

Tuberculosis in the school setting in Hong Kong from Jan to December 2020

From Jan 2020 to Dec 2020, the Department of Health (DH) received notification of 3699 (provisional figure) tuberculosis (TB) cases, of which 182 (4.92%) were aged 3 to 24 years (usual school age). The corresponding proportion in 2018 and 2019 was 5.76% and 4.75% respectively.

According to the data as of 31 March 2021, there were a total of 7 clusters of TB cases in the school setting from Jan to Dec 2020, comprising 14 subjects. Four of the clusters were from tertiary institutions and three was from secondary school. There were 2 cases in each clusters, with a median of 2 cases. Genotyping showed one cluster was bacteriologically linked.

DH will continue to promote awareness of TB and its prevention in schools, the general community as well as the health care sector so as to facilitate early diagnosis to allow effective control of this airborne infectious disease at its very source.