

Parents reminded to choose primary schools

Children who have joined the Primary One Admission (POA) System for 2021 but have not yet secured a discretionary place can take part in the Central Allocation process by making their choice of schools on either January 30 (Saturday) or January 31 (Sunday).

"By participating in Central Allocation, these students will be allocated a government or aided primary school place," a spokesman for the Education Bureau (EDB) said today (January 25).

"The School Places Allocation Section of the bureau has sent letters to the parents concerned inviting them to make their choice of schools at a specified Central Allocation Centre at an assigned time slot from 9.30am to 12.30pm and from 1.30pm to 4.30pm on January 30 and from 9.30am to 12.30pm on January 31.

"Parents who have not yet received the invitation letter from the EDB should call the School Places Allocation Section at 2832 7700 as soon as possible.

"In light of the latest epidemic developments of COVID-19, to reduce the gathering of people and maintain social distancing, the bureau will arrange for the parents of applicant children to make school choices at the Central Allocation Centres in different time slots on the dates specified above according to the applicant children's POA application number. Parents are requested to follow the instructions of the letter and make their choice of schools at the Central Allocation Centre within the specified time slot on the specified date. Parents who cannot make school choices within the specified time slot can go to the designated Central Allocation Centre from 1.30pm to 4.30pm on January 31 to proceed with the related procedures. The bureau has also arranged to send the Choice of Schools Form together with the letter for parents to fill in in advance to reduce their length of stay at the Central Allocation Centre.

"If parents are under compulsory quarantine or other related measures and are unable to make school choices in person or through their authorised representatives at the Central Allocation Centre on the specified date, they may contact the School Places Allocation Section (hotline at 2832 7700) for appropriate assistance.

"Apart from the above, in view of the immigration control implemented amidst the epidemic, should individual parents of applicant children who intend to commute daily to schools in Hong Kong or parents who are outside Hong Kong be unable to go to the Central Allocation Centre to make school choices in person, they could authorise in writing a representative to bring the completed Choice of Schools Form and the Letter of Authorisation to

proceed with the related procedures. If parents are not able to make school choices in person or through their authorised representatives, they could arrange to return the duly completed form by post to the EDB's School Places Allocation Section on or before January 31."

Parents who have recently moved or have plans to move in the near future are required to inform the School Places Allocation Section as soon as possible so that they can make school choices in the POA School Net where their new home is located. Parents should fill in the actual residential address of their child. If a false address is given by parents to secure a Primary One (P1) place for their child, the application will be rendered void and the P1 place allocated will be withdrawn.

The bureau has put in place a monitoring mechanism to verify the residential addresses of children as given by the parents. Random checks of applicant children's addresses are also being stepped up. The public are encouraged to report suspected cases of individuals using a false address to the School Places Allocation Section by calling the hotline at 2832 7700. As in previous years, the bureau will take appropriate action against false address cases.

For information about the procedures for Central Allocation, parents may call the bureau's 24-hour automatic telephone enquiry service at 2891 0088.

Central Allocation is composed of two parts. Part A, which takes up 10 per cent of the P1 places earmarked for Central Allocation, is for unrestricted school choices. Parents can choose up to three government or aided primary schools in any school nets. Part B takes up the remaining 90 per cent of the P1 places earmarked for Central Allocation. Parents of applicant children residing in the school net concerned are to select schools from the "Choice of Schools List for Central Allocation" of their school net, while parents of applicant children who intend to commute daily to schools in Hong Kong are to select schools from the "Choice of Schools List for Central Allocation (For Applicant Children who intend to commute daily to schools in Hong Kong)". Parents should fill in the Choice of Schools Form in the order of their preference.

The computer-programmed Central Allocation will first process the school choices in Part A and then the school choices in Part B. The allocation process basically follows the parents' choice. For oversubscribed schools, the order of priority in allocating P1 places will be determined by random numbers generated by the computer for individual applications. This is to ensure fairness to all applicant children.

For applications for participation in POA 2021 after January 31, parents need to complete the necessary procedures with the School Places Allocation Section of the bureau. The bureau will separately arrange P1 places for the applicant children this June.

In the event of adverse weather or other special conditions on any day(s) during the period of making school choices, please pay heed to radio or television announcements on any special arrangements.

The results of Central Allocation for POA 2021 will be sent to parents by post from June 2 to June 3. Parents wishing to receive the results of Central Allocation of their applicant children via SMS message on June 2 may provide a mobile phone number on the Choice of Schools Form and indicate their consent to receive the results via this mobile phone number.