

SED visits Yau Tsim Mong District (with photos)

The Secretary for Education, Mr Kevin Yeung, visited Yau Tsim Mong District today (August 28) to learn more about the kindergarten learning activities for non-Chinese speaking (NCS) children and a local historic building revitalisation project. He also exchanged views with local District Council members.

Accompanied by the Yau Tsim Mong District Council (YTMDC) Chairman, Mr Chris Ip; the YTMDC Vice Chairlady, Ms Wong Shu-ming; and the District Officer (Yau Tsim Mong), Mrs Laura Aron, Mr Yeung first went to Lui Seng Chun at Lai Chi Kok Road, Mong Kok. Among the first batch of the Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme launched in 2008, the Grade I historic building was turned into a Chinese medical healthcare centre. Mr Yeung was briefed by representatives of the Hong Kong Baptist University on the project and viewed the architectural features of the historic building as well as its Chinese medicine clinic and dispensary.

Afterwards, Mr Yeung called on the YTMDC to exchange views with members on education and other district issues.

Mr Yeung then visited Western Pacific Kindergarten at Waterloo Road, Yau Ma Tei. At the kindergarten, in which over 90 per cent of students come from NCS families, Mr Yeung listened to an introduction on the support for NCS children by the school management and the views on education services shared by parents. He also viewed learning activities for the students.

Under the quality kindergarten education policy, the Education Bureau has stepped up professional development programmes for teachers and school-based professional support to enhance the services for NCS students in kindergartens. In addition, kindergartens admitting eight or more NCS students can have additional funding for implementing related support measures, such as employing additional teachers.

The kindergarten has arranged two teachers for each class in which an ethnic minority English teacher and a local Chinese teacher work together to enhance students' Chinese and English proficiency through bilingual teaching. "Situated learning" is also adopted to help children learn about and integrate into community life in a joyful atmosphere. During the visit, Mr Yeung was invited to join a bus ride game and share the fun of experiential learning by playing the role of a bus driver to pick up student passengers for a bus journey.

The kindergarten and the parents have established effective communication channels through organising parents' days and activities such as picnics, a reading scheme and a mini sports day for parents and children as well as seminars and workshops to improve mutual understanding and co-

operation.

Mr Yeung thanked the kindergarten for providing holistic support for NCS children. He said that the Government has earmarked \$500 million in the 2018-19 Budget for strengthening the support services for ethnic minorities. This includes enhancing support for NCS students in learning Chinese language as well as employment and training opportunities, with a view to helping them integrate into the community and realise their potential.

