

External School Review Report

SKH Lam Kau Mow Secondary School

School Address: 10 Tak Po Street, City One, Shatin,
New Territories

Review Period : 10 to 11, 13, 17 and 19 December 2024

**Quality Assurance Division
Education Bureau**

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Notes on the External School Review Report

1. This report covers the current development of the school and the key External School Review (ESR) findings. Suggestions for improvement are also given for the school's reference and follow-up.
2. The report is intended for the key stakeholders of the school, including members of the Incorporated Management Committee (IMC), teachers, specialist staff, parents and students.
3. The Education Bureau (EDB) will upload the concluding chapter of the ESR report to the EDB website for public access. The school should also release the content of the report to the key stakeholders by making the ESR report available in the school premises for their easy access. To further enhance transparency, the school is strongly encouraged to upload the report to its homepage.
4. The IMC should lead the school to follow up on the suggestions made in the report, in order to facilitate its self-improvement and enhance its continuous development.

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1. External School Review Methodology

- 1.1 The ESR team conducted the review in December 2024 to validate the school self-evaluation (SSE) and its impact on the school's development. Suggestions are made to facilitate the school's continuous improvement and development.
- 1.2 The ESR team employed the following methods to understand the situation of the school:
- Scrutiny of documents and data provided by the school before and during the ESR;
 - Observation of 34 lessons taught by 34 teachers;
 - Observation of various school activities, such as the Religious Assembly, national flag raising ceremony, life-wide learning activities; and
 - Meetings and interviews with the key stakeholders of the school including the school management¹, teachers, specialist staff, parents and students.

2. Current Development of the School

- 2.1 The school aims to offer to students a holistic and quality education with reference to the ethos of Christian whole-person education as propounded by the Anglican Church, inculcating in them good moral virtues, intelligence, physical fitness, gregariousness, aesthetics and spiritual well-being.
- 2.2 The class structure approved by the Education Bureau and the number of students² in the current school year are as follows:
- | Level | S1 | S2 | S3 | S4 | S5 | S6 | Total |
|--------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| Number of Classes | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 25 |
| Number of Students | 131 | 129 | 124 | 106 | 125 | 103 | 718 |
- 2.3 The Principal has assumed the role since 2022 while the three Vice-principals (VP) have taken up their respective roles within the past five years. Almost 75% of the teachers have been serving in the school for 10 years or more.
- 2.4 The previous ESR report (2015) made the following recommendations: (1) enhancing school self-evaluation to accelerate school development; and (2) exploring pedagogies to enhance deep learning.
- 2.5 The major concerns of the previous school development cycle (2019/20 to 2021/22 school years) are: (1) further enhance students to be self-directed

¹ The school management generally refers to the IMC, school head and deputy heads

² Based on administrative records kept in the Bureau's information system during the ESR

learners and problem solvers with effective learning habits and problem-solving skills; and (2) build up students' self-esteem and resilience.

- 2.6 The major concerns of the current school development cycle (2022/23 to 2024/25 school years) are: (1) to promote effective learning and teaching; (2) to enhance STEAM education; and (3) to promote students' social-emotional development.

3. External School Review Findings

- 3.1 **Progress has been made in practising the Planning-Implementation-Evaluation cycle; evaluation work should be enhanced to effectively inform planning.**

3.1.1 A whole-school approach is rightly adopted with teachers' participation in the formulation of major concerns (MC). With access to the SSE data and information tapped from various sources, teachers are invited to express their views on the school's development direction, which are further discussed at the School Administration and School Improvement Committee comprising teachers of different ranks and teaching experience. Taking into consideration the students' needs as reflected from, for example, students' academic results, the data in Assessment Program for Affective and Social Outcomes, and the latest trends in education development, the school has formulated its development focuses with emphases properly put on developing students' self-directed learning (SDL) capabilities and strengthening their resilience, and planned the respective priority tasks in a progressive manner. For instance, students were equipped with various self-learning habits and skills in the last development cycle, and have been guided to set goals, monitor their learning progress and evaluate their learning in the current development cycle.

3.1.2 The school's development focuses are clear. In comparison with the previous development cycles, the targets have been better defined and more focused, tying in well with student learning, for instance, developing students' creativity, collaboration and problem solving skills in the MC of enhancing STEAM education. While many of the strategies under the realm of student support are routine tasks, the rest are mostly appropriately formulated against the MC, catering for students' learning needs both in and outside the classroom. Subject panels and committees largely devise their programme plans in line with the school's development focuses in their own context. The school has also made some progress in its evaluation work since the last ESR with the focus aptly shifted from strategies to targets. However, the evaluation at both the school and the subject and committee levels relies heavily on quantitative data derived from the perception of different stakeholders while concrete

review of students' holistic performance is lacking. The suggestions for improvement are rather general without detailed analyses on the hindering factors. The school should analyse both qualitative and quantitative data in an integrative manner, conduct a holistic review of student performance, and identify the areas for improvement to more effectively inform future planning.

3.2 Resources are effectively utilised to promote students' whole-person development; internal communication should be improved to foster the school's continuous development.

3.2.1 The school demonstrates effective deployment of resources in the promotion of priority tasks. For example, support services from the EDB and tertiary institutions have been solicited to refine the school-based Chinese and English Language curricula; and the close collaboration with different churches contributes to students' spiritual growth. Good effort is also made to rally the support of parents and alumni in various activities, such as the Mental Health Day, and life planning education. Being well informed of the SSE data and the progress of school work, the IMC members are familiar with the school's development direction and provide advisory and monetary support whenever needed. While teacher professional development (PD) activities are rightly organised in response to the school's MC, the refined mentoring system and induction programme are well in place to acclimatise new teachers with their duties, the school's education philosophy and student backgrounds. However, teachers' participation in the PD activities varies. A strategic plan could be implemented to further encourage teachers to engage in the PD activities organised by external organisations and professional exchanges with teachers from other schools.

3.2.2 Following up on the recommendations in the last ESR report, the school has more clearly delineated the roles and duties of the three VP. However, some important tasks such as the PD of the staff under their purview have not been assigned any coordinator. Given their heavy workload and limited experience in management, the VP have yet fully performed their coordinating and supervisory roles, leading to, for example, the discrepancies in the implementation of school work and the lack of coordination of some curriculum initiatives. The school organisation structure should be reviewed to create space for the VP to fulfill their roles, and empower teachers with potential to take on more responsibilities, thus enhancing their ownership. Despite the provision of proper communication channels in the school, the morale among teaching staff in recent years has been low mainly due to misunderstanding. Realising the problem, the school management has taken proactive steps to improve the situation; however, rebuilding relationship takes time. The communication among the school management, middle managers and teachers should continue to be heightened, so that doubts could be dispelled and teachers united to foster the school's continuous development.

3.3 The promotion of SDL is in steady progress; a reading culture is being nurtured; cross-disciplinary collaboration should be enhanced to facilitate students' integration of STEAM-related knowledge and skills.

3.3.1 The school strives to provide students with diversified learning experiences to foster their whole-person development. A wide range of co-curricular activities, including academic societies, interest groups and local field trips, have been organised to enrich and extend student learning. In addition, positive steps have been taken in recent years to establish the Global Learning Committee, which aims to broaden students' global perspective through thematic learning. While curriculum mapping is conducted among related subject panels to facilitate students' integrative use of knowledge and skills across disciplines, overseas study tours to Poland and Mongolia are also suitably planned to complement classroom learning, promoting cultural exchange and service learning. Currently, the coverage of the essential learning elements in certain Key Learning Areas (KLA) such as Science Education and Technology Education at the junior secondary level is inadequate. The school has to conduct a holistic review to ensure a balanced curriculum so as to help students build a strong foundation for their studies at the senior secondary level.

3.3.2 Developing students' SDL capabilities has been the school's focus for years. With a clear target of building students' learning habits and skills, including pre-lesson preparation and note-taking, a variety of strategies have been aptly devised. For example, students are assigned different pre-lesson preparation tasks such as watching videos assigned and conducting preliminary research on a topic; they are also introduced to graphic organisers like mind maps and timelines for note-taking. In this development cycle, a "LKM Scholar Programme" has been launched for S1 students to practise the SDL cycle by learning something new of their own choice during long holidays, and upon completion, sharing their learning outcomes and reflection with their peers. From the samples of student work, the self-chosen topics cover both academic and non-academic aspects, ranging from learning the basics of a foreign language to acquiring new dancing or drawing skills. Students reflect on how they adjust their learning pace and strategies to better achieve their goals, demonstrating their SDL abilities. With the gradual introduction of Bring Your Own Device in the promotion of the SDL, there is an increasing need to enhance students' information literacy (IL). At present, only a few subjects and committees have incorporated elements of the IL in their curricula and learning activities. Coordinated planning at the school level is yet in place, leading to the lack of knowledge of whether the attitudes, skills and knowledge required in the "Information Literacy for Hong Kong Students" Learning Framework have been covered and the related student performance. The school should review the existing learning elements related to the IL with reference to the learning framework for more holistic planning.

3.3.3 While STEAM education for elite students is in good progress as demonstrated by the pleasing results achieved in STEAM-related external competitions, the development of STEAM education for all is at a preliminary stage. A few subject panels have devised learning activities that involve application of knowledge of different STEAM-related subjects, for example, designing a water filter in S1 Science, during which the process of design thinking is observed as students are required to test their designs before finalising their product. However, students are guided to complete the task without the chance of exploring the real-life problem and solutions on their own, as in other STEAM-related learning activities. Besides, collaboration among STEAM-related subjects is limited. To provide students with ample opportunities to apply knowledge and skills across subjects, the role of the STEAM coordinator should be enhanced in fostering collaboration among STEAM-related subjects to create more opportunities for students to explore problems and solutions in their everyday life, and apply their knowledge and skills in an integrative manner.

3.3.4 Commendable effort has been put to provide a wide variety of programmes and activities on reading, for example, the inter-school book exchange programme, book sharing sessions and reading buddy programme, to nurture students' love of reading. As observed, students are willing to visit the library at recess and lunch-time, and most enjoy reading books or magazines during the morning reading period. A reading culture is being established. To promote reading across the curriculum, the school library has devised an interesting programme in collaboration with subject panels. For instance, a series of science books related to animals are recommended to students after they have interacted with some animals in a post-exam activity, enabling them to connect reading with real life. In view of the positive feedback from teachers and students, the school library has leveraged on the school garden and introduced another well-thought-out programme under the theme of "plants", in which students have read extensively for acquiring knowledge related to plants and grown their own plants for the creation of art work.

3.4 Different strategies and questioning techniques are well adopted to facilitate classroom learning; teachers should provide more opportunities to consolidate student learning and enhance their confidence.

3.4.1 Lessons are conducted with clear learning objectives. Teachers duly adopt different resources, such as visual aids and e-learning tools, to enhance students' understanding of learning contents and promote class interaction; they also suitably draw on daily-life examples to facilitate students' comprehension of abstract concepts and arouse their learning interest. Students are mostly attentive and they closely follow teachers' instructions. They have generally formed a good habit of jotting down notes as instructed

and completing the pre-lesson task assigned. However, students' taking the initiative to ask questions, which is a target SDL capability promoted by the school, is rare in lessons and should be further encouraged. An orderly classroom is noted with good rapport among teachers and students. In a few lessons, teachers tend to rush to complete the learning tasks and conclude the lesson without allowing sufficient time for students to reflect on and consolidate their learning.

3.4.2 The strategies of using tiered tasks and scaffolding to cater for learner diversity are commonly adopted. Some teachers make good use of heterogeneous grouping to facilitate peer learning. Most exhibit good questioning techniques and ask a range of questions at different levels not only to check students' understanding but also provoke their thinking. However, students generally respond to teachers' questions in brief and short phrases, showing their lack of confidence. Despite providing timely and positive feedback, teachers tend to explain the key learning points on their own without inviting students to elaborate further. Teachers should allow more time for students to present and expand on their ideas. In a few more effective lessons, the design is systematic and student-centred. Teachers conduct pair work and group work to engage students, and play the role as a facilitator to guide them to conduct in-depth discussion and provide room for peer evaluation. Students actively participate in exchanging ideas and co-constructing knowledge with peers and teachers. A lively learning atmosphere is observed in these lessons. Such good practices can effectively foster students' engagement and collaboration, and should be widely promoted.

3.5 Proper values and attitudes are rightly reinforced through the integration of cognition, affection and action; diversified strategies are employed to help students lead a healthy lifestyle.

3.5.1 Based on students' learning and developmental needs, a systematic school-based values education programme has been designed to cultivate in students priority values and attitudes through form periods. Different types of learning and teaching materials such as news, videos and animations related to students' daily life are appropriately used to facilitate their discussion and sharing of personal views and experiences. Besides, meaningful service learning activities like visits to the minority groups and elderly home are offered to all S1 to S5 students to put proper values into practice, and debriefing sessions arranged to encourage self-reflection. Significant effort has been dedicated to enhancing students' understanding of Christian beliefs and creating a vibrant religious atmosphere. Christian values are delivered through the school-based Ethics curriculum, complemented with various religious activities outside the classroom; Religious Assembly is conducted once every cycle with students leading bible reading and, as observed, performed a cappella hymn singing in a reverent manner.

3.5.2 The school continues to systematically promote national education (NE) within and beyond the classroom. Learning elements related to NE, including national security education, are organically embedded in the curricula of different subjects; various activities such as board exhibitions, national knowledge quiz competitions and exchanges with Mainland sister schools are aptly organised to enhance students' understanding of our country and their sense of safeguarding national security. As observed in the national flag raising ceremony, students demonstrate proper etiquette and solemn attitude. A special room with exquisite displays of Chinese teaware, traditional costumes and accessories, and the like has also been set up to enhance students' interests in traditional Chinese culture through activities like paper-cutting and Chinese tea appreciation. To further create an atmosphere conducive to the promotion of NE and deepen students' understanding of the historical events and figures of our country, the school could organise NE-related activities with closer reference to the "National Education – Event Planning Calendar".

3.5.3 A well-structured life planning education programme is designed to foster students' self-understanding, and guide them to set goals and plan for their future. In addition to structured learning in form periods, a wide array of activities such as life simulation activities, talks and visits about careers including e-sport players and make-up artists, and job shadowing are thoughtfully organised to broaden students' horizons. Individual counselling services are suitably provided to help all S5 and S6 students make informed decision on life and career planning based on their abilities, aptitudes and interests. As reflected by students, the job-shadowing opportunities allow them to gain workplace experience, enabling them to make appropriate choices on their further studies and future career.

3.5.4 Echoing one of the MC, the school has made good effort in promoting physical health, social well-being and mental health among students through diversified strategies. To encourage students to develop a habit and interest in exercise, a sports corner with fitness equipment is newly created, and different types of sports such as indoor rowing and triathlon are aptly introduced in the Physical Education lesson. Students' social well-being is promoted through the different mentoring programmes offered by the senior form students to their junior counterparts, and the class- and form-based activities proposed and organised by students to enhance their bonding with peers. As observed, students are actively engaged in inter-house or inter-class sports competitions and cheer for their classmates enthusiastically, displaying a strong sense of unity. As for students' mental health, a three-tiered support model is properly adopted. In addition to lessons and talks given by social workers on related themes, diversified hands-on activities including acrylic pour painting and aroma stone making are organised to raise students' awareness of mental health and guide them the proper ways to cope with

pressure. Commendable effort is also made to train a team of student ambassadors to promote mental health among their peers. Appropriate support and various services such as individual counselling and art and animal therapy groups are also provided for students in need.

3.6 Students possess a strong sense of belonging to the school and exhibit harmonious relationship with teachers; they excel in various non-academic domains and perform well academically.

3.6.1 Students are courteous and self-disciplined. They display a strong sense of belonging to the school. Teachers and students have a close and harmonious relationship. Students are devoted to serving their peers, the school and the community. Student leaders show a strong sense of responsibility in carrying out their duties and are willing to organise activities for fellow schoolmates.

3.6.2 In the past three years, the percentages of students meeting the general entrance requirements for local undergraduate university programmes in the Hong Kong Diplomas of Secondary Education (HKDSE) Examination and the general entrance requirements for sub-degree courses were above the territory averages of day school students. Taking into account the S1 intake, the school performed satisfactorily in the HKDSE Examination in the past three years.

3.6.3 Students are active in joining activities and competitions in various domains, such as music, sports and STEAM education. They have performed impressively and won several individual and group awards in district and inter-school competitions, including STEAM competitions and the Hong Kong Schools Music Festival. Students have also obtained outstanding results in sports, in particular handball, shuttlecock and rowing.

4. Conclusion and Way Forward

The school has made some progress in practising the Planning-Implementation-Evaluation cycle. While the targets of the major concerns are better defined, the focus of evaluation is rightly shifted from strategies to targets. Effective deployment of resources is also noted in the promotion of priority tasks. Through teachers' concerted effort, students are offered a variety of learning experiences both in and outside the classroom, which fosters their whole-person development. Students frequent the library at recess and lunch-time, and most enjoy reading books or magazines during the morning reading periods. Significant effort has been dedicated to creating a vibrant religious atmosphere with good student participation. Proper values and attitudes are effectively promoted through the integration of cognition, affection and action. A comprehensive plan is in place to foster a healthy lifestyle among students, appropriately addressing their physical and mental health and social well-being. Students are courteous and self-disciplined, and exhibit a strong sense of belonging to the school. They actively participate in various activities and competitions. The relationship between students and teachers is close and harmonious.

Looking ahead, the school needs to make reference to the following suggestions to facilitate self-improvement and enhance continuous development.

- 4.1 The communication among the school management, middle managers and teachers should be enhanced to dispel doubts and foster unity. The school organisation structure should also be reviewed to create space for the Vice-principals to fully fulfill their coordinating and supervisory roles, and empower teachers with potential to take on more responsibilities to increase their ownership.
- 4.2 The evaluation of school work relies heavily on the use of quantitative data. The school should conduct a holistic review of student performance using both qualitative and quantitative data, and clearly identify the areas for improvement, thereby informing future planning more effectively.
- 4.3 The curriculum at the junior secondary level has room for improvement. The school should ensure a full coverage of the essential learning elements, enabling students to build a solid foundation for their studies at the senior secondary level. Besides, teachers should allow more lesson time for students to elaborate their ideas and consolidate their learning to further enhance their confidence.