



香港教育大學  
The Education University  
of Hong Kong



Research Brief  
**EPL IMPACT**

**Investigating Space in Kindergartens**

Presented by  
**Dr Gail YUEN**



[gwkyuen@eduhk.hk](mailto:gwkyuen@eduhk.hk)



[www.eduhk.hk/epl](http://www.eduhk.hk/epl)



Faculty of Education  
and Human Development  
教育及人類發展學院



Department of Education Policy  
and Leadership  
教育政策與領導學系



The Joseph Lau Luen Hung Charitable Trust  
Asia Pacific Centre for Leadership and Change  
劉鑾雄慈善基金 亞太領導與變革研究中心



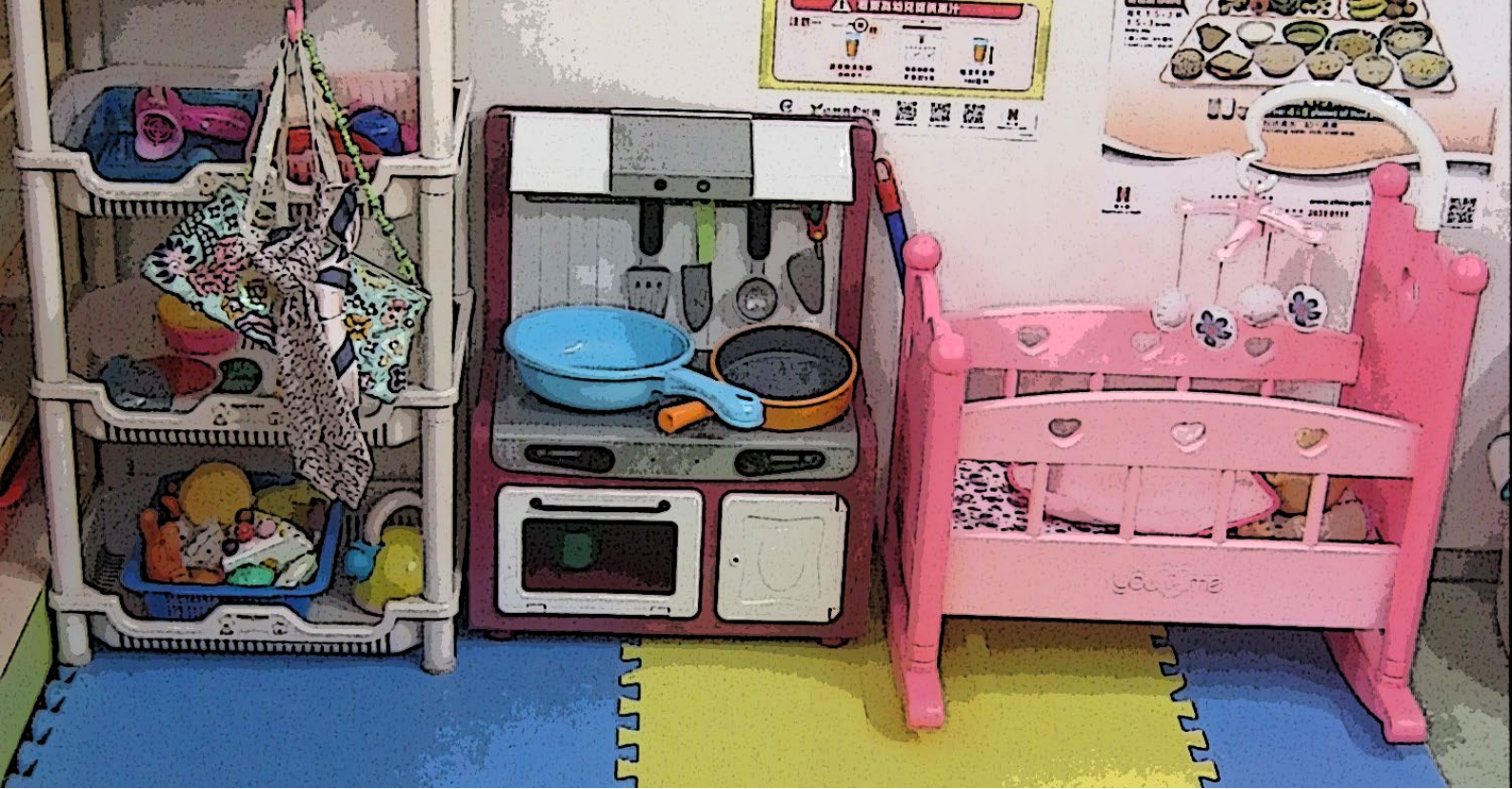
## Introduction

This research study sought to address the long-standing and complex issue of space in Hong Kong kindergartens, which are very diverse due to different historical paths, policy trajectories and market forces that produce substantial variations in operation mode and standard, premise location and design, availability of indoor and outdoor space, and professional practice. Under the Kindergarten Education Scheme (KES), the Hong Kong government recommended kindergartens increase their indoor available area per child by 20%. Despite dedicated efforts to implement the KES curriculum with its emphasis on child-centred, play-based learning, kindergartens, including those participating in this research, have struggled to meet the 20% increase policy goal and implement free play. Case study data were generated from two long whole-day (LWD) and one half day and whole day (mixed-mode) participating kindergartens. A questionnaire was sent to all KES kindergartens of the 2018/2019 school year, with a response rate of 44% involving 325 kindergartens. The available space in Hong Kong kindergartens was examined as a complex issue comprising the 1) planning, design and provision of physical space; 2) spatial practices of children, teachers and principals; and 3) significance, values and meanings attributed to different spaces in kindergartens.



## Key Issues and Significant Findings

- 1** Many KES kindergartens are unable to adopt the government's recommendation to increase the indoor available area per child by 20%. They doubt the effectiveness of the suggested direction in the absence of concrete support measures and in realising the curriculum vision that values child-centred, exploratory and play-based practices. There are significant differences in various aspects of space and spatial practices by operation mode, suggesting issues of spatial disparities in kindergartens that serve disadvantaged children and are situated in less favourable communities. These issues are significantly more prominent in LWD kindergartens.
- 2** In response to the premise structural constraints, kindergartens usually turn to outdoor public spaces and community facilities as external resources. Yet, they encounter many concerns and difficulties when accessing these resources. One common example is the government's use of luck draws to allocate public spaces and facilities, allowing only single application with no priority for kindergartens.
- 3** Young children are expected to benefit from this research study which has shown differing perspectives on what constitutes good learning in kindergartens. These different visions of learning are apparent between kindergartens and between key stakeholders (e.g., children, teachers and principals) in each kindergarten.



# Main Stakeholders and Engagement with Them

The study concerns stakeholders like policymakers, kindergarten teachers and principals, as well as teacher educators. For the purpose of facilitating more grounded discussions and professional reflections on the space issue, a leaflet that reports the significant findings and recommendations of the study has been produced and distributed to the main stakeholders. Focused effort will be made to engage preservice and serving teachers in experimenting kindergarten space for more 'think-outside-the-box' practices.

香港教育大學  
The Education University  
of Hong Kong

《探討參與幼稚園教育計劃之幼稚園的空間》研究<sup>1</sup>

本研究旨在探討參與幼稚園教育計劃之幼稚園的空間提供和使用，以及不同空間和空間運用對幼兒身心發展和學習之影響；並對幼稚園校舍及空間運用，提供具體的參考和改善建議。研究方法包括案例研究及問卷調查。三所抽樣幼稚園之案例研究於2019年9月至2020年1月期間進行，而問卷調查於2020年6月發放予751所參與上述計劃的幼稚園（2018/19年度），最後成功回收327份（回應率為43.54%）。

研究發現

(一)《學前課程教學手冊》：建議每名學生室內可佔面積增加20%（教育局·2017）

- 現時空間標準：
  - 每名學生1.8平方米，包括室內活動區域而不包括輔助設施（長全日制幼稚園除外）。
  - 每名學生2.3平方米，包括所有輔助設施（長全日制幼稚園）。
- 此標準低於其他已發展國家和地區，亦沒有為室內和室外空間訂立的標準。

國家/地區	室內空間標準(平方米)	室外空間標準(平方米)
澳洲	3.25	7
美國加州	3.25 (排除某些公用區)	7
加拿大卑詩省	3.7	6
加拿大安大略省	2.8 (排除某些公用區)	5.6
德國柏林	3	6至10
英國曼	2.3 (3-5歲) ; 2.5 (2歲)	必須
台灣	2.5	3.0
日本東京	1.98 (> 2歲) ; 3.3 (< 2歲)	3.3
新加坡	1.88 (平日) ; 3 (全日)	必須
香港	1.8 不包括輔助設施 (長全日制幼稚園除外) 2.3 包括輔助設施 (長全日制幼稚園)	非必須

資料來源：不同國家和地區的官方文件/網站

(二)《幼稚園教育課程指引》：加入自由遊戲（課程發展委員會·2017）

- 促進幼兒均衡發展、自主和探索學習，以及感官體驗。
- 平日制課程安排幼兒每天有少於30分鐘的自由遊戲時間，全日制課程則不少於50分鐘。形式由各幼稚園自行決定（可安排在自選活動和體能活動中）。
- 除了要求創設安全和豐富的學習環境外，還鼓勵教師盡量減少規則，讓幼兒在選擇物料時能自由探索，與同伴互動，以及創發自己的遊戲方式。

註1：即為免費優質幼稚園教育計劃



## Research Impact and Recommendations

Taking the differing perspectives into account, it may be helpful to:

- Evaluate kindergartens not so much by comparing with each other, but rather according to the extent to which a given kindergarten space and its spatial practices serve the visions of learning of its children, teachers and principals.
- Adopting this view, a 'good' kindergarten space should enable different perspectives of its stakeholders to coexist and interact.



## For more Information:

- 1 Yuen, G. (2020). Public Policy Research on “*Investigating space in kindergartens under the Free Quality Kindergarten Education Scheme*”: Key findings ([leaflet and video in Chinese](#)).
- 2 For enquiries, please contact Dr Gail Yuen at [gwkyuen@eduhk.hk](mailto:gwkyuen@eduhk.hk).



 **Video Interview**

