

SED on Primary One admission

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Education, Mr Kevin Yeung, at a media session after attending a Legislative Council Panel on Education meeting today (September 3):

Reporter: Secretary, there are news and reports saying that basically some of the Primary One (P1) classes are kind of being cut and there are fewer class numbers. So why do you think the situation is happening? And is there anything to do with some of the education reforms that the Government has rolled out in recent years? What will the Government do in light of the situation to make sure schools can still develop stably in future, and that schools won't be forced to shut down?

Secretary for Education: I think there is some misunderstanding on the figures. I noticed that there are some reports on the cuts in the number of Primary One classes. But in fact, the way we calculate the number of P1 classes each year (such as the provisional assumption for the admission process in 2022) is based on the number of P6 classes in the previous year, and also the number of classrooms divided by six, then take whichever is larger. So it is just formula-based. It does not reflect actually the forecast of the (number) of the possible P1 students. What we will be doing is, by the middle of this month, a headcount of the new P1 students, then we will know better (if there is) any major change in the population or the number of students admitted to Primary One.

Reporter: My second question, undeniably some students were leaving, so what will the Government do to make sure schools can develop stably looking forward and that schools won't be forced to shut down?

Secretary for Education: As I said, we need to do the headcount by the middle of this month before we know exactly the impact on individual schools. Overall we noticed that there have been some saying that there were people migrating to other countries, but I think overall we have measures implemented in previous years to maintain the stability of the sector, especially the primary (school) sector. We have lowered the number of students for each class, and for surplus teachers, we would have a toleration period of three years.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)