

SED calls on parents to arrange early COVID-19 vaccination for children (with photos)

The Secretary for Education, Dr Choi Yuk-lin, today (August 5) visited TWGHs Yau Tze Tin Memorial College to attend the "School Vaccination Day" activity, which was organised by the Education Bureau (EDB) and a school sponsoring body for the first time.

The activity was jointly organised by the EDB and the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals (the Group) with participation from 10 secondary schools, primary schools and kindergartens under the Group and in Tuen Mun District. A total of about 170 students and parents have enrolled for vaccination.

Dr Choi said, "Vaccination is the most effective way to protect against COVID-19 and can reduce the risk of severe cases and fatalities. The Government has announced the lowering of the minimum age for receiving vaccination to 6 months old. Young children may receive the Sinovac vaccine to enhance personal protection."

She appealed to parents to arrange early vaccination for their children. Eligible students who have received the first and second doses of vaccine should receive the third dose of vaccine as soon as possible for more comprehensive and effective protection. She also encouraged more school sponsoring bodies to organise joint school vaccination activities to help parents take care of vaccinated students and concentrate resources on a single spot for providing the different doses of vaccine.

From May to July this year, the School Development Sections of different districts under the EDB worked closely with regional principals' associations and schools to organise 25 rounds of the "School Vaccination Day" activity. Additionally, at least seven rounds of such activity have been scheduled for August.

Schools (including kindergartens and kindergarten-cum-child care centres) may organise outreach vaccination activities for students, teachers, school staff and parents through the Vaccination Subsidy Scheme School Outreach. They may also arrange transportation for students to receive vaccination at a Community Vaccination Centre through the group booking services under the Civil Service Bureau. The designated website for the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme (www.covidvaccine.gov.hk/en/programme) provides the latest information including details on vaccination venues, reservation and enquiry hotlines.

In addition, the EDB today announced the arrangements for face-to-face classes at the start of the 2022/23 school year. In light of the latest development of the epidemic, the preparedness of schools and health experts' advice, the EDB has decided to continue half-day face-to-face class

arrangements for the 2022/23 school year until further notice. Individual secondary schools which have reached the required vaccination rate (i.e. all teachers and school staff directly employed by the schools have met the requirements of the "Vaccine Pass" and 90 per cent or more of the total number of students of the school eligible to receive vaccination have received two doses of vaccine for more than 14 days) may arrange whole-day face-to-face classes for students. Individual secondary or primary school students who have received two doses of vaccine for more than 14 days may attend non-academic extra-curricular activities at school after lessons or during the other half-day of a school day.

As the daily rapid antigen test (RAT) arrangement helps with gatekeeping at school, after listening to the views of the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health, the EDB considered it necessary for schools to maintain the daily RAT arrangement in the new school year until further notice. The EDB will continue to distribute RAT kits to students with financial need through the schools.

Schools should continue to strictly implement the various anti-epidemic measures stipulated in the "Health Protection Measures for Schools" updated by the EDB from time to time and the "Health Advice to Schools for the Prevention of COVID-19" issued by the CHP, including the requirement of staff and students to wear masks on campus at all times and maintain an appropriate social distance.

The EDB reminds parents to continue to adopt the preventive measures against communicable diseases during the summer vacation, maintain a clean and hygienic household environment, pay attention to the health conditions of their children, and avoid taking their children to crowded places with poor ventilation. They should also closely observe the physical conditions of their children, and seek medical advice promptly if their children have fever or develop symptoms of other communicable diseases.



