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# Should secondary schools in Hong Kong offer evening classes for pupils under 17?

**FOR**

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Hong Kong's education system is known to be intensive. Most students wake up at the crack of dawn for a day packed with classes and tutoring.

While this "ordinary" schedule might work for many, it is definitely not a one-size-fits-all situation.

Evening classes offer students who cannot follow traditional routines a fair shot. Not everyone can fit everything into a rigid daytime school schedule. For example, some students may be dealing with health or family issues.

Whatever the reason, evening classes give them a chance to learn with a schedule that suits their circumstances.

For children who cannot attend school during the day, flexible learning provides education during irregular hours, as well as the opportunity to return to school.

Some systems in Denmark, Estonia and South Korea adjust daily schedules based on student age, ensuring younger children do not spend hours in structured learning. Hong Kong could benefit from similar programmes, especially for students who feel left behind by the current system.

Students who attend classes in the evening may even gain back time during the day to revise, catch up on assignments or even rest.

Evening classes might actually be better for some students. One study by Elise R. Facer-Childs, Sophie Boiling and George M. Balanos found that those who are more awake at night – called an evening or late chronotype – tend to perform better after 8pm, while their mental and physical abilities are compromised earlier in the day.

Allowing students to learn when they are at their best could lead to

better focus, stronger results and healthier lifestyles.

Flexible learning programmes could be tailored to what students actually want to achieve. Hong Kong secondary schools could offer a diverse array of electives, language courses or even pre-career training during the evening.

Issues such as staffing, transport and safety would need to be addressed. But with support from the government, communities and educators, these challenges can be easily handled.

By giving young people the option to learn in a way that works best for them, we will give every student a real shot at a better future. At the end of the day – or rather, the end of the night – evening classes could be a real game changer for Hong Kong pupils under 17.



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