

South China Morning Post

A7: Florida wakes to the wrath of Irma

Downgraded from a hurricane to a tropical storm, Irma left several northern Florida cities flooded and continued to batter them with heavy rain and high storm surges on Monday.

Once ranked one of the most powerful hurricanes recorded in the Atlantic, Irma hit vast sections of Florida through Sunday and into Monday. It first made landfall on the Florida Keys archipelago as a category 4 storm with winds up to 215km/h and then coming ashore south of Naples and heading up the west coast.

Weakening to tropical storm with sustained winds of up to 110km/h at 8am on Monday, Irma had moved to about 56km west of Gainesville and was headed up the coast, the National Hurricane Centre said.

C1: Kindergartens in free scheme still billing parents

About 30 out of 500 kindergartens offering half-day programmes are still charging fees despite being part of a recently implemented free school scheme.

In eight of these kindergartens, parents are forking out HK\$4,000 or more a year for courses. Two schools are even asking for higher fees than the previous year.

The kindergartens are part of a scheme announced by then chief executive Leung Chun-ying in his policy address in January last year. The plan provides kindergartens with annual subsidies of HK\$33,190 per pupil for half-day classes, and HK\$43,150 to HK\$53,100 for full-day courses. A total of about 740 schools are now part of the scheme.