



Child Assessment Service

Department of Health

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

Follow-up Service Prior to Primary School Admission

Based on individual needs as informed by the assessment results, Child Assessment Service (CAS) will arrange follow-up services for some children prior to their admission to primary school. Updated information on the children's development and progress will be obtained through questionnaires, telephone interview or direct assessment of the children. Parents may also be invited to attend parent seminars or workshops. We aim to follow up the children's developmental progress and to make respective recommendations including those for special school placement or educational support in primary school if needed. As such, not all children have to undergo pre-primary one assessment (Pre-P.1) prior to primary school admission.

Pre-P.1 Assessment

The targets for Pre-P.1 assessment are for those children with significant learning difficulties, sensory impairments, significant physical disabilities or multiple developmental problems. The purpose is to review their progress in domains such as cognition, adaptive functioning, language and learning through standardized assessments. Based on the assessment results, we will make recommendations for special school placement or suggest respective support services for children having Special Education Needs (SEN) in mainstream primary school. Referral to specialist service(s) under Hospital Authority may also be made if indicated.

Arrangement for Pre-P.1 Follow-up and Assessment

Two questionnaires titled "Children's Developmental Progress" (parent and teacher version) will be sent to parents when their children are studying in K3. Parents and teachers are encouraged to complete and return them at their earliest convenience.

Based on medical and developmental history, as well as updated progress gathered from parents and teachers, our professional staff will decide if children need further assessment and the timing of arrangement.

Children who may need special school placement will be given priority for assessment; children pending for mainstream primary school will be assessed shortly after.

If parents decide to have their children repeat K.3, please indicate on the Children's Developmental Progress questionnaire. We will send another set of questionnaires to parents a year later (i.e. when the children is repeating K.3) to gather updated information about the children's developmental progress and to arrange assessments and/or services if indicated.

Some children may not need follow-up assessment. These include children with steady progress after preschool rehabilitation training; children who have already been referred to specialist clinic in Hospital Authority for management of their emotional, behavioural, language or physical needs; children with mild learning and/or developmental challenges who will be given timely and appropriate school support service, and children whose parents opine that they do not have significant developmental or learning problems.

For some behavioral and emotional issues, it would be more appropriate to follow-up children after they enter primary school. Relevant questionnaires will be sent out in the second term of primary one to monitor their progress.



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Modes and Areas of Assessment

Based on the children's individual needs, the assessment will cover areas such as cognitive functioning, social competence, adaptive functioning, motor functioning, language, word learning, attention, behaviour and emotion, etc. The assessment could be in the modes of direct observation of the children, parent interviews, administration of standardized tests or use of rating scales. Information provided by parents and teachers in kindergarten or child care centre will also be considered.

Each standardized test adopts a set of standard testing procedures and a unified scoring system, and to be administered on an individual basis. These standardized tests have established, through scientific research, age-norms of performance across various age groups. These norms would be used for comparing the performance of the tested children. To ensure the validity and reliability of the tests, the content and process of standardized tests are kept strictly confidential so that children are tested fairly in a rigorously controlled environment.

Depending on the children's age, cognitive abilities, and physical conditions, different developmental tests or intellectual assessment may be administered. The cognitive or intelligence tests include assessment of basic concepts, vocabularies, verbal reasoning, visual-spatial analysis, abstract reasoning, working memory, and processing speed.

Preparation for Assessment

In general

- Parents are encouraged to liaise with kindergarten/child care centre regarding their children's training routines, and to facilitate home training to ensure their children have enough exposure to apply what they have learnt and sufficient practice in self-care skills.
- Parents could regularly check on the children's developmental progress from kindergarten/child care centre in order to adjust the training needs of the children.
- Parents should refrain from over-training the children as it could be counterproductive.

Prior to assessment

- Children are advised to have enough sleep and parents are to avoid arranging intensive training.
- Depending on the children's character, prompting regarding to the assessment arrangement can be given in advance.
- Parents are to avoid being overly anxious in front of the children so as to prevent from aggravating their stress.
- For some children, their physical or emotional state may vary drastically during the course of the day. If so, it would be better to schedule the assessment at a time when the children are relatively stable in emotion. Please notify our staff and arrangements will be made as much as possible to accommodate the child's needs.

On the day of assessment

- It is advised to have sufficient time for breakfast and allow ample time for commuting to the designated center. This could prevent the children from being distraught and unsettled during assessment.
- Parents may bring the children's favorite snacks, stickers, or other small items as reward to enhance stabilizing their mood.
- Parents should cooperate with the examiner to manage the children's emotional or behavioral problems in case if any arise.
- If the children are unwell on the day of assessment, do not insist on bringing the children for the assessment. Please call our staff to reschedule the booking.
- Excessive worries would only increase stress both to yourself and the children. Parents feeling at ease could help children better apply their knowledge and skills in the assessment.



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Parents' Post-assessment Response

Understandably, parents care a lot about their children's school placement. Also, parents may have expectations on the assessment results to which sometimes, the results might vary. Parents might require some time to re-think about the results. We believe that we are in line with parents in placing the children's overall developmental needs as the first priority. With parents' positive and open attitude, and the arrangement of the most appropriate school support services, children could be helped to continue developing their abilities to the fullest potential.

What is Intellectual Disability?

Intellectual Disability (ID) is a developmental condition. Individuals with ID have intellectual abilities and adaptive functioning that are significantly below what is expected of same-age peers. This leads to difficulties in learning, communication, self-care, social functioning, and daily living in general. The symptoms of ID are usually noticeable in early childhood years. The degree of impairment can be classified into mild, moderate, severe and profound.

Do All Children with ID Have to Study in Special School?

Special schools are designed for children with disabilities who have difficulty in coping with regular schools. Depending on the children's level of intellectual disability and/or other physical impairments, suitable school placements with appropriate training and support would be suggested. Simultaneously, under the current integrated education approach adopted by the Education Bureau, children with mild ID may study in mainstream primary school. Parents are advised to consider the children's abilities and needs, as well as the family's long-term support when making decision for school placement.

Types of Special School in Hong Kong

After our assessment, children may be referred to different types of special schools, including school for children with intellectual disability, school for children with physical disability, school for children with visual impairment, and school for children with hearing impairment.

Among the schools for children with intellectual disability, there are:

Schools for Children with Mild Intellectual Disability

Offer primary school education, and focus on developing social and occupational skills that enable independent living in adulthood

Teacher-to-student ratio is 1:15

Schools for Children with Moderate Intellectual Disability

Offer training with emphasises on self-care, adaptive functioning skills, communication, and simple occupational skills

Teacher-to-student-ratio is 1:10

Schools for Children with Severe intellectual Disability

Offer training that emphasizes basic self-care, sensory and perceptual abilities, and communication skills

Teacher-to-student ratio is 1:8



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Parents can access information about special school application from institutions with pre-school rehabilitation training or the Education Bureau. It may also be helpful to contact the special schools directly for a visit to understand the school's teaching and curriculum. Websites such as the Education Bureau's platform for special schools <https://www.chsc.hk/spsp/> (in Chinese only) or the Integrated Education and Special Education Information Online (SENSE) <https://sense.edb.gov.hk/en/index.html> contain detailed information about local special schools.

To initiate the application process for special schools, parents have to sign a consent form that indicates your agreement for us to send the assessment report to the Education Bureau. Assessment results, information collected from assessment and the children's special education needs will be integrated in a report for the Education Bureau's reference.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Do all children have to undergo Pre-P.1 Assessment?

Pre-P.1 assessment is intended for children with severe learning difficulties, sensory impairments, significant physical disability, or multiple developmental problems who need special school placement or relevant school support service. Whether and when the assessment will take place depends on the children's previous diagnoses and information collected from questionnaires completed by parents and teachers.

Children with steady progress after preschool rehabilitation training and children who have already been referred to specialist clinic in Hospital Authority for management of their emotional, behavioral, language or motor aspects, *do not need to* undergo Pre-P.1 assessment.

Most primary schools will offer timely and appropriate support to children who have mild developmental or learning difficulties. For other children, parents may opine that their children do not show any significant developmental or learning difficulties. As such, not all children are required to undergo Pre-P.1 assessment.

2. Is the assessment result based solely on the children's test performance on the day of assessment and to be conducted only once?

The examiner will take into account information collected from parents and/or kindergarten/ child care centre to understand more about the children's daily functioning.

During the assessment, children are required to employ their knowledge and skills set to tackle novel problems, their on-site test performance may differ from their usual performance.

Parents could inform the examiner if they think that the children's performance on test day varies significantly from their usual performance. In general, Pre-P.1 assessment will only be conducted at one point of time, and children are not recommended to be re-assessed within a short interval.



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3. After the assessment, does CAS decide which type of special school the children will be enrolled in?

Based on the assessment results and information collected from parents and/or teachers, we will reveal our findings and discuss with the parents regarding the child's educational need. Assessment summary would be given to parents. With parents' consent, a copy of our report would be sent to the Education Bureau who will take reference from the report and be responsible for the allocation of special school placement.

4. What happens if the children should be considered for special school placement after they have been admitted to a mainstream primary school?

Parents could contact and liaise with the Special Education Needs Coordinators (SENCO) in their primary school. School-based educational psychologist will provide the necessary follow-up and assessment.

5. If the follow-up assessment has yet to be arranged, how may the necessary support and services be arranged in primary school?

By the end of K.3, professional staff in pre-school rehabilitation service units will prepare a document titled "Comprehensive Development Progress Report on Pre-school Children". It summarises the children's overall developmental progress and suggest areas that need to be supported in primary school. With parent's consent, the report will be sent to primary school via the Education Bureau for the arrangement of respective support services.

Parents may submit the relevant documents (e.g. most updated assessment summary, training progress reports and medical certificates) to primary school for their reference and arrangement of the appropriate educational support services. Parents may also contact the Special Education Needs Coordinators (SENCO) in their primary school to discuss the required support services.

The Education Bureau will enact the "Early Identification and Intervention Programme for Primary One Students with Learning Difficulties" annually in all public primary schools in Hong Kong. The programme helps school teachers identify students at risk of learning difficulties so that timely support can be provided.

As such, children who have not undergone Pre-P.1 Assessment from CAS may also receive school-based support services in primary school.