



**Six Months into the CNOPE Reform Project
HKSPC's Children's Residential Home Embraces New Culture**

(29 September 2022, Hong Kong) The Hong Kong Society for the Protection of Children (HKSPC) was delighted to receive visitors from the Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Welfare Services and Executive Council (ExCo) to its Children's Residential Home (CRH) on 28 September 2022 and today respectively for a first-hand feel of the change introduced at the home since March under the stewardship of the Council of Non-profit Making Organisations for Pre-primary Education (CNOPE), piloting the CARE model with improved staffing ratio. Visitors were briefed on the latest operation at CRH, and taken around the facility to interact with the children and their carers. HKSPC took the opportunity to also update the visitors on other initiatives undertaken to strengthen management and governance (see attached Implementation Update).

The visitors met the new Management team including but not limited to the Deputy Director (Child Care & Education), CRH Superintendent, and the Child Safeguarding Consultant, whose job is to single-mindedly ground and sustain a child-centric culture in CRH and across the Society.

The CRH Revamp Project is part of the Society's Change to Improve initiative in response to the recommendations of the First Interim Report of the Independent Review Committee. The Society is committed to sustaining the mission-driven culture under the new leadership, new frontline team, enhanced systems and mechanisms, as well as reinforced, continuous communication and in particular internal engagement. (Ends)

About Hong Kong Society for the Protection of Children

HKSPC has been committed to nurturing children in their early childhood development since 1926. Being one of the most established organisations in the field, HKSPC currently operates 28 service units and serves around 3,000 children aged 0 to 16 and their families on a daily basis.

Media Enquiry

Corporate Communications Department, HKSPC

Annie Loi

Tel : 3184 6660

Email : annieloi@hkspc.org

Laura Chan

Tel : 3184 6678

Email : laurachan@hkspc.org

IRC First Interim Report Recommendations Implementation Update (as at 27 Sep 2022)

Recommendations for CRH	Implementation Updates
<p>1. Wholesale staff to ensure children first principle</p>	<p>1.1. CNOPE-coordinated the Children’s Residential Home (CRH) Reform Project (the Project) commenced in late Mar 2022 to introduce fundamental change in CRH’s residential child care model, with enhanced training and coaching to focus on professional development of CCWs and building of personal bond between carers and children.</p> <p>1.2. By Oct 2022, only a few Children Care Workers (CCWs) who were on staff before the Dec 2021 Incident continue to serve CRH under Project.</p> <p>1.3. Headcounts of CCWs have been expanded to 80 from 54 and CCW-child ratio is improved to 1:5.</p> <p>1.4. Chief CCWs, CCW team leaders and social workers are assigned to children of four different age groups to enhance supervision and support to front-line workers.</p> <p>1.5. A new Assistant Superintendent and a new Chief CCW reported for duty on 26 Sep.</p> <p>1.6. The digital platform for recording children’s daily activities and developmental progress is being redesigned to improve user-friendliness and efficiency. Project is led by Deputy Director (Child Care & Education).</p>
<p>2. Governance, management & monitoring upgrade</p>	<p>2.1. Audit & Risk Management Committee was established in Mar 2022 and is chaired by former HKSPC Chairman and Legislator Peter Wong; Risk Management, Compliance and Internal Audit Department (RMD) was formed with Audit & Risk Management Director in position since mid-Jun. RMD has grown to 4 members and the external service provider has submitted the draft report for the first 2 internal audit projects of the year.</p> <p>2.2. Service leadership is enhanced with new Deputy Director (Child Care & Education) in position since mid Jul.</p> <p>2.3. Executive Committee (ExCo) Member, Dr Leo Chan, is designated for child safeguarding; a dedicated Child Safeguarding Consultant has been in position since early Aug. Training workshops on child safeguarding were conducted for CRH staff, Head Office (HO) departments and other service units.</p> <p>2.4. HR Taskforce was formed in Mar 2022 to review HR policies and practices to enhance management structure, recruitment and retention, performance management and training, staff engagement and corporate culture, etc. Initiatives have been recommended and taken to improve staff fringe benefits, centralise HR functions (e.g. exit interviews, recruitment and welcome briefing for new staff), and conduct a staff survey to better understand staff perceptions / sentiments. Town hall, skip level and exchange meetings as well as informal lunch with ExCo members have been proposed to enhance communications within the Society.</p>



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	<p>2.5. Central complaints register, managed by RMD, has been established to strengthen monitoring of complaints handling since Apr 2022.</p> <p>2.6. Whistleblowing policy were approved by EXCO in Jul 2022. Staff training will commence in Sep 2022, with implementation planned for Oct 2022.</p> <p>2.7. CCTV monitoring is enhanced with random daily checks by authorized staff of CRH and random weekly checks by designated HO staff and the Child Safeguarding Consultant.</p> <p>2.8. An AI CCTV monitoring system, designed by HKU Sport AI Lab (Dr Wilton Fok), is being piloted at CRH, and undergoing testing and fine-tuning.</p>
3. Resignations to underline accountability	<p>3.1. CRH Superintendent and Director of HKSPC both resigned in Jan 2022 and left in late Mar/early Apr 2022</p> <p>3.2. New Superintendent was appointed in mid Mar from a recruitment exercise; new Director was appointed in early May following territory-wide search.</p>
4. Kindergarten attendance for older children and resumption of volunteers programme	<p>4.1. Among the 13 CRH children aged over 3, 12 are enrolled in 2 nursery schools at HKSPC headquarters, and 1 is enrolled in an external school. 11 children diagnosed with developmental disabilities (DDs) join the Integrated Programme of the school or receive On-site Pre-school Rehabilitation Services (OPRS) by HKSPC's Centre of Child Enlightenment.</p> <p>4.2. 10 CRH children with DDs are receiving service from Training Subsidy Programme for Children on the Waiting List of Subvented Pre-school Rehabilitation Services (TSP).</p> <p>4.3. Volunteers programme was resumed in mid Jul, yet suspended again in late July due to the recent uptick in COVID-19 cases. It has restarted on 20 Sep as the pandemic situation improves.</p>
5. Staff support and rebuilding morale	<p>5.1. A team of professionals from the Division of Clinical Psychology, HK Psychology Society, coordinated by Dr. Rachel Poon was engaged in mid Jan 2022 to provide short-term support service to staff and children of CRH. Counselling support was offered to staff in Jan-Feb 2022, and 5 observation sessions on children were conducted in mid-May which revealed no significant traumatic stress reactions among the children affected by the CRH Incident.</p> <p>5.2. CRH Reform Project provides ongoing on-the-job counselling to CRH staff.</p>