

Committee on Review of Residential Child Care and Related Services holds first meeting

The Committee on Review of Residential Child Care and Related Services chaired by the Director of Social Welfare held its first meeting today (April 26) to discuss the terms of reference of the Committee as well as the scope and timetable of the review.

In the meeting, representatives of the Social Welfare Department briefed members on the current situation and monitoring mechanism of the residential child care and related services. The members then exchanged preliminary views on three major review areas, namely service regulation and monitoring; service planning and provision; and service quality, and will discuss these issues in detail in future meetings.

The Committee agreed that the review will be conducted in two phases. The first phase, expected to be completed in September this year, will focus on the services for children aged below 6, including residential child care centres (also known as residential crèches and residential nurseries), and residential special child care centres. The second phase, expected to be completed in March 2023, will cover the review of other types of residential child care services, including children's homes and reception centre, boys'/girls' homes and hostels, as well as non-institutional services, namely foster care service, small group homes (SGHs) and SGHs for mildly mentally handicapped children.

Apart from the Director of Social Welfare as the Chairman, members of the Committee include Legislative Council members, experts in children's affairs, representatives of welfare organisations with relevant experience, as well as experts from the medical, legal and business sectors. The Committee will seek stakeholders' views in due course as well.

The Committee was set up on April 19 this year to conduct a comprehensive review on the existing residential child care and related services, the interface among services and service monitoring so as to identify areas for improvements, work out feasible measures for enhancement and put forward concrete proposals on the areas under review.