

Education Bureau Circular Memorandum No. 36/2024

From: Secretary for Education

To: Supervisors and Heads of all government, aided (including special schools), caput schools and schools under the Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS)

Ref: EDB(SA3)/SA/POL/6/1/3

Date: 29 February 2024

Pilot Scheme on the Use of School Venues by Arts Groups

Summary

This circular memorandum serves to invite applications from the public sector schools and schools under the DSS to participate in the “Pilot Scheme on the Use of School Venues by Arts Groups” (the Scheme) implemented by Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) of Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau and Education Bureau (EDB) in the 2024/25 school year.

Background

2. The Government has all along been encouraging schools to open up their facilities for hire to outside organisations to foster collaboration between schools and the community. The Chief Executive announced in the Policy Address 2023 to launch the Scheme to open up part of schools venues for rehearsals by arts groups after school hours on a pilot basis to foster the development of arts and cultural industries as well as to promote arts education through the provision of more opportunities for students to access artistic creations.

Details

3. Schools are encouraged to actively participate in the Scheme and open up their school halls and/or multi-purpose activity rooms during weekends and/or school holidays from 1 September 2024 to 30 June 2025 as far as possible for arts groups to hire the venues for rehearsals through LCSD. Within the aforesaid period, participating schools should open up the venues concerned for no less than two days in selected month(s) with at least a session of 3 hours each day. Schools are encouraged to facilitate block booking (i.e. no less than two sessions) with the view to providing stable rehearsal venues for arts groups. Participating schools may also provide more than one facility for the arts groups for rehearsals during the

same time slots and/or at different time slots. The facilities made available for hire must be basically equipped¹, safe and in good condition.

4. During LCSD's assessment of the applications from arts groups, higher priority will be accorded to arts group(s) which can broaden the arts and cultural knowledge and artistic horizons of students (such as providing students with complimentary access to dress rehearsals/performances/reviews, conducting talks/workshops related to the promotion of arts and Chinese culture for students, etc.), so as to enhance students' participation in arts activities and to promote arts education.

5. In the application for hiring school venues, arts groups are required to sign the "Conditions of Use of School Venues by Arts Groups" to commit their full compliance of the conditions set out therein to protect schools against any claims, losses or damages which may be incurred due to the hirers' act of negligence. For details of the Conditions of Use of School Venues, please refer to Annex 1.

Application Procedures

6. Schools that intend to participate in the Scheme should complete the "Application Form for Participation" (Annex 2A) and "Information Form of Facilities Available for Hiring by Arts Groups" (Annex 2B) sent by EDB via the Fast Information Transmission System – School Messaging Module (SMM), and return (1) the scanned copy of completed application form bearing the principal's signature and school chop (Annex 2A) and (2) softcopy (in MS Excel format) of the information form (Annex 2B) to EDB via SMM **on or before 28 March 2024**. A consolidated list of participating schools and the school facilities available for hire will be uploaded to LCSD webpage in **April 2024** for arts groups' reference when making the application.

7. The Scheme consists of two terms, the first term covers September 2024 to January 2025, and the second term covers February to June 2025. LCSD will, where necessary, seek EDB's comment when processing the applications of arts groups, and inform the schools concerned via EDB the matching results of schools and arts groups for the first and second term in **July and December 2024** respectively. Having regard to the school-based

¹ For example: air-conditioning, audio-visual aids, general furniture of chairs and tables, etc.

circumstances and needs, schools shall then decide whether or not to accept the application from the arts groups, and provide written confirmation of the matching result to LCSD via EDB. After confirming that the school and the arts group agree on the matching result, both parties can discuss on the details of the arrangement for hiring the school venue.

Subsidies Disbursement Arrangement

8. With approval for hiring out school venues to arts groups under the Scheme, schools will receive a subsidy to support hiring out their venues to arts groups for rehearsals and to promote arts education. Schools will receive a subsidy of \$4,500 for each 3-hour session hired by the arts groups, up to a maximum of \$45,000 (i.e. a maximum of 10 sessions, each lasting for at least 3 hours, will be subsidised) per school year.

9. The subsidy will be disbursed to aided schools, caput schools and DSS schools in October 2024 and March 2025. For government schools, the subsidy will be provided in the form of budget allocation in two batches in October 2024 and March 2025. LCSD will confirm with the arts groups and schools the actual number of hours/sessions that school venues are hired by arts groups in the first and second term of the Scheme in the 2024/25 school year in **February and July 2025** respectively. According to the information provided by LCSD, EDB will adjust the subsidies paid to the participating schools where necessary.

Financial and Accounting Arrangement

10. Schools are required to observe the established principles and requirements on the use of public funds promulgated by EDB when using the subsidy. Schools are required to keep a separate ledger account for the subsidy to record all income and expenditure chargeable to the subsidy. Relevant expenses incurred in connection with the hiring of school venues to arts groups under the Scheme, such as hiring extra manpower (including salaries, Mandatory Provident Fund, etc.), strengthening security measures, defraying additional utility costs, replacing or acquiring equipment/appliances needed, and carrying out urgent minor repair works, etc., should be met by the subsidy and no additional subsidy would be provided to cover such expenses. Schools are also allowed to spend the subsidies disbursed on expenditure related to the promotion of arts education in the schools (such as arrangement of additional arts activities for students, subsidies for students to participate in arts competitions and improvement/purchase of schools' learning and teaching materials for supporting arts education). All books of accounts, receipts, payment vouchers and invoices, etc. must be kept

for at least 7 years by schools for accounting and auditing purposes. Aided schools, caput schools and DSS schools should adhere to EDB's requirements on submission of annual audited accounts set out in the relevant circular memoranda/letters as well as their appendices in preparing ledger accounts and annual accounts. EDB may request schools to provide relevant documents for auditing the use of the subsidy if necessary. Please note that only expenses incurred on the hiring out of school venues under the Scheme to arts groups or relevant expenditure spent on the promotion of arts education in schools could be charged to the subsidy account. Any deficit should be borne by non-government funds; and should not be charged to government funds. For government schools, expenditure should be charged to the user code assigned. Schools failing to provide relevant documents for auditing or not spending the subsidy according to the ambit stated in this circular memorandum will be required to return the disbursed amounts that do not belong to the subsidised items of the subsidy to EDB.

11. In procuring relevant services, items, furniture and equipment, schools are reminded to refer to the Points to Note in the Purchase of Goods/Services in EDB Circular No. 3/2022 "Acceptance of Advantages and Donations by Schools and their Staff" and follow the procurement procedures listed therein. Aided schools and caput schools are also required to follow the procedures and guidelines promulgated in EDB Circular No. 4/2013 "Procurement Procedures in Aided Schools" and "Guidelines on Procurement Procedures in Aided Schools (June 2023)", while government schools should follow the store and procurement guidelines promulgated in relevant EDB Internal Circulars. DSS schools should follow the guidelines on procurement procedures of aided schools, or the school-based procurement policies formulated upon the endorsement of their School Management Committees/Incorporated Management Committees.

12. Schools can retain the subsidies for use in the 2025/26 school year until 31 August 2026. Schools have to return the completed "Report on the Use of Subsidy" (Annex 3) to EDB **on or before 30 September 2026**. Any unspent balance of the subsidies as of 31 August 2026 will be clawed back from aided schools, caput schools and DSS schools by EDB in accordance with the "Report on the Use of Subsidy" (Annex 3) submitted by schools. As for government schools, any unspent balance will lapse as of 31 August 2026. Transfer of funds and/or unspent balance out of this subsidy is not allowed.

Levying Charges for Hire of Accommodation

13. Schools participating in the Scheme are advised to adopt the reduced rates as specified in the respective Guidelines for Levying Charges for Hire of Accommodation in aided schools and government schools issued by EDB or concessionary rates according to school-based policy for caput schools and DSS schools, so as to make the charges more affordable for the non-profit making arts groups and to demonstrate schools' support in promoting arts at the community level. If circumstances warrant, schools may also waive the charge altogether. Please refer to the EDB Internal Circular No. 6/2005, EDB Circular No. 5/2011 and the Guidelines for Levying Charges for Hire of Accommodation in Aided Schools posted on EDB homepage at <https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/student-parents/sch-info/fees-charges-in-sch/aided-sch/index.html>.

Enquiry

14. For enquiries, please contact the respective Senior School Development Officer of your district.

Ms Rio CHEUNG
for Secretary for Education

c.c. Heads of Sections – for information

Pilot Scheme on the Use of School Venues by Arts Groups

Conditions of Use of School Venues by Arts Groups

1. The arts group shall be a non-profit making organisation with the primary purpose of promoting arts development and shall not use the school facilities/venues for holding profiteering activities. The hired school facilities/venues shall only be used for rehearsal activities, and shall not be used for any performances.
2. The school facilities/venues shall only be used by approved arts group and shall not be sublet to other organisations/individuals.
3. The hired school facilities/venues shall only be used for the designated rehearsals of art programme(s) specified in the application form. Members of the arts group shall not enter or use any other non-designated facilities/venues. All users must leave the school at the end of each rehearsal session.
4. The school will not provide any storage space for the arts group. The group must take responsibility for safekeeping all items brought and remove them from the school premises after using the facilities, including performance props, equipment, instruments, etc. The school shall not be held liable for any damages or losses.
5. The arts group shall not admit unauthorised individuals who are not participating in the rehearsals of the art programme(s) or members of the public to the school during the use of school facilities/venues.
6. All users must wear appropriate attire, footwear, use appropriate equipment and protective gear as necessary. The arts group shall take appropriate action to safeguard the health and safety of all users.
7. Smoking is strictly prohibited in school. Eating and drinking shall not be permitted inside the activity areas.
8. Users shall maintain cleanliness of the venue throughout the rehearsal activity. Before returning the hired venue, users shall clean up all waste and restore all facilities to their original conditions.
9. The school will close the facilities/venues upon issue of Tropical Cyclone Signal No. 8 or the RED/BLACK Rainstorm Warning Signal. The school may also exercise discretion to close the facilities/venues when, in its opinion, that the facilities/venues are unsuitable for use from the safety or operation point of view. In such case, the school will refund the hire charge for the unused session(s).
10. The arts group shall be responsible for meeting the cost of repairing any damage caused to the school facilities/venues, and of repairing or reinstating or replacing any equipment, apparatus, fitting, or other property damaged or destroyed (fair wear and tear excepted), stolen or removed during the use of school facilities/venues.

11. The arts group shall take out adequate insurance policy (including third-party liability insurance) for programmes organised under the Scheme. The arts group shall also purchase a third-party liability insurance of a minimum of HK\$10 million and appropriately list the school as one of the insured party, and provide a copy of the insurance policy to school for record.
12. The arts group shall indemnify and keep indemnified school against all actions, claims, and demands by any person who suffers or sustains any death, injury, loss or damages arising out of or as a result of the use of school facilities/venues by the arts group or any person so authorised by it due to the negligence on the part of arts group or on the part of such authorised person.
13. The arts group shall not make, publish, display or disseminate event related publicity materials that contain false, biased, misleading or deceptive information. The arts group shall not expressly or by implication make reference to the school in any publicity materials without prior permission of the school.
14. The arts group shall take full responsibility and ensure that their activities comply with the legal requirements of Hong Kong, do not involve any content that jeopardises national security, and do not contain violent, pornographic, or indecent material. The arts group must also prohibit any members of the arts group from bringing prohibited items into the school premises.
15. The school reserves the right to reject/terminate the arts group's hiring of facilities/venues at any time based on its vision and mission or religious beliefs.
16. The arts group should sign an undertaking to ensure full compliance with the aforementioned requirements.
17. If the arts group does not observe any of the aforementioned Conditions of Use, the school may prohibit its entry to the school and use of school facilities/venues, or terminate the hiring of the relevant facilities/venues at any time.

Pilot Scheme on the Use of School Venues by Arts Groups
Application Form for Participation

To: School Administration 3 Section, Education Bureau (EDB)
 (Please submit (1) scanned copy of completed application form (Annex 2A) bearing the principal's signature and school chop and (2) soft copy (in MS Excel format) of the "Information Form of Facilities Available for Hiring by Arts Groups" (Annex 2B) to EDB via the "Fast Information Transmission System – School Messaging Module" (SMM) **on or before 28 March 2024.**)

Name of School (District): _____ ()
 Address: _____

Our school wishes to apply for the above Scheme in the 2024/25 school year to open up our school hall(s) and/or multi-purpose activity room(s) to arts groups. Please refer to the attached MS Excel document – "Information Form of Facilities Available for Hiring by Arts Groups" (Annex 2B) for the relevant hiring information.

I have read and understood EDB Circular Memorandum No. 36/2024 regarding "Pilot Scheme on the Use of School Venues by Arts Groups" and agreed with the content of the Personal Information Collection Statement appended in this application form.

Signature of Principal:

Name of Principal: _____

Date: _____

School Chop

Personal Information Collection Statement

Purpose of Collection

1. The personal data provided by you in this form will be used by EDB for processing your application for the Pilot Scheme on the Use of School Venues by Arts Groups (the Scheme), issuing relevant result notifications, future contact, statistics and event opinion surveys, as well as the administration and enforcement of rules and regulations including the Education Ordinance (Cap. 279).
2. The provision of personal data required by this form and during the processing of this form is obligatory. In the event that you do not provide those personal data, we may not be able to handle or further process the application / notification mentioned in paragraph 1 above.

Classes of Transferees

3. The personal data you provide will be made available to persons working in EDB. Apart from this, they may be transferred or disclosed to the parties or in the circumstances listed below:-
 - (a) other Government bureaux and departments, including Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau and Leisure and Cultural Services Department, for the purposes mentioned in paragraph 1 above;
 - (b) the schools and the arts group in which the form relates for the purposes mentioned in paragraph 1 above;
 - (c) where you have given your prescribed consent to such disclosure; and
 - (d) where such disclosure is authorised or required under the law or court order applicable to Hong Kong.

Access to Personal Data

4. You have the right to request access to and correction of your personal data held by EDB. Request for access or correction of personal data should be made in writing to School Administration 3 Section of Education Bureau [Address: 3/F, 14 Taikoo Wan Road, Taikoo Shing, Hong Kong].

附件 2B：可供藝團租借設施資料表

2024年3月28日或之前把(1)已填妥並附有校長簽署和學校蓋章的「參加計劃申請表」(附件2A)掃描副本及(2)「可供藝團租借設施資料表」(附件2B)軟復本(MS Excel格式)透過「高效資訊傳遞系統-學校通訊模組」(SMM)交回教育局。 (Use submit (1) scanned copy of completed application form (Annex 2A) bearing the principal's signature and school chop and (2) soft copy (in MS Excel format) of this "Information Form of Facilities Available for Hiring by Arts Groups" (Annex 2B) to Education Bureau through the "Fast Information Transmission System – School Messaging Module" (SMM) **on or before 28 March 2024**.)

Note 1: Please provide a contact that allow the arts groups to reach the schools' representatives direct.

Note 2: Please refer to the EDB Internal Circular No. 6/2005 (applicable to government schools) and EDB Circular No. 5/2011 (applicable to aided schools) on hire of accommodation as well as the Guidelines for Levying Charges and the Schedule of Recommended Charges for Hire of Accommodation in Government Schools and Aided Schools.

Note 3: Participating schools should open up the venues concerned for no less than two weekends and /or school holidays in selected month(s) from 1 September 2024 to 30 June 2025, with at least a session of 3 hours each day.

學校名稱:	地區:
Name of School:	(District:
學校地址:	
School Address:	
聯絡人姓名:	職位:
Contact Person:	(Position Held:
電話號碼 [註1]:	傳真號碼:
Phone No. [Note 1]:	Fax No.:
電郵:	
Email:	

[illegible]

Pilot Scheme on the Use of School Venues by Arts Groups
Report on the Use of Subsidy

To: School Administration 3 Section, Education Bureau (EDB)
 (Please submit a scanned copy of the completed “Report on the Use of Subsidy” (Annex 3) to EDB via the “Fast Information Transmission System – School Messaging Module” (SMM) **on or before 30 September 2026.**)

(Please put a “✓” in the appropriate box(es))

1. Our school has spent the subsidy mentioned in EDB Circular Memorandum (CM) No. 36/2024 on the following:

	Area
☐	Relevant expenses incurred in connection with hiring school venues to arts groups under the Scheme (such as hiring extra manpower [including salaries, Mandatory Provident Fund, etc.], strengthening security measures, defraying additional utility costs, replacing or acquiring equipment/appliances needed and carrying out urgent minor repair works, etc.)
☐	Expenditure related to the promotion of arts education in the school (such as arranging additional arts activities for students, subsidising student participation in arts competitions and improving/purchasing schools’ learning and teaching materials for supporting arts education.)

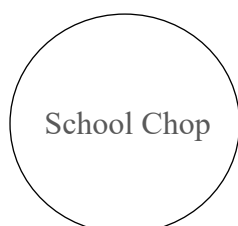
2. As of 31 August 2026, the subsidy:

☐	has been fully spent.
☐	has an unspent balance of \$ _____ which will be returned to EDB [applicable to aided schools, caput schools and DSS schools] / will be cancelled [applicable to government schools].

3. Declaration

This is to certify that:

- (i) Our school has observed the principles and ambit set out in EDBCM No. 36/2024, as well as the requirements of relevant guidelines, circulars and letters issued by EDB from time to time when using the subsidy and other relevant grants and subsidies. All of the expenditure is in line with the usage principles and purposes of the relevant subsidies, and in compliance with the financial management guidelines as well as circulars and guidelines on procurement procedures applicable to our school;
- (ii) Our school has kept a separate ledger account and properly records all the income and expenditure items of the subsidy. All expenditure items are supported by documentary proof. All the relevant financial records, books of accounts, receipts, payment vouchers and invoices will be kept by our school for at least 7 years for accounting and auditing purposes;
- (iii) Our school will submit the annual audited accounts (if applicable) to EDB within the prescribed period after the completion of every school year, in which the total income and expenditure of the subsidy will be recorded. In case of any discrepancy between this report and the annual audited accounts, we will notify EDB promptly for follow-up actions; and
- (iv) The information provided in this report is true and accurate. We understand that EDB has the right to request the school to provide documentary proof of the expenditure for auditing and inspection purposes. The school is required to return the disbursed amounts that do not belong to the subsidised items of the subsidy to EDB.



Name of School (Chinese)* : _____

Name of School (English)* : _____

School No. & Location No. : _____

(Format : xxxxxx – 0001)

Signature of Supervisor : _____

Name of Supervisor : _____

Date : _____

* Must be identical to the name shown on the school chop