

Notification arrangements on Secondary One discretionary places and distribution of school choice documents for Central Allocation

Parents of Primary Six students participating in the current (2021) cycle of the Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA) System who have made applications under the discretionary places (DP) stage will receive notifications from the secondary schools they have applied for tomorrow (March 31) if their children have been selected as successful applicants. Parents need not confirm with the schools concerned if they accept the DP offers, a spokesman for the Education Bureau (EDB) said today (March 30).

For parents who have also successfully applied for a school place in a non-participating Direct Subsidy Scheme secondary school (NDSS secondary school) for their children, they should decide whether to retain the offer from the NDSS secondary school. If they decide to retain the offer, they should disregard the notifications from the secondary schools which have selected their children at the DP stage. Their children will be allocated to the concerned NDSS secondary school according to the established mechanism. On the other hand, parents who have decided to decline the NDSS secondary school offer should notify the school concerned and retrieve the signed Parent's Undertaking and the original copy of the Primary 6 Student Record Form on or before April 12 in order to retain the school place successfully applied for at the DP stage.

"Students who have not been notified as successful DP applicants are required to participate in the Central Allocation (CA)," the spokesman said. Primary schools participating in the SSPA System have been informed to collect copies of the following documents on April 12:

- Secondary One Choice of Schools Form (Choice Form);
- Notes for Parents on Central Allocation (Notes for Parents);
- Secondary School List (SSL); and
- Handbook for Unrestricted School Choices (Handbook).

Parents of Primary Six students participating in the SSPA will each receive the Choice Form, the Notes for Parents and the SSL for the school net of the student from his or her primary school. Parents may ask for the Handbook from primary schools for reference or obtain the school lists in the Handbook through the EDB's homepage (www.edb.gov.hk) and the fax service of the EDB's automatic telephone enquiry system on 2891 0088.

In light of the development of the COVID-19 epidemic, to reduce the

gathering of people and maintain social distancing, the EDB advised that primary schools should make flexible arrangements in providing support for parents in making school choices. For instance, instead of organising large-scale parents' briefings, schools could provide parents with information or advice by video conferencing, phone or email, and distribute the choice-making documents to parents of cross-boundary students by post or email.

"The Choice Form is divided into two parts (Part A and Part B). Parents should refer to the Handbook when filling in Part A 'Unrestricted School Choices' of the Choice Form and choose not more than three secondary schools from any school net (including the student's school net). As for Part B 'Restricted School Choices', parents should refer to their child's SSL and choose a maximum of 30 secondary schools according to their preference. Parents must not enter any school choices which are not in the SSL of the school net of the child in Part B since invalid school choices will not be processed," the spokesman said.

The spokesman reminded parents that prior to making school choices for their children, they should read carefully the Notes for Parents. Parents are encouraged to watch the DVD "Secondary School Places Allocation System 2019/2021 Cycle" distributed to them in October last year to understand in detail the SSPA System. Parents should also refer to the Secondary School Profiles 2020/2021 published in December last year by the Committee on Home-School Co-operation for information supplied by the secondary schools and visit the Secondary School Profiles homepage (www.chsc.hk/secondary/en) for the schools' latest developments.

"Parents must complete and return the Choice Form to their children's primary school for submission to the EDB on or before May 5. Should individual parents have genuine difficulties in returning the duly completed Choice Form to their children's primary school in person or through an authorised representative, he/she should contact the primary school in advance and return the Choice Form to the primary school by post," the spokesman said.

He added, "The results for SSPA 2021 (for both the DP and CA stages) will be announced on July 6. Parents wishing to receive the result of their children via SMS message on that day should provide a mobile phone number on the Choice Form to indicate their consent to receive the result via that phone number. Parents may refer to the Notes for Parents for more information."

Parents who have questions in completing the Choice Form are advised to consult their children's primary schools. Relevant information about the SSPA System and some frequently asked questions will be uploaded to the EDB's homepage (www.edb.gov.hk) on April 12 for parents' reference.

Parents may call the EDB's automatic telephone enquiry system on 2891 0088 for information by then. Further enquiries may also be directed to the School Places Allocation Section (SSPA) of the EDB on 2832 7740 and 2832 7700.