



Mr Yeung Yun-hung, Kevin, JP
Secretary for Education
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
11/F, East Wing, Central Government Offices
2 Tim Mei Avenue
Tamar
Hong Kong

6 April 2022

Dear Secretary Yeung,

Through the Education Sub Committee of the British Chamber of Commerce, I have heard that there was a meeting last Saturday between international schools, the Chief Executive and yourself to consider the procedure for the in-person return to schools post the Easter holidays. I was pleased to hear that two specific reassurances were given:

- Children would not be separated from parents following contraction of COVID-19 unless they are in need of intensive, emergency or life-saving medical care; and
- home isolation is encouraged for low-risk individuals who have contracted COVID-19, provided that they do not live with someone who may be identified as being at high risk of severe complications and can arrange for a single room and a toilet to be exclusively allocated.

We of course welcome the return of in-person classes on 19 April. However, it has not been possible for schools to make adequate provisions – or to allay parents' and students' concerns – without knowing the answers to some critical questions. These include:

- Is it definite that schools can resume face-to-face teaching from 19th April?
- Will the resumption of face-to-face be half or full days – is it dependent on 90% pupil vaccination rate? (N.B. Some Regional Education Officers have indicated that international schools may not have to comply with this requirement as has been reported in the SCMP.)
- What is the procedure if a student comes down with COVID? Does the school have to close as per current CHP guidelines?
- What is the procedure if a school staff comes down with COVID?
- What are the instructions as to whether school staff and/or students should undergo Rapid Antigen Tests twice weekly (as per UK/US procedure)?
- What are the instructions relating to whether or not extra curricula activities and sports can go ahead and under what conditions?

We appreciate the complexity of this situation. However, it is becoming increasingly urgent that we get some clarity on these issues – and that the schools, both local and international, are informed before the media. Many international schools closed on Friday 1 April for the 2-



week Easter break, and it puts them in a very challenging position to plan ahead. This uncertainty is causing significant stress to schools and parents. A significant number of families have left Hong Kong for countries where their children can safely attend school. Many others will follow suit if this uncertainty continues.

We would respectfully request an urgent response to the matters raised in this letter and would be happy to attend a further meeting for that purpose.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Burnett OBE
Chairman
The British Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong

Cc Ms Priscilla To Kit-lai, JP, Deputy Secretary for Education
Dr Ronald Lam Man-kin, JP, Director of Health, Department of Health
Mr David Graham, Executive Director, The British Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong
Mr Mark Loasby, Chair of Education Committee, The British Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong