

EDUCATION BUREAU
CIRCULAR MEMORANDUM NO. 78/2018

From : Secretary for Education

To : Heads of primary and secondary schools (excluding English Schools Foundation schools and international schools)

Ref : EDB(SRC)CCT/07 Pt. 6

Date : 30 June 2018

Notes on Choosing Private Schools Offering Non-formal Curriculum

Summary

This circular memorandum serves to request schools to heighten the awareness of students and parents in choosing private schools offering non-formal curriculum (PSNFCs)^{Note} and to duplicate and distribute to parents of their students the leaflet on *Notes on Choosing Private Schools Offering Non-formal Curriculum*.

Preamble

2. Students receive essential education at formal schools, where they have a balanced development in the domains of ethics, intellect, physical development, social skills and aesthetics. Private tutorial assistance to students is only an option. Parents and students should cautiously consider whether it is necessary to patronize private tutorial schools.

Details

3. Schools are requested to bring to the attention of students and parents at opportune times such as during a weekly assembly, a class teacher period or a parent activity that if patronizing a PSNFC, including a private tutorial school, is considered necessary, parents and students should -

- (a) **Choose a PSNFC which has been registered or provisionally registered**

A PSNFC should exhibit its certificate of registration or provisional registration of a school in a conspicuous place in the school premises, and courses should be conducted only at the address(es) specified in the certificate.

- (b) **Read carefully the information contained in the course leaflet provided by a PSNFC before enrolling for a course**

Before students' enrollment for a course, a PSNFC should provide students with a course leaflet containing information on course fees, duration, time and venue, the principal and teachers and refund policies

^{Note} : Private schools which offer educational courses such as tutorial, commercial, language and computer courses are all categorised as private schools offering non-formal curriculum (PSNFCs).

and procedures.

(c) Pay attention to the course fees information

A PSNFC should display information in respect of the courses operated and their inclusive fees at a prominent position in the school premises.

(d) Pay course fees on a monthly basis

A PSNFC should collect course fees on an equal monthly basis. The first monthly instalment should be collected not earlier than one month before the commencement of the educational course. Other than the first instalment, each instalment of the fees should be collected on or after the first school day of each month of the period during which the educational course is conducted. Students and parents should not pay course fees in a lump sum by any means, including the use of credit cards.

(e) Retain formal receipts

The formal receipt for a payment received should be stamped with the school chop, signed by the supervisor of the PSNFC and should contain information on the registered school name and address(es), the student's name, the course name and venue, the date and the amount of the fee collected and the month covered by the fee paid. Students and parents should retain the receipt for refund purpose if necessary.

(f) Select a PSNFC with safe learning environment

Students and parents should check whether the number of students in class exceeds the permitted accommodation which is specified in a notice exhibited in a prominent place in each classroom.

(g) Choose the appropriate course date and time

Parents should choose suitable courses, paying attention to the appropriateness in the amount, period and time of the tutorial assistance needed.

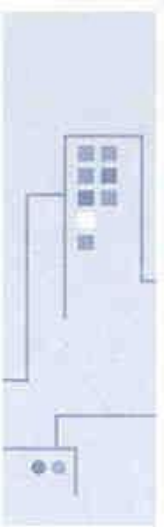
4. To facilitate access by students and parents to the relevant information and to prevent them from being defrauded, schools are requested to duplicate and distribute the attached leaflet on *Notes on Choosing Private Schools Offering Non-formal Curriculum* to the parents of their students.

5. Should you have any enquiry, please contact the respective Senior School Development Officer.

Ms Jenny CHAN
for Secretary for Education

c.c. Heads of Sections

Notes on Choosing Private Schools Offering Non-formal Curriculum



With effect from 1 July 2004, private schools offering non-formal curriculum (PSNFCs)^{Note 1} are exempted from the provisions of the Education Ordinance and the Education Regulations relating to **fees, employment of teachers, teachers' qualifications, principals, holidays and hours of instruction**, subject to compliance with the conditions specified in the Education (Exemption) (Private Schools Offering Non-formal Curriculum) Order. For details of the exempt provisions and the conditions of exemption under the Education (Exemption) (Private Schools Offering Non-formal Curriculum) Order, please visit the Education Bureau Homepage at <http://www.edb.gov.hk>.

To protect their interests and to be wise consumers, students who intend to enrol in a PSNFC and their parents should take note of the following matters.

■ Choose a school which has been registered or provisionally registered with the Education Bureau

According to the Education Ordinance, every school^{Note 2} is required to be registered with the Education Bureau. A school should display its certificate of registration or provisional registration in a conspicuous place in the school premises, and courses should be conducted at the address(es) specified in the certificate only.

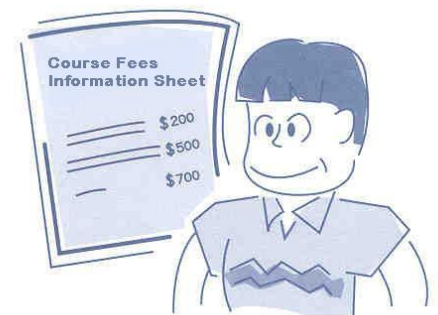


■ Read carefully the information contained in the course leaflet provided by the school

Before students enrol on a course, the school should provide them with a course leaflet containing details of the course fee, duration, time and venue, as well as information on the principal, teachers, refund policies and procedures.

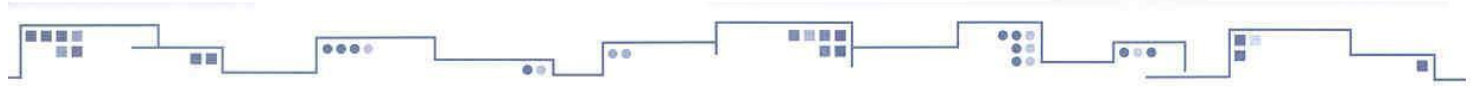
■ Pay attention to the course fees information

The school should display information in respect of the courses operated and their inclusive fees (including monthly fees and the number of instalments) in a conspicuous place in the school premises.



^{Note 1} Apart from schools which offer post secondary, secondary, primary, kindergarten and nursery education, private schools offering educational courses such as tutorial, commercial, language and computer courses are all categorized as private schools offering non-formal curriculum.

^{Note 2} According to the Education Ordinance, a "school" means an institution, organization or establishment which provides for 20 or more persons during any one day or 8 or more persons at any one time, any nursery, kindergarten, primary, secondary or post secondary education or any other educational courses by any means, including correspondence delivered by hand or through the postal services.



■ Pay course fees on a monthly basis

The school should collect course fees on an equal monthly basis. It should, in accordance with the Education Ordinance, collect the first instalment no earlier than one month before the commencement of the educational course. Other than the first instalment, subsequent instalments should be collected on or after the first school day of each month of the period during which the educational course is conducted. Students and parents should not pay course fees in a lump sum by any means, including the use of credit cards.

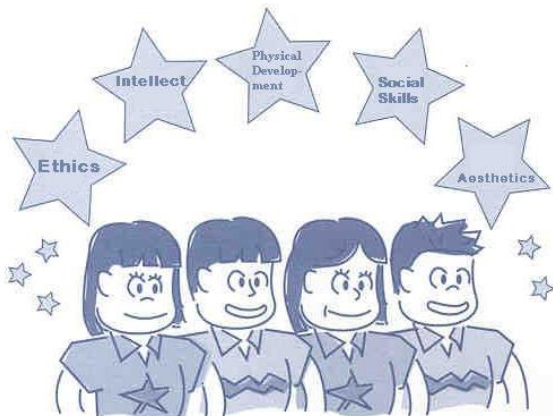


■ Retain formal receipt

The receipt for a course payment should contain the registered school name and address(es), the student's name, the course name (or code) and venue, the date and the amount of the fee collected and the month covered by the fee paid. It should also bear the school chop and be endorsed by the supervisor of the school. Parents and students should retain the receipt as a proof of enrolment and for refund purposes when necessary.

■ Select a school with a safe learning environment

Parents and students should pay attention to the school environment and check whether the number of students in a class exceeds the permitted accommodation of the classroom which is specified in a notice displayed in a conspicuous place in each classroom.



■ Choose the appropriate course date and time

Students should have a balanced development in the domains of ethics, intellect, physical development, social skills and aesthetics. Normally there is no need for them to enrol on tutorial courses; in case it is considered necessary, parents should choose suitable courses, paying attention to the appropriateness in the amount, period and time of the tutorial assistance needed.

Website and telephone enquiry

Education Bureau Homepage <http://www.edb.gov.hk>

Education Bureau 24-hour automatic telephone enquiry 2891 0088