set of "school-based" criteria so as to set priority for redundant teachers leaving the school and retaining them when vacancies arise. Our teachers are fully aware of the arrangement;
- (ii) the School will rectify the redundant teacher situation as soon as opportunities arise;
- (iii) during the retention period, the School is not allowed to offer any new appointment and must absorb the redundant teacher(s) whenever vacancy(ies) arise(s) from natural wastage of teachers on the staff establishment;
- (iv) during the retention period, the School may claim reimbursement of daily-rated supply teachers or employ monthly-paid temporary teachers only if the number of teachers on leave for three or more consecutive days at the same time exceeds the number of redundant teachers;
- (v) the EDB may collect further information, including but not limited to the vacancy situation of the School and other schools under the same SSB, for processing this application;
- (vi) the School is required to inform the respective Senior School Development Officer of any subsequent changes in the redundant teacher situation so that the retention arrangement could be updated in a timely manner; and
- (vii) the School shall refund the EDB of any over-payment of Salaries Grant paid to it.



Signature of School Supervisor : \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School Supervisor : \_\_\_\_\_

Date : \_\_\_\_\_