

Helping Your Children of Kindergarten Age







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Foreword

Family is where we first receive education in our life. Parents play an important role in their children's growth and learning. The Education Bureau (EDB) would like to deliver the following messages to all parents:

1. Education begins at families. Parents are the first and most important teachers of their children;
2. To nurture a child, kindergartens certainly play an important role, but they can never replace family education.



Helping Your Children of Kindergarten Age



We would like to take this opportunity to draw parents' attention to the messages, and the skills to get along with their children. Parents and schools should work together to achieve the common goal of providing their children with a life-long learning foundation. This can be accomplished by giving the children a pleasurable and diversified life experience that meets their developmental needs, thereby cultivating their interest in learning and helping them to develop good living habits.

Nurturing children is the inherent duty of parents and parenting is an art. We sincerely hope that all parents will take an active role in ensuring healthy and happy development of children. Public views on this booklet are most welcome. Please send your comments to the Kindergarten Inspection Section, Education Bureau, Wu Chung House, 213 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai, Hong Kong.



How Much Do You Know About Child **Development**

Chapter 1



Do you know about the kindergarten children?

Let's listen to what they say:

- During the early years, my body grew rapidly. I had to do a lot of exercise in order to learn body movement coordination and understand different spatial concepts such as up and down, far and near. I was fond of running, jumping, climbing, cycling etc. Please let me have adequate physical activities every day so that I can grow taller and stronger.

How Much Do You Know About Child Development

- When I turned three, I could not grasp a pencil properly to write or draw. I needed lots of opportunities for free painting and pre-writing games such as Play-Doh, bead-threading etc. Between the age of four or five, I had a better control of my fingers and pencils. My coordination was also improving. I was then ready to write.
- I needed to play with toys a lot to practise my fine motor skills. Playing with toys was fun. It helped my intellectual development too. Some toys, such as blocks and Play-Doh, could unleash my creativity. Playing with water and sand could soothe my emotions. Learning through play could provide me with pleasurable learning experience, help me think faster and learn better!
- When I first entered kindergarten, I could only utter short phrases. I liked talking to myself and imitating what adults said. In kindergarten, I learned through games and activities such as role-play and imaginative play. My language ability grew over the years. By and by, I could communicate more effectively by using more complex sentences and abstract vocabulary!



Chapter 1

- On admission to kindergarten, I was rather self-centred and could not understand others' views or perspectives. Playing with other children in kindergarten helped me learn the right attitude to get along with others. At the same time, I had better self-control and learned to observe rules when being part of a group.
- I loved music and often moved to it. In kindergarten, I had more opportunities to sing, move rhythmically and play musical games with other children. This helped exert my music talent, cultivate my interest in music, and promote my imagination!
- I loved art and crafts. In kindergarten, teachers let me observe, draw, explore and create with different art materials. I became more aware of the things around me and this helped my understanding and appreciation. Gradually, I could draw simple pictures such as people, houses, airplanes etc. I could even use my imagination to express myself and create my own drawings.
- Before entering kindergarten, I needed adults to help me with eating, getting dressed and tidying things up. In kindergarten, I learned to eat, wash hands, wipe mouth, and go to toilet by myself. Mom and dad, please give me more opportunities to try, so that I can take better care of myself and form good personal hygiene habits.
- During the early years, I learned from real life experience. I used my senses to explore things around me, e.g. I observed with my eyes, touched and manipulated things with my hands etc. At first, I judged things by intuition. As I became more experienced in communicating with others, abstract logic and concepts such as words and symbols became more comprehensible.

How Much Do You Know About Child Development

Parents should note that:

The growth and development is similar for every child, but each individual develops at his/her own rate. As every child is unique, do not compare children with each other.





How to **Help** Your Children Grow Up Happily



Chapter 2

Healthy and happy growth comprises a balanced development in the domains of physique, intellect and emotion.

Care for your children's physical health

- Develop their habit of going to bed early and getting up early
- Ensure they have sufficient sleep
- Teach them the correct postures of sitting and standing
- Raise their awareness of personal hygiene
- Provide them with a fresh and balanced diet



How to Help Your Children Grow Up Happily



- Provide them with sufficient meal time
- Help them build up good eating habits, such as:
 - maintain a balanced diet
 - eat moderately at regular hours
 - avoid having too many snacks
 - wash hands before meals
 - avoid wastage of food
- Take precautions to ensure safety at home and the surrounding environment
 - identify the potential risks in the environment at children's eye level
- Help them look after themselves, e.g. getting dressed, tidying up things etc. so as to develop their coordination and self-care ability
- Let them have enough physical activities

Chapter 2

Facilitate your children's intellectual development

- Have a multitude of opportunities to talk with your children. Use open-ended questions to let them express their opinions and thoughts freely
- Listen to them with patience and try to understand their thoughts and feelings
- Give your children appropriate guidance, and encourage them to share what they have experienced in daily lives
- Make regular visits to libraries with your children, read books together to foster their interest in reading
- Let them listen to music often. This will help their imagination, concentration and emotions
- Spend more time to play with your children
 - let them take the initiative and avoid giving too many restrictions and guidelines, so as to foster their creativity and imagination
- General tips on how to select toys for your children:
 - choose those that match their abilities
 - choose those that suit their interests
 - avoid those with pointed or sharp edges or small components, and ensure that the materials are safe
 - use diversified or open materials to unleash their creativity
 - make good use of household articles or recycled products to create your own toys

How to Help Your Children Grow Up Happily



- While your children are playing with their toys, pay attention to the following:
 - avoid giving them too many toys at a time
 - encourage them to tidy up after playing
 - teach them to treasure their toys and not to discard old toys on receiving new ones
- Choose television programmes and computer games that are appropriate for your children. Watch TV together and explain when necessary. Teach them the right way to protect their eyesight while watching TV or computer screens
- Take your children to visits and exhibitions to enrich their life experience. Discuss with them the relevant subjects to broaden their general knowledge

Concern your children's emotional and behavioural development

- All children need love and support. You should accept their individuality and give specific and appropriate encouragement. Help them build up their self-confidence
- Children need to be respected before they know how to respect others. Listen to what they say, try to understand and acknowledge their feelings. It helps children build up their self-esteem
- Children love imitating others. Adults should always be their good role models. Remember, your actions speak louder than words
- Good rapport and harmonious relationship among family members give children a sense of security. Children who grow up in a caring environment tend to be more emotionally stable
- Children usually comprehend things partially. You must guide them thoroughly with patience on what they can do and how to do it right. The instructions given should be clear and specific, e.g. say "Please put the toys back to the basket" instead of "Don't misplace the toys"
- Doting on your children or giving free rein will hinder their development of the concepts of right and wrong. If their behaviour becomes dangerous, disruptive or destructive, you should stop them immediately
- Point out the mischief instead of criticising your children personally, e.g. say "I know you are unhappy, but vent your anger on the vase is not correct" instead of "You are such a rude child"

How to Help Your Children Grow Up Happily



- You may not agree on your children's behaviour, yet you may try to acknowledge their feelings
- Encourage your children to articulate their feelings in words instead of resorting to offensive, destructive or aggressive behaviour
- Arrange appropriate leisure activities and games to ventilate your children's emotions. For example, take them to a park to run and jump freely
- Give your children a choice on trivial matters. For example, let them choose the colours of their clothes, they would then feel respected and enjoy the autonomy

Parents should note that:

As your children grow up, they may experience problems concerning learning or adaptation in life situations. Most of these problems are neither serious nor permanent. They can be solved if you are willing to spend more time and effort to provide them with suitable and timely assistance. You should not be too worried, but instead, adopt a positive and accepting attitude by contacting the school principal, teachers or relevant professionals (see Appendix 1) as early as possible. Together, you will be able to sort out a solution which in turn, promotes a healthy and happy development of your children.



What Is A **Good** Kindergarten



Chapter 3

Environment and facilities

- A safe and hygienic physical environment
- A spacious play area
- A variety of toys and learning resources
- Comprehensive teaching facilities that meet children's needs
- A stimulating environment for learning





School management

- Comply with the provisions of the *Education Ordinance and Education Regulations*
- Post the certificate of registration and the fees certificate in a prominent place within the school premises
- Display the permitted accommodation of the classroom in a prominent place of each classroom
- Deploy teaching staff according to the *Education Regulations*
- Arrange meals and transportation for children properly
- Be transparent. Provide the public with information regarding school operation, development and future plans

School missions

- Be in line with social development
- Be recognised by parents

Chapter 3



Curriculum aims

- Be in line with the policy of pre-primary education in Hong Kong and the characteristics of child development
- Foster children's positive learning attitudes and good habits
- Nurture children to attain all-round and balanced development

Curriculum contents

- Use children's mother tongue as the medium of instruction
- Organise child-centred learning activities based on children's abilities, interests and needs

What Is A Good Kindergarten

- Let children learn happily through games and activities
- Provide activities to develop children's social skills and creativity
- Arrange sufficient music and physical activities for children every day

Learning and teaching

- Teachers should be equipped with professional knowledge and attitude
- Teachers should be friendly and patient, and able to establish a good relationship with children
- Children should be given enough time to choose their own activities every day, so as to enhance their self-learning ability
- Teachers should respect and cater for individual differences
- Teacher should make effective use of learning corners and play materials
- Assignments should be suitable in quantity and diversified in content to match children's abilities



Chapter 3

Assessment for learning

- Assessment should be linked to the principles of child development. Do not expect all children of the same class level to attain the same standard of performance, and do not compare them with each other.
- Assessment should be based on the continuous observation record of children's performance and progress in different aspects. Dictation, tests or examinations should not be used as assessment.
- Involve parents in the assessment process. For instance, invite them to provide information about their children's performance at home for school's reference.

Education Bureau publishes the *Profile of Kindergartens and Kindergarten-cum-Child Care Centres* every year for parents' reference in selecting kindergarten or child care centre for their children. Information listed in the profile includes school background and characteristics, fees, staff qualifications, curriculum information, number of students, teacher-student ratio, school facilities, and whether the school has participated in the Pre-primary Education Voucher Scheme. The profile is available at Regional Education Offices of EDB, Public Enquiry Service Centres of Home Affairs Department, Maternal and Child Health Centres of Department of Health, Integrated Family Service Centres of Social Welfare Department, and public libraries. Parents can also surf the following websites: <http://www.edb.gov.hk> or <http://www.chsc.hk/kindergarten/en/>.

What Is A Good Kindergarten





How Can Parents **Help** Their Children Adapt to School Life



Chapter 4



Schooling in kindergartens marks the beginning of a new stage for children. It is very important that schools and parents work together to help children adapt smoothly to school life. Prior to and during the initial stage of your children's schooling, you can help them prepare for school life in the following ways:

- At home, give your children more opportunities to develop their self-help skills, such as:
 - getting dressed: buttoning, zipping, shoe-tying
 - tidying things up
 - wiping sweat and cleaning runny nose
 - proper table manners
 - toilet training

How Can Parents Help Their Children Adapt to School Life

- In daily life, give your children opportunities to learn to:
 - listen attentively
 - answer questions
 - express their needs
 - get along with others
- Parents, accompanied by their children, attend the schools' "Orientation Day" or "Orientation Week", as well as adaptive activities to gain familiarity with the new teachers and environment prior to the start of school.



Chapter 4

- Familiarise your children with the new environment by walking around the school premises with them
- Guide your children to try out school facilities
- Explain the drop-off and pick-up arrangement to your children and remind them of the safety precautions. Promise that they will be picked up after school to help them build up a sense of security
- Encourage your children to socialise with their schoolmates. Try to know other parents at the same time
- Keep close contact with your children's teachers
- Help your children feel secured by talking with them every day, sharing their feelings and thoughts about their school lives and clearing their doubts if any. This will help them get over the adaptive period smoothly



How Can Parents Help Their Children Adapt to School Life



Understand the difficulties faced by children in coping with kindergarten life

- Children may find themselves unaccustomed to certain situations at the beginning of their school life, such as:
 - being away from home
 - being separated from parents
 - being placed in an unfamiliar environment
 - having to get along with a group of unfamiliar people (teachers and other children)
 - being placed in a much more spacious area
 - having to follow routines

Chapter 4

- Children may behave in an unusual manner at the beginning of the school term, such as:
 - being exceptionally attached to and showing particular reliance on parents
 - feeling extremely tired
 - losing temper easily
 - sucking fingers frequently
 - wetting bed without particular reasons

All of these may be temporary as your children have not yet adapted to the new environment. You need not worry too much and your children will gradually adjust to the new environment under the care and guidance of you and the school.

- If, despite all your preparation work, your children still keep crying and are afraid of going to school:
 - do not worry too much since children's adaptability to new environment varies
 - do not threaten or bribe your children to behave
 - console them gently and entrust them to their teachers' care
 - allow them more time to adapt to school life
 - give appropriate support and encouragement, and share their school life
 - keep close contact with the teachers, if necessary, to understand your children's behaviour in school and collaborate with them for the well-being of the children

How Can Parents Help Their Children Adapt to School Life





Home-School Co-operation for Nurturing the New Generation

Chapter 5

Parents and schools are partners. To ensure a healthy development of children, schools need parents' support and assistance. Therefore, a close home-school relationship must be established in order to allow parents to understand their children's performance in school, which in turn improves the coordination between both parties. Parents' active participation can step up the synergy of home-school co-operation:

- Visit the school to gain a better understanding of the school environment and curriculum arrangements
- Observe how your children learn in school
- Understand the characteristics of child learning and development. Do not request the school to give writing assignment to your children too early, or assess your children's learning using inappropriate tools such as dictation, tests and examinations



Home-School Co-operation for Nurturing the New Generation



- Take part in parents' activities organised by the school such as parent-teacher association, education seminars, parent-child activities, and volunteer as parent helpers
- Keep close contact with the teachers to understand your children's daily experiences at school
- Read the information provided in the parents' handbook and notices issued by the school. Make use of the parents' newsletter, children's handbooks etc. to communicate with the school when necessary
- If your children are allergic to certain kinds of food, temperature, articles of daily use or even toys, you should inform the school to make appropriate arrangements
- Make use of the communication channels provided by the school. Give positive feedback and comments to facilitate school development



Develop Children's Potential through Comprehensive and Pleasurable Learning Experiences



Chapter 6

Quality early childhood education aims to nurture children to attain balanced growth in the domains of ethics, intellect, physique, social skills and aesthetics, and to foster their whole person development.

To attain the goal of quality early childhood education, games and meaningful activities are essential. A relaxed and enjoyable learning environment will develop children's potential, cultivate their interest in learning and enable them to grow up healthily and happily.

A Quality Kindergarten should:

- not adopt a curriculum that does not match with children's abilities
- not ask children in nursery class to write
- not assign too much homework
- not assign repetitive copying tasks
- avoid arithmetic exercises merely for drilling purposes
- avoid mechanical computer exercises
- avoid repetitive copying or rote memorising of English vocabulary
- not use dictation, tests or examinations as assessment tools

The above practices will stifle children's interest in learning and hinder their creativity.

Develop Children's Potential through Comprehensive and Pleasurable Learning Experiences



Parents should encourage their children to:

- have an enquiring mind
- explore
- exploit their creativity and imagination
- build up good reading habits
- be confident in expressing their feelings and views
- develop their learning interest that lays the foundation for life-long learning

Chapter 6

How to love your children

All parents love their children. Nevertheless, what children need is love not spoiling. Parental love is an essential nutrient for children and the most important foundation for maintaining parent-child relationship. Every child is unique in terms of physique, talents, character and interests. Parents should understand and accept their children's uniqueness, and have reasonable expectations of their children.

Life in itself is a learning process. Children need to learn by trial and error in their course of development. Parents should pinpoint their children's mischief, not them personally, and provide them with guidance patiently. Give specific encouragement when their children perform well, such as praising their efforts and concentration. When their children encounter setbacks, parents should give them support and encouragement. In addition, parents should spend some time to play with their children each day, talk with them, listen to what they say and empathise their feelings and emotions.

In disciplining children, parents should be consistent in their approaches and attitudes. Their behaviour should conform to their words. They should set good examples for their children. Parents should also collaborate with the teachers to help children form good habits and grow up healthily and happily.



Develop Children's Potential through Comprehensive and Pleasurable Learning Experiences



Some tips on “How to love your children” for parents’ reference:

Love your children but avoid doting on them

Have realistic expectation of children’s capabilities

Show concern for both their physical and psychological well-being

Share their joy and sadness

Maintain daily communication with your children

Be patient when children make mistakes

Set good role models for your children

Be generous with your encouragement and praise

Discipline appropriately to rectify mischief

Maintain good home-school co-operation

Appendix 1

Professional support services are as follows:

1. Department of Health

21/F, Wu Chung House, 213 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai, Hong Kong

Tel: 2961 8989 / 2961 8991

Website: <http://www.dh.gov.hk>

2. Child Assessment Centres, Department of Health

- Fanling Child Assessment Centre
4/F, Fanling Health Care Centre, 2 Pik Fung Road, Fanling,
New Territories Tel: 2639 1402
- Pamela Youde Child Assessment Centre (Sha Tin)
2/F, 31-33 Chap Wai Kon Street, Sha Tin, New Territories Tel: 2210 1600
- Tuen Mun Child Assessment Centre
G/F, Tuen Mun Hospital, 23 Tsing Chung Koon Road, Tuen Mun,
New Territories Tel: 2468 5261
- Ha Kwai Chung Child Assessment Centre
2/F, Ha Kwai Chung Polyclinic & Special Education Services
Centre, 77 Lai Cho Road, Kwai Chung, New Territories Tel: 2370 1887
- Central Kowloon Child Assessment Centre
2/F, 147L Argyle Street, Kowloon City, Kowloon Tel: 2246 6633
- Pamela Youde Child Assessment Centre (Kwun Tong)
3/F, 79 Cha Kwo Ling Road, Kwun Tong, Kowloon Tel: 2727 8474

3. Family Health Service, Department of Health

Room 1308, Guardian House,
32 Oi Kwan Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong

Tel: 2961 8855

2112 9900 (24-hour Automatic Telephone Enquiry system)

Website: <http://www.fhs.gov.hk>

4. Integrated Family Services and Integrated Family Service Centres, Social Welfare Department

Hotline: 2343 2255

Website: <http://www.swd.gov.hk>

5. Family Life Education Resource Centre, Social Welfare Department

24/F, Southorn Centre,
130 Hennessy Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong

Tel: 2835 1949

Website: <http://www.family-land.org>

6. Against Child Abuse

- Head Office

13/F, Corn Yan Centre, 3 Jupiter Street, North Point, Hong Kong

Tel: 3542 5722

- Chuk Yuen Centre

Room 107-108, G/F, Wai Yuen House, Chuk Yuen (North) Estate, Wong Tai Sin

Tel: 2351 6060

Appendix 1

- Tuen Mun Centre
Room 409, Ting Cheung House, On Ting Estate, Tuen Mun, New Territories
Tel: 2450 2244
- Hotline: 2755 1122
Website: <http://www.aca.org.hk>

7. The Hong Kong Council of Social Service - Family and Community Service

11/F-13/F, Duke of Windsor Social Service Building,
15 Hennessy Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong
Tel: 2864 2929

8. Hong Kong Council of Early Childhood Education and Services

Room D3, 3/F, Hop Hing Industrial Building,
704 Castle Peak Road, Cheung Sha Wan, Kowloon
Tel: 2788 1666

9. School Places Allocation Section (Primary One Admission), Education Bureau

Office 2, 2/F, Manulife Financial Centre,
223 Wai Yip Street, Kwun Tong, Kowloon
Tel: 2832 7700 (General enquiry)
2891 0088 (24-hour Automatic Telephone Enquiry system)

Hotlines of Other Organisations

1. The Boys' and Girls' Clubs Association of Hong Kong

“Comprehensive Child Development” Parents' Hotline: 2866 6388

2. Tung Wah Group of Hospitals

Child Care Hotline: 2770 2262

3. Hong Kong Lutheran Social Service

Lutheran Parents' Hotline: 3622 1111

4. Hong Kong Young Women's Christian Association

Counselling Hotline: 2711 6622

5. Hong Kong Family Welfare Society

Family Careline: 2342 3110

6. Po Leung Kuk

Family Support Hotline: 8103 2338

Other References

1. Parent Academy

Website: <http://www.hkedcity.net/parent/>

2. HKEdCity

Website: <http://www.hkedcity.net>

Appendix 2

Hong Kong Regional Education Office

3/F, Cityplaza 3, 14 Taikoo Wan Road,
Hong Kong

Tel

2863 4646

Central & Western District

2863 4678

Wan Chai District

2863 4626

Hong Kong East District

2863 4649

Southern District

2863 4664

Islands District

2863 4634

Kowloon Regional Education Office

Podium-1/F, East Block, Education Bureau Kowloon Tong
Education Services Centre, 19 Suffolk Road, Kowloon Tong

3698 4108

Yau Tsim & Mong Kok District

3698 4163

Sham Shui Po District

3698 4196

Kowloon City District

3698 4141

Wong Tai Sin District

3698 4219

Kwun Tong District

3698 4178

Sai Kung District

3698 4206

New Territories East Regional Education Office

Tel

22/F, Landmark North, 39 Lung Sum Avenue,
Sheung Shui, New Territories

2639 4876

Sha Tin District

2639 4857

Tai Po District

2639 4856

North District

2639 4858

New Territories West Regional Education Office

19/F, Chinachem Tsuen Wan Plaza, 457 Castle Peak Road,
Tsuen Wan, New Territories

2437 7272

Kwai Chung & Tsing Yi District

2437 5433

Tsuen Wan District

2437 5457

Tuen Mun District

2437 5483

Yuen Long District

2437 7217

Appendix 3

The Pre-primary Education Voucher Scheme (hereafter referred to as the “PEVS”) provides direct fee subsidy for parents/legal guardians/registered custodians with children attending kindergartens or kindergarten-cum-child care centres (hereafter collectively referred to as “kindergartens”) in form of pre-primary education vouchers. Kindergartens eligible for PEVS may redeem the vouchers of their students. For information about tuition fees and other details of kindergartens, please refer to the *Profile of Kindergartens* and *Kindergarten-cum-Child Care Centres* published by EDB or visit the website of EDB at <http://www.edb.gov.hk>.

Enquiries

Applicants may visit the website of EDB for details of the PEVS. Application details are available at the website of the Student Finance Office, Working Family and Student Financial Assistance Agency. Applicants may also enquire about individual application by phone.

Address: Room 713, 7/F, Kwai Hing Government Offices,
166-174 Hing Fong Road, Kwai Chung, New Territories

Enquiry hotline: 2802 2345 (24-hour Telephone Enquiry System)

Website: <http://www.wfsfaa.gov.hk/sfo/eng>

Kindergarten and Child Care Centre Fee Remission Scheme

The government has launched the PEVS since the 2007/08 school year to provide direct fee subsidy for parents with children attending kindergartens that are eligible to join the PEVS. If the parents of the students eligible for joining the PEVS need extra financial assistance, they may approach the Student Finance Office, Working Family and Student Financial Assistance Agency to apply for the Kindergarten and Child Care Centre Fee Remission Scheme.

Address: Room 713, 7/F, Kwai Hing Government Offices,
166-174 Hing Fong Road, Kwai Chung, New Territories

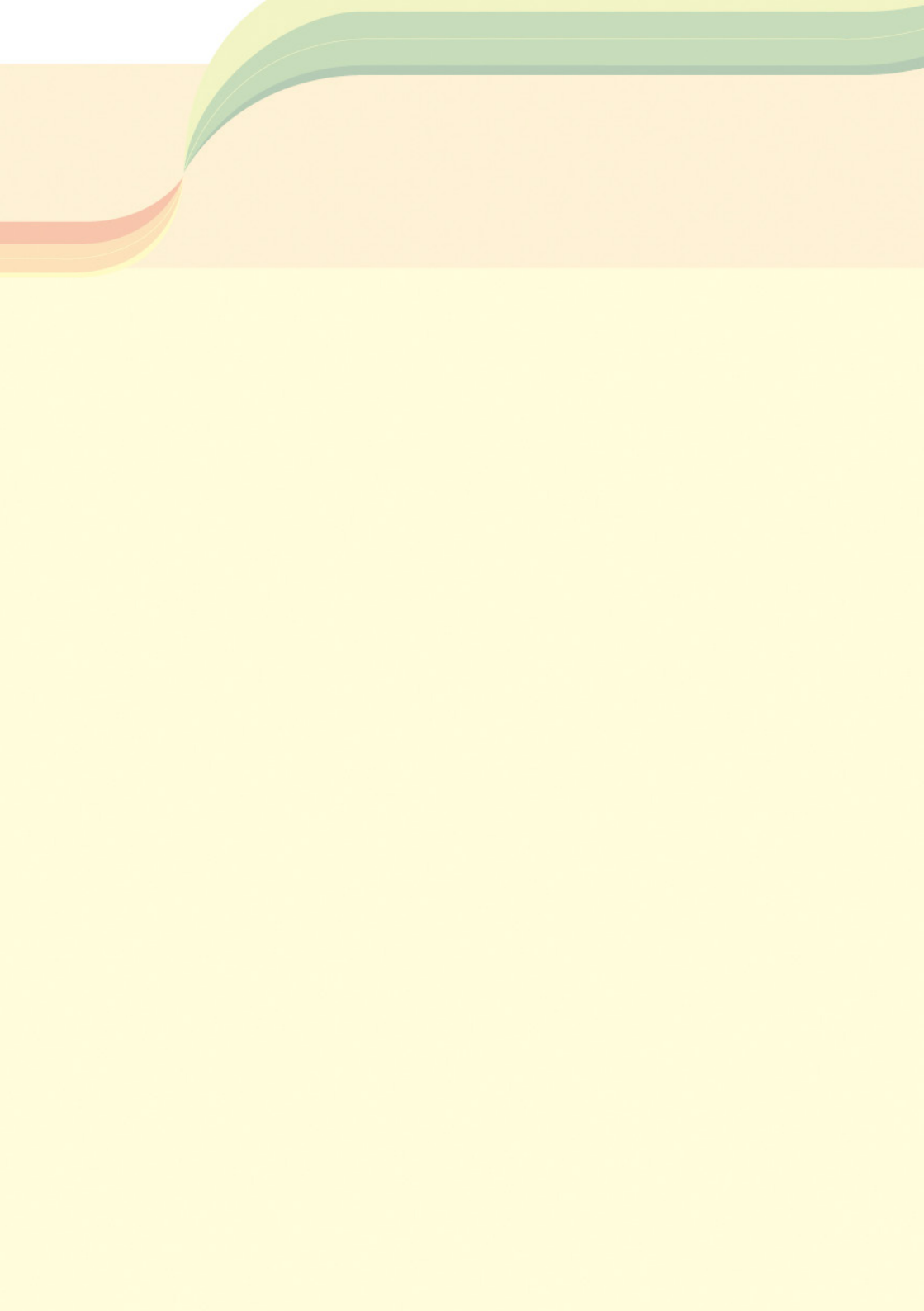
Enquiry Hotline: 2802 2345 (24-hour Telephone Enquiry System)

Guide to the Pre-primary Curriculum

Aim to enhance the quality of pre-primary education in Hong Kong, the Curriculum Development Council published the *Guide to the Pre-primary Curriculum* in 2006 for all pre-primary institutions, where recommendations for areas such as curriculum planning, learning and teaching, assessment etc. were given. Subsequently, the *Guide to the Pre-primary Curriculum – Parent Booklet* was published in 2007 to promote parents' basic understanding of the curriculum. They can then work collaboratively with schools to help their children grow healthily and happily during this important stage of development.

The *Guide to the Pre-primary Curriculum – Parent Booklet* can be accessed at the following website:

http://www.edb.gov.hk/kg_guide_parent_booklet_eng





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