

EDUCATION BUREAU CIRCULAR MEMORANDUM NO. 133/2021

From: Secretary for Education

To: Supervisors and Heads of
Kindergartens/ Kindergarten-cum-
Child Care Centres and Schools with
Kindergarten Classes Joining the
Kindergarten Education Scheme – for
action

Ref.: EDB(KGI)/INP/1/9/2

Date: 10 November 2021

Serving Principal External Observer Scheme in Quality Review

Purpose

The purpose of this circular memorandum is to inform kindergartens, kindergarten-cum-child care centres and schools with kindergarten classes (collectively referred to as “KGs” hereafter) joining the kindergarten education scheme of the details of the Serving Principal External Observer Scheme in Quality Review (Serving Principal External Observer Scheme), and invite KG principals to participate.

Background

2. To enhance the transparency of Quality Review (QR), the Education Bureau (EDB) has been involving independent members¹ as external observers in some QR visits since the 2013/14 school year. The External Observer Pilot Scheme Involving Serving Principals (Pilot Scheme) has been implemented from the 2018/19 school year to further enhance the transparency of QR and capitalise on the professional knowledge and experience of frontline principals. Serving principal external observers conduct professional sharing on teachers’ teaching skills and the set-up of the learning environment, but do not assess school performance.

3. The Pilot Scheme was completed in the 2020/21 school year². The EDB reviewed the effectiveness of the Pilot Scheme by soliciting views from the school sponsoring bodies, external observers, as well as the management and teachers of the KGs who had undergone QR through questionnaires and focus group meetings. All stakeholders agreed that the Pilot Scheme could enhance the transparency of QR and facilitate the professional growth of both external observers and KG practitioners.

¹ Independent member external observers were experts in early childhood education. They possessed rich experience in inspection, teaching or education administration, and were not serving in the education sector at the time.

² The Pilot Scheme was originally scheduled to be implemented in the 2018/19 and 2019/20 school years. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Pilot Scheme was extended to the 2020/21 school year.

Details

4. In view of the positive results of the Pilot Scheme, we will regularise the Serving Principal External Observer Scheme starting from the 2021/22 school year. Serving principal external observers will be arranged to take part in some QR visits according to the QR mechanism every year. Serving principals participating in the aforesaid Scheme should fulfil the following criteria:

- (i) Be serving principals of KGs joining the kindergarten education scheme;
- (ii) Possess no less than 10 years of teaching experience in early childhood education, including no less than 5 years of related managerial and supervisory experience; and
- (iii) Agree to accept other serving principal external observers to join the QR visits of the KGs they are serving.

5. Successful KG principal applicants will be given the opportunity to receive relevant training in the 2021/22 school year and serve as external observers in QRs thereafter. The EDB will liaise with the principals concerned to arrange an appropriate time for them to join the training and QR visits. To avoid conflict of interest, the EDB will not arrange external observers to visit KGs of the same school sponsoring body/operator and district. For the purpose of the Serving Principal External Observer Scheme, the duties of and code of practice for external observers, please refer to [Appendix 1](#).

6. If school sponsoring bodies/operators would like to nominate one or more principals of their KGs to join the above-mentioned Scheme, please fill in the “Nomination Form” in [Appendix 2](#). Serving principals of individual KGs joining the kindergarten education scheme may fill in the “Application Form” in [Appendix 3](#) to join the Scheme after obtaining the consent of their school supervisors. The deadline for application is **10 December 2021 (Friday)**. We will notify KG principals and their school sponsoring bodies/operators of the results of application in writing by January 2022. Successful KG principal applicants will be arranged to serve as external observers upon their completion of relevant external observer training or professional sharing activities. Details will be provided in due course.

7. An online briefing to introduce the details of the Serving Principal External Observer Scheme will be held on **26 November 2021 (Friday)**. Representatives of school sponsoring bodies/operators and principals interested in joining the online briefing may return the completed “Enrolment Form” ([Appendix 4](#)) on or before **23 November 2021 (Tuesday)** by fax (3104 0865) or by email (ikg63@edb.gov.hk). KG principals may also submit application through the EDB Training Calendar (Course ID: KGE020220034).

Enquiries

8. For enquiries, please contact Ms LAM Tuen-yee or Ms HO Mei-fong, Christy of the Kindergarten Inspection Section at 2892 6550 or 3540 6945.

Ms Y Y SO
for Secretary for Education

c.c. Heads of Sections – *for information*

Serving Principal External Observer Scheme in Quality Review

Objective

To enhance the transparency of Quality Review (QR)

Duties of External Observers

- To attend training/professional sharing activities for external observers
- To participate in the QR visits (ranging from 2.5-day to 3.5-day) and observe “learning and teaching” of the school during the process, but do not assess school performance. The scope of duties includes:
 - conducting lesson observations and observing children’s activities with the Review Team
 - reading the School Report and related teaching plans
 - sitting in the interviews with children conducted by the Review Team
 - sitting in the meetings held by the Review Team at the school
 - sitting in the oral feedback session conducted by the Review Team
 - conducting professional sharing on teachers’ teaching skills and the set-up of the learning environment with the school after the oral feedback session conducted by the Review Team (about 10-15 minutes)
- To provide feedback on the QR mechanism and the Serving Principal External Observer Scheme in QR

Code of Practice for External Observers

- To regard the interest of children as the primary concern
- To preserve integrity and courtesy, and strictly adhere to neutrality
- To understand the school context in a professional and objective manner
- To respect the judgement of the Review Team on the performance of the school
- To abide by the principle of confidentiality. Do not take pictures, record videos and make copies of the school’s documents during the visit. Any school or personal information collected during the visit should not be disclosed to the public
- To follow the workflow arranged by the leader of the Review Team
- To conduct lesson observations with the Review Team, and not to conduct any observations alone
- To conduct sharing with the school according to its context
- Not to express any comments or views to the school except during the sharing session after the oral feedback

**Nomination Form for Serving Principal External Observers
(For Nomination by School Sponsoring Bodies/Operators)**

Part A (To be completed by the school sponsoring bodies/operators)

[Please return by post or by fax **on or before 10 December 2021 (Friday)**]

To Permanent Secretary for Education

Attn: Ms LAM Tuen-yee
Kindergarten Inspection Section (Fax No: 3104 0865)
Room 1216, 12/F, Wu Chung House,
213 Queen's Road East, Wanchai, Hong Kong

Our school sponsoring body/operator **nominates** the following principals to participate in the Serving Principal External Observer Scheme in Quality Review:

	Name of School	Name of Principal
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		

(Please continue on a separate sheet if the space provided is insufficient)

Signature of Representative of School Sponsoring Body/Operator: _____

Name of Representative of School Sponsoring Body/Operator: _____

(Position Held: _____)

Name of School Sponsoring Body/Operator: _____

Contact Number: _____

Date: _____

Part B (To be completed by the principal being nominated)

[Please return by post or by fax **on or before 10 December 2021 (Friday)**]

To Permanent Secretary for Education

Attn: Ms LAM Tuen-yee
Kindergarten Inspection Section (Fax No: 3104 0865)
Room 1216, 12/F, Wu Chung House,
213 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai, Hong Kong

I _____ (Name of the Principal) **am nominated to participate in** the Serving Principal External Observer Scheme in Quality Review, and agree to accept other serving principal external observers to join the Quality Review visit of the kindergarten I am currently serving. I have read and understood the duties of and the code of practice for external observers. I have **no less than 10 years of teaching experience in early childhood education, including no less than 5 years of related managerial and supervisory experience** (including experience as senior teacher, vice principal or principal)*. Details are as follows:

Name of Organisation/School	Position Held*	Date (Month/Year)		Duration	
		In chronological order		Year	Month
		From	To		
<i>Example :</i> <i>ABC Kindergarten</i>	<i>Teacher</i>	<i>12/09</i>	<i>08/15</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>XYZ Kindergarten</i>	<i>Senior Teacher</i>	<i>09/15</i>	<i>08/18</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>XYZ Kindergarten</i>	<i>Principal</i>	<i>09/18</i>	<i>08/21</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>0</i>

**Only full-time experience acquired on or before 31 August 2021 would be counted. All information collected is for the present application only.*

Name of School: _____ School Number: _____

Contact Number: _____ Email: _____

Signature of School Supervisor: _____ Name of School Supervisor: _____

Signature of School Principal: _____ Date: _____

**Application Form for Serving Principal External Observers
(For Application of Individual Principal)**

[Please return by post or by fax **on or before 10 December 2021 (Friday)**]

To Permanent Secretary for Education

Attn: Ms LAM Tuen-yee
Kindergarten Inspection Section (Fax No: 3104 0865)
Room 1216, 12/F, Wu Chung House,
213 Queen's Road East, Wanchai, Hong Kong

I _____ (Name of the Principal) **apply to participate in** the Serving Principal External Observer Scheme in Quality Review, and agree to accept other serving principal external observers to join the Quality Review visit of the kindergarten I am currently serving. I have read and understood the duties of and the code of practice for external observers. I have **no less than 10 years of teaching experience in early childhood education, including no less than 5 years of related managerial and supervisory experience** (including experience as senior teacher, vice principal or principal)*. Details are as follows:

Name of Organisation/School	Position Held*	Date (Month/Year)		Duration	
		In chronological order		Year	Month
		From	To		
<i>Example :</i> <i>ABC Kindergarten</i>	<i>Teacher</i>	<i>12/09</i>	<i>08/15</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>XYZ Kindergarten</i>	<i>Senior Teacher</i>	<i>09/15</i>	<i>08/18</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>XYZ Kindergarten</i>	<i>Principal</i>	<i>09/18</i>	<i>08/21</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>0</i>

**Only full-time experience acquired on or before 31 August 2021 would be counted. All information collected is for the present application only.*

Name of School: _____ School Number: _____

Contact Number: _____ Email: _____

Signature of School Supervisor: _____ Name of School Supervisor: _____

Signature of School Principal: _____ Date: _____

Serving Principal External Observer Scheme in Quality Review – Online Briefing

Enrolment Form

[Please return by email or by fax **on or before 23 November 2021 (Tuesday)**]

To: Kindergarten Inspection Section, EDB

Attn: Ms LAM Tuen-yee (Fax no.: 3104 0865 / Email: ikg63@edb.gov.hk)

I _____ (Name) will attend the online briefing on the **Serving Principal External Observer Scheme in Quality Review**.

Event	Date and Time	Remarks
Online briefing	26 November 2021 (Friday) 3:00-4:30 p.m.	The link and the password of the briefing session will be emailed to the participants on 24 November 2021

Signature of Participant: _____

Name of School Sponsoring Body/Operator/School: _____

Position Held: _____

Contact Number: _____

Email: _____

Date: _____