

31 May 2019

Education Bureau Circular No. 15/2019

Transfer of Information of Students with Special Educational Needs

[Note: This circular should be read by –

- (a) Supervisors and heads of all government, aided, Direct Subsidy Scheme schools and caput secondary schools – for action; and
- (b) Heads of special schools, kindergartens/kindergarten-cum-child care centres and sections – for information]

Summary

This circular reminds schools of the arrangements for transfer of information of students with special educational needs (SEN) at different stages to facilitate early identification of and intervention for these students. It supersedes the Education Bureau (EDB) Circular No. 9/2013 dated 14 June 2013.

Background

2. The EDB has all along been promoting integrated education in accordance with five basic principles, namely early identification, early intervention, Whole School Approach, home-school co-operation and cross-sector collaboration. To help schools cater for students with SEN, on top of the regular subvention, the EDB provides public sector ordinary schools with additional resources, professional support and teacher training. Schools have to adopt the Whole School Approach for aligning school policies, culture and practices, and deploying resources flexibly, for early identification of students with SEN and provision of support through the 3-Tier Intervention Model.

3. Timely transfer of relevant information of students with SEN (e.g. SEN type and support arrangements) to the schools they are enrolled in can help recipient schools realise earlier the SEN of students and the support they have received, so that these schools can provide the students with continued or reinforced support to enhance effectiveness. Therefore, schools are appealed to remind parents of the importance of

transferring the SEN information of their children and encourage parents to complement the schools' arrangements for information transfer at different stages, including from pre-primary to primary schooling, from primary to secondary schooling, from one primary/secondary school to another and from secondary to post-secondary education.

Seeking parental consent

4. Schools have to abide by the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance in processing their students' SEN information. As such, when soliciting parents to give consent for transferring the SEN information of their children, schools have to let parents understand the purpose of the arrangements (as mentioned in paragraph 3 above) and the problems that may arise from refusal to accept the arrangements. Besides, schools have to let parents know their rights to request access to and update of the information provided under the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance, and to change their options.

5. Schools have to explain to parents their arrangements for keeping students' SEN information and the practice of inputting the respective information into the EDB's Special Education Management Information System (SEMIS) upon parental consent and updating the information on a need basis. Should parents need to change the information of their children in future, schools should liaise with the EDB for updating the respective information in SEMIS.

Transfer of information of students with SEN

Pre-primary to primary schooling

6. A collaborative mechanism is in place among the EDB, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) and the Child Assessment Service under the Department of Health (DH) and the Hospital Authority (HA) to ensure that when children with special needs proceed to primary schools from pre-school centres/kindergartens, the primary schools can realise their special needs earlier and provide them with support. Every school year, upon parental consent, the child assessment centres of the DH and the HA will send the assessment information of the children concerned to the EDB whereas the pre-school rehabilitation service units subvented by the SWD will forward the progress reports of the respective children to the EDB. The EDB will in turn transfer the assessment information and progress reports¹ of these children to their recipient

¹ Starting from 2019, progress reports of children proceeding to Primary One will be transferred to their recipient government/aided/DSS primary schools by electronic means via SEMIS.

government/aided/Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) primary schools before the commencement of the new school year.

7. Primary schools have to scrutinise the assessment information and/or progress reports of the students concerned and approach their parents to learn about students' SEN and recent development, so as to assess the tier of support they require under the 3-Tier Intervention Model and provide them with the corresponding support². Besides, schools have to use an appropriate parental consent form (see sample at Appendix 1) to seek parents' consent for inputting the assessment information and/or relevant information from the progress reports of the students into SEMIS, so that the EDB and the schools may use such information for educational purposes in supporting students with SEN, for instance, following up students' learning performance and disbursement of the Learning Support Grant to schools.

Primary to secondary schooling

8. Before Primary Six (P6) students with SEN proceed to Secondary One (S1), primary schools should use an appropriate parental consent form (see sample at Appendix 2) to seek parents' consent for transferring the SEN information of the students concerned to their recipient secondary schools, so that the secondary schools can understand their learning needs and arrange appropriate support. Primary schools should also inform parents that their consent for transferring the SEN information of their children to secondary schools will not affect the result for Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA) of their children. To tie in with the timeframe of the release of the SSPA results, primary schools have to input into SEMIS before the date of announcement the options of parents of P6 students with SEN regarding information transfer. Besides, primary schools have to pass **by mid-August** the respective information of the students concerned (e.g. medical reports, assessment reports, summary of the support rendered, succinct learning records and teaching strategy suggestions), together with the original copy of the duly signed parental consent form, to the recipient secondary schools for action. Primary schools may make use of the sample letter³ provided by the EDB.

² Please refer to the EDB circular on "Early Identification and Intervention for Students with Learning Difficulties or Special Educational Needs".

³ Available at the relevant Appendix to the *Operation Guide on the Whole School Approach to Integrated Education*.

Transfer of information after the release of the results for SSPA

9. According to the options of parents recorded in SEMIS by primary schools, the EDB will, within seven working days after the release of the results for SSPA, transfer the basic SEN information (e.g. SEN type and tier of support required) of P6 students whose registrations have been confirmed by secondary schools participating in SSPA to the recipient secondary schools via SEMIS. Secondary schools have to plan and provide support for these students as early as possible with reference to the information available in SEMIS and that passed by the primary schools. If a student with SEN switches to another school after registration, the original recipient secondary school should, **within one month** upon receipt of notification and consent of parents, pass the students' SEN information as provided by the primary school and the parental consent form to the new recipient school.

10. For P6 students with SEN not enrolling in the secondary schools allocated under SSPA, the EDB will check their schooling status through the Enrolment Survey conducted in September each school year. Should parental consent be recorded in SEMIS, the EDB will transfer the basic SEN information of these students to their recipient government/aided/caput/DSS secondary schools via SEMIS in October. Secondary schools may download from SEMIS the *SEMIS – A User Guide for Secondary Schools*⁴ for information about step-to-step instructions for input or update of information in SEMIS.

11. For newly admitted students with SEN whose duly signed parental consent forms are not available from their original schools or whose relevant information is not available in SEMIS, secondary schools should use an appropriate parental consent form (see sample at Appendix 1) to seek parents' consent for storing the SEN information of these students in SEMIS to facilitate the use of such information by the EDB and the schools for educational purposes.

Special arrangements for Pre-Secondary One Hong Kong Attainment Test

12. Students proceeding to S1 may be required to take the Pre-Secondary One Hong Kong Attainment Test (Pre-S1 HKAT) in the secondary schools to which they are

⁴ Please go to the Main Menu of SEMIS and click "Useful Information" at the upper right hand corner.

allocated. On or before the release of the results for SSPA, primary schools have to use the proforma⁵ provided by the EDB to give parents the recommendations on special arrangements for students with SEN going to take Pre-S1 HKTA. Parents may present the proforma to the secondary schools at the time of their children's registration, so that the schools can make reference to the respective information and make appropriate special arrangements for the students to take the test accordingly. For details of the Pre-S1 HKAT, please refer to the respective circular memorandum issued by the EDB annually.

13. When completing the above-mentioned proforma, primary schools have to note that the special arrangements recommended for the test must be confirmed by relevant professionals (such as speech therapists, doctors, educational psychologists, clinical psychologists and audiologists) as appropriate to the needs of the students concerned and the same special arrangements were made for the students concerned during school internal tests/examinations at P6. Besides, primary schools have to furnish the secondary schools with documents relating to special arrangements for tests/examinations for review by the EDB as necessary.

Switch of schools at primary/secondary level

14. For primary and secondary schools, when their students with SEN switch school, they should use an appropriate parental consent form (see sample at Appendix 3), to seek parents' consent for transferring the basic SEN information of the students concerned (e.g. SEN type and tier of support required) to the recipient schools via SEMIS, so that the recipient schools can understand the SEN of the students concerned and provide appropriate support. Besides, schools have to pass **within one month** the respective information of these students (e.g. medical reports, assessment reports, summary of the support rendered, succinct learning records and teaching strategy suggestions), together with the original copy of the duly signed parental consent form, to the recipient schools. Since such information can facilitate the recipient schools' early identification of the SEN of the students and provision of support, schools are appealed to encourage parents to consent to the transfer of SEN information of their children.

⁵ Available at the relevant Appendix to the *Operation Guide on the Whole School Approach to Integrated Education*.

15. For newly transferred students with SEN whose duly signed parental consent forms are not available from their original schools or whose relevant information is not available in SEMIS, the recipient schools should use an appropriate parental consent form (see sample at Appendix 1) to seek parents' consent for storing the SEN information of these students in SEMIS to facilitate the use of such information by the EDB and the schools for educational purposes.

Secondary to post-secondary education

16. To ensure that secondary school leavers with SEN can receive appropriate support no matter they choose to pursue further studies, receive vocational training or take other courses, secondary schools should discuss post-schooling arrangements with these students and their parents as early as possible. When a place has been offered by post-secondary institution/training organisation, schools should, with the consent of both parents and students⁶, liaise with the student affairs office or the designated officer of other departments of the institution/training organisation to work out arrangements for the transfer of the SEN information of the students concerned, so that the institution/organisation can plan and provide appropriate support earlier according to the SEN of the students. To facilitate information transfer, the EDB compiles an updated contact list of local post-secondary institutions/educational organisations annually and uploads it onto the EDB website⁷ for schools' and parents' reference.

Enquiries

17. For enquiries, primary schools may contact Inspectors of the Special Education Support 3 Section, and secondary schools may contact Inspectors of the Special Education Support 4 Section.

Godwin LAI
for Secretary for Education

⁶ If the students concerned are aged 18 or above with normal intelligence and are not mentally incapacitated, schools have to seek their consent.

⁷ EDB website (<https://www.edb.gov.hk>): Home > Education System and Policy > Special Education > Support and Subsidy > Ordinary School > Support for Student Diversity in Secondary Schools > Contact Details of Local Post-secondary Institutions/Educational Organisations for Transfer of Information of Secondary Students with Special Educational Needs, or click on the link below:
https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/tc/edu-system/special/support/wsa/secondary/ps_contact.pdf

SAMPLE
Parental Consent Form
for Submission of Information of Students with Special Educational Needs
(applicable to newly admitted students/students submitting fresh information)

Dear Parent/Guardian,

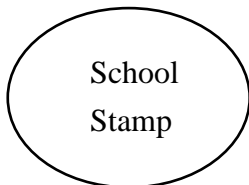
It has come to our knowledge that your child, _____ (name of student), has special needs/special educational needs (SEN)/academically low achievement (ALA) (applicable to primary schools), and we will provide him/her with support according to the 3-Tier Intervention Model.

The Education Bureau (EDB) has all along been providing schools with additional resources, professional support and teacher training to help them cater for students with SEN. With parental consent, schools have to submit information of students with special needs/SEN/ALA via the EDB's Special Education Management Information System (SEMIS), so that the EDB and the school may use such information for education purposes (e.g. for allocation of additional resources, provision of professional support, and compilation of statistics). Information of your child will only be used for such purposes.

We hereby seek your consent to having information of the special needs/SEN/ALA (applicable to primary schools) of your child recorded in SEMIS and updated on a need basis. Without your consent, the EDB and the school may not get hold of sufficient information for providing the support that your child needs.

Under the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance, you have the right to request access to and update of your child's personal information, and to change your option. Please make your request to us if necessary.

Kindly complete the reply slip below and return it to us by _____ (date).



Signature of principal: _____

Name of principal: _____

Name of school: _____

Date: _____

Reply Slip

To: Principal of _____ (name of school)

I **give my consent** for your school to input information of the special needs/special educational needs (SEN)/academically low achievement (ALA) (applicable to primary schools) of _____ (name of student) into the Special Education Management Information System (SEMIS) of the Education Bureau (EDB), and update such information on a need basis, so that the EDB and the school may use it for education purposes.

I **do not give my consent** for your school to input information of the special needs/SEN/ALA (applicable to primary schools) of _____ (name of student) into the EDB's SEMIS for the following reason(s):

My child does not need special educational support.

I have reservation about disclosing the SEN of my child.

Others: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____

Name of Parent/Guardian: _____

Date: _____

[Please put a ✓ in the appropriate box(es).]

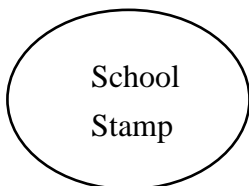
SAMPLE
Parental Consent Form
for Transfer of Information of Students with Special Educational Needs
(applicable to Primary Six students proceeding to Secondary One
through the Secondary School Places Allocation)

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Your child, _____ (name of student), is going to proceed to secondary schooling. We hereby seek your consent for us to pass the information of the special educational needs (SEN) of your child (e.g. medical reports, assessment reports, summary of the support rendered, succinct learning records and teaching strategy suggestions), together with your written consent, to his/her recipient secondary school, and for the Education Bureau (EDB) to transfer the basic SEN information of your child (e.g. SEN type and tier of support required) recorded in the EDB's Special Education Management Information System (SEMIS) to the secondary school after the release of the results for Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA), so that the EDB and the school concerned may use such information for educational purposes, which include facilitating the school's early identification of the SEN of your child and continued provision of appropriate support for your child. Please note that the transfer of such information will not affect the result for SSPA of your child. Without your consent, the EDB and the school concerned may not get hold of sufficient information for providing the support that your child needs.

Under the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance, you have the right to request access to and update of your child's personal information, and to change your option. If necessary, please make your request to the school that your child is attending.

Kindly complete the reply slip below and return it to us by _____(date).



Signature of principal: _____

Name of principal: _____

Name of school: _____

Date: _____

Reply Slip

To: Principal of _____ (name of school)

I **give my consent** for your school to pass the information of the special educational needs (SEN) of _____ (name of student), together with this reply slip, to his/her recipient secondary school, and for the Education Bureau (EDB) to transfer his/her basic SEN information (e.g. SEN type and tier of support required) recorded in the EDB's Special Education Management Information System (SEMIS) to the secondary school after the release of the results for Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA), so that the EDB and the school concerned may use such information for educational purposes, which include facilitating the school's identification of his/her SEN and provision of appropriate support. His/her personal information will only be used for the above purposes.

I **do not give my consent** for your school to transfer the SEN information of _____ (name of student) to his/her recipient secondary school, **and also do not give my consent** for the EDB to transfer his/her basic SEN information recorded in SEMIS to the secondary school after the release of the SSPA results for the following reason(s):

My child does not need special educational support.

I have reservation about disclosing the SEN of my child.

Others: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____

Name of Parent/Guardian: _____

Date: _____

[Please put a ✓ in the appropriate box(es).]

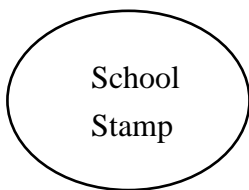
SAMPLE
Parental Consent Form
for Transfer of Information of Students with Special Educational Needs
(applicable to students going to switch to another primary/secondary school)

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Your child, _____ (name of student), is going to switch to another primary/secondary school. We hereby seek your consent for us to pass the information of the special educational needs (SEN) of your child (e.g. medical reports, assessment reports, summary of the support rendered, succinct learning records and teaching strategy suggestions), together with your written consent, to his/her recipient primary/secondary school, and for the Education Bureau (EDB) to transfer the basic SEN information of your child (e.g. SEN type and tier of support required) recorded in the EDB's Special Education Management Information System (SEMIS) to his/her recipient primary/secondary school, so that the EDB and the school concerned may use such information for educational purposes, which include facilitating the school's early identification of the SEN of your child and continued provision of appropriate support for your child. Without your consent, the EDB and the school concerned may not get hold of sufficient information for providing the support that your child needs.

Under the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance, you have the right to request access to and update of your child's personal information, and to change your option. If necessary, please make your request to the school that your child is attending.

Kindly complete the reply slip below and return it to us by _____(date).



Signature of principal: _____

Name of principal: _____

Name of school: _____

Date: _____

Reply Slip

To: Principal of _____ (name of school)

I **give my consent** for your school to pass the information of the special educational needs (SEN) of _____ (name of student), together with this reply slip, to his/her recipient primary/secondary school, and for the Education Bureau (EDB) to transfer his/her basic SEN information (e.g. SEN type and tier of support required) recorded in the EDB's Special Education Management Information System (SEMIS) to his/her recipient primary/secondary school, so that the EDB and the school concerned may use such information for educational purposes, which include facilitating the school's identification of his/her SEN and provision of appropriate support. His/her personal information will only be used for the above purposes.

I **do not give my consent** for your school to transfer the SEN information of _____ (name of student) to his/her recipient primary/secondary school, **and also do not give my consent** for the EDB to transfer his/her basic SEN information recorded in SEMIS to his/her recipient primary/secondary school for the following reason(s):

My child does not need special educational support.

I have reservation about disclosing the SEN of my child.

Others: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____

Name of Parent/Guardian: _____

Date: _____

[Please put a ✓ in the appropriate box(es).]