

External School Review Report

Ho Fung College (Sponsored by Sik Sik Yuen)

School Address: 448 Wo Yi Hop Road, Kwai Chung, New Territories

Review Period: 9, 13-14, 17 November 2017

**Quality Assurance and School-based Support 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 reference of the school.
2. The report is intended for the key stakeholders of the school, including members of the Incorporated Management Committee (IMC), teachers, parents and students.
3. The school should release the content of the report to the key stakeholders by making the ESR report available in the school premises for their easy access. Alternatively, the school may upload the report to its homepage for the reference of the stakeholders.
4. The IMC should lead the school to follow up the suggestions made in the report, in order to facilitate its self-improvement and enhance its continuous development.

**Education Bureau
The Government of the Hong Kong
Special Administrative Region (2018)**

1. External School Review Methodology

- 1.1 The ESR team conducted the review in November 2017 to validate the school's self-evaluation 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 school visit;
 - Observation of 31 lessons taught by 31 teachers;
 - Observation of various school activities, including playground and hall assemblies, Chinese and English reading periods, and after school activities; and
 - Meetings and interviews with the IMC members, the Principal, Vice principal, teachers, parents and students.

2. Current Development of the School

- 2.1 Ho Fung College (Sponsored by Sik Sik Yuen) was founded in 1974. The school motto is "to act benevolently and to teach benevolence". According to its mission statement, the school is committed to providing the students with an all-round quality education so that they can make valuable contributions to the well-being of the community; observes closely the teachings of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism in the moral training of students; emphasises a balanced development of the students through moral, intellectual, physical, social and aesthetic education in helping them to become competent and responsible citizens; and places great emphasis in helping the staff to develop professionally, promoting close links with parents and alumni, and collaborating with other social services organisations, so as to create a congenial environment for providing quality education for the students.
- 2.2 The class organisation approved by the Education Bureau and the number of students in the current school year are as follows:

Level	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	Total
Number of Classes	4	4	4	4	4	4	24
Number of Students	128	122	132	135	132	130	779

Small class learning and teaching is implemented from S2 onwards, with four classes re-arranged into 5 to 6 groups.

- 2.3 The last ESR was conducted in 2010. The key recommendations from the report are 1) strengthening consensus building to maximize outcomes in self-improvement; 2) improving management and accountability system to support change; and 3) strengthening capacity building to equip teachers with knowledge and skills to realise pedagogical change. Since the last ESR, there have been a number of teachers getting retired. The current Principal assumed principalship in 2012. From January 2015 to August 2017, there were no Vice principals (VPs) in the school.
- 2.4 The last School Development Plan (SDP) is from 2013/14 to 2015/16, and the school major concerns (MCs) are 1) to enhance students' efficacy and self-esteem in learning; and 2) to train students in perseverance; develop self-directed and introspective ability. The current SDP is from 2016/17 to 2018/19, and the school MCs are 1) to develop a highly effective school; and 2) to enhance students' positive personal attributes. The targets to be achieved include honing students to become confident learners, building up a learning community in school, and strengthening students' positive attitudes, sense of responsibility and personal values.

3. External School Review Findings

3.1 The school leaders are enterprising and embrace change. Pleasing outcomes are brought along with changes promulgated by the school Principal. Succession plan is an issue to be addressed.

3.1.1 Students are in general of high abilities. The building of a learning community which shares passion for academic excellence is the common goal of the stakeholders. The school sponsoring body (SSB) has very high expectation of the school, and attaches great importance to learning and teaching. Overseas educational visits have been arranged to heighten teachers' awareness, followed by initiatives to be implemented in the school, including self-directed learning (SDL) and collaborative learning. This gives impetus to in-house sharing and teachers' opening up of their classes.

3.1.2 A number of changes have been promulgated by the Principal, focussing both on student learning and school management and organisation. He demonstrates strong and effective leadership; and the changes brought along are with discernible positive outcomes. There is strengthened use of government funds to enrich students' learning experiences and cater for their learning differences. A strong data-driven approach is adopted for the school development. Student data has been widely used to effectuate greater learning and teaching effectiveness, such as the matching of student interest/abilities with their elective subjects in senior forms, and the use of assessment data to enhance student learning through different types of grouping of students in the junior forms. Clearly understanding that teachers play a fundamental role in student learning, efforts are put not only on maintaining staff stability through utilisation of different grants, but also on making long term planning in optimising teacher expertise for the senior form teaching.

3.1.3 In response to the recommendation of the last ESR and for more effective collaboration, there has been restructuring of the school organisation into four domains (academic, school management, pastoral care, school publicity and partnership), and with one VP overseeing two domains. During the period with the absence of VPs, the four senior teachers were appointed as assistant principals in heading the four domains overseen by the Principal to ensure a smooth running of the school. With open dialogues kept between the school Principal and teachers, teachers' consensus in school development is generally high. Teachers are competent. They love the school and focus on the benevolence of students. With the concerted effort of all teaching and non-teaching staff, and with student voice heard, the school is making pleasing and steady progress.

3.1.4 Currently, there are places to be filled for both the senior and middle management. To continue with the current success of the school and for its future development, deliberation could be given by the SSB on the succession plan with greater recognition given to teachers with good potential. With the new IMC composition this year, greater mutual support and understanding between the IMC and school management is expected.

3.2 All teachers contribute to the school self-evaluation process. The school is reflective in enhancing its continuous development. Constant reviews are made in achieving the targets set.

3.2.1 The school has been adopting a holistic approach in school self-evaluation (SSE). All teachers participate in and contribute to the formulation of school's major concerns on a KLA basis. When the Principal first assumed leadership in the school, he followed the SDP (2011-14). Yet, in view of the school development needs, upon discussion among teachers and with the endorsement of the IMC, the SDP was revised one year before the completion of its cycle. A new SDP was devised for 2013-16. For this and the current SDP (2016-19), the two MCs are both centred around the students - their academic work and pastoral care. Upon reviewing the effectiveness of the last SDP, and with good progress made at various aspects, such as students' academic progress, new focuses are developed in the current SDP. Greater attention is now given to the more average students to recognise their efforts and build up their confidence. This is on the right track as there could be more success celebrated among a larger group of students.

3.2.2 In both SDPs, clear targets and appropriate implementation strategies are set to achieve the MCs. The effectiveness review made in the "achievement and reflection" is with great details, with "suggestions for improvement" followed through in the upcoming annual school plan. In positioning itself to develop into a highly effective school in the current SDP, the school has incorporated some major renewed emphases (MRE) of the latest curriculum development as implementation strategies, such as the promotion of Information Technology (IT) in Education, implementation of an interdisciplinary Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education, and extension of Reading to Learn. Constant reviews have been made with continuous adjustment in building up a learning community in the school.

3.2.3 For the learning and teaching in school, the planning, implementation and evaluation (P-I-E) cycle is well in place among all KLAs/subjects. Evaluation reports are prepared by different subject panels to review and reflect on their progress with follow-up measures. Some panels have made good use of the evaluation findings to inform planning of the subsequent year. The formulation of annual programme plans for students' pastoral care is according to data drawn from Assessment Program for Affective and Social Outcomes

(APASO), programme evaluation reports, questionnaire survey findings and meetings with students. Suggested measures in evaluation reports and meetings are properly followed up.

3.3 The culture of lesson observation is developing. More school-context consideration could be given to the implementation of learning and teaching strategies.

3.3.1 To achieve a learning community with shared vision and passion, efforts are put both on developing a student-centred paradigm in learning and teaching, and enhancing teachers' professional development through in-house sharing and networking with schools under the same SSB. While the culture of lesson observation as a whole-school practice is developing, more school-based consideration could be given to the implementation of "collaborative learning". At the present stage, the implementation progress of "collaborative learning" varies with subjects. The school could assess the suitability of this strategy in the school context and deliberate how this strategy could be utilised to encourage students' independent learning capabilities.

3.3.2 Focuses pertinent to the school's MC, such as developing students into self-directed learners and honing them to become confident learners, could be identified for teachers' pedagogical sharing and lesson observation. Lesson observation should as well be followed with post-lesson discussion and reflection among teachers involved. To sharpen teachers' pedagogical skills, there could be links established with schools of comparable background.

3.4 MRE are suitably incorporated in school curriculum to achieve the targets set in school's major concerns. While P-I-E has been successfully implemented, the KLA coordinators could assume a stronger role in curriculum leadership.

3.4.1 To attain the target of building up a learning community and enhancing students to become confident learners, the school has aptly incorporated some of the MREs into the curriculum. Good planning, implementation and evaluation are found in the promotion of STEM education. There has been positive feedback with teachers' enhanced awareness on STEM education and collaboration among different subjects. Students' cross disciplinary learning in STEM is evident. The school could ride on the impetus by organising related educational activities or promoting STEM through formal lessons.

3.4.2 IT in Education is another implementation strategy to achieve a highly effective school. In addition to the infrastructure development, there has been sharing of good practices on e-learning among teachers. Online resources and platform are well in place in the school to support learning and teaching. The on-line platform has been well used by some teachers to provide timely feedback for students to improve, as well as for students' self

and peer evaluation. Given students' high abilities, it is worthy to explore further the use of IT in Education to empower students and stretch their potential in learning.

3.4.3 Reading has always been accorded with great importance in the school. There are various reading schemes, activities and competitions; and the culture of reading is well established in the campus. Building upon this, there could be broadening of students' horizon and making reading more meaningful through strengthening Reading across the Curriculum. As a secondary school using English as the medium of instruction (EMI), the school has successfully created an English-rich learning environment. Teachers are eloquent in using English in lesson delivery, and most students can communicate fluently and confidently in English both in and outside lesson.

3.4.4 The Academic domain has been overseeing the academic development in the school, including enhancing EMI, assessment, teachers' professional development, as well as facilitating and monitoring the functioning of KLA/subject panels. While the KLA coordinators are playing a proper role in ensuring the quality of curriculum implementation, their curriculum leadership could be strengthened, such as the capacity building of the KLA members.

3.5 Curriculum reviews and strategies to cater for learner diversity have positive impact on student learning. Assessment as learning could be further fostered for students to become self-directed learners.

3.5.1 Curriculum reviews have been on-going in response to the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE), curriculum reform, students' learning needs and their language abilities. There has been restructuring of subjects offered at the junior level, with a broad curriculum to help students build a strong knowledge foundation. The widening of elective subjects in the senior forms enables students to pursue areas of their own interest and abilities. The smaller class size also enhances a more interactive learning environment, which is conducive to more effective learning.

3.5.2 To better address students' learning needs, there is small group English teaching in S1, and ability grouping of students in S2 and S3 as according to their performance in English, Chinese and Mathematics. Various enhancement and remedial programmes such as elite classes, remedial classes and supplementary tutorials are also in place to cater for students' learning diversity.

3.5.3 The school assessment and assignment policies are clear. From the sampled student work scrutinised, there is a good variety of assignments designed to extend students' knowledge and skills, such as creativity and problem-solving skills. Teachers' use of feedback to aid student learning is also discernible. In view of their good potential, the school could explore

making good use of “assessment as learning” to strengthen students’ SDL through self-reflection and goal setting.

3.6 Students have good learning attitudes and high learning abilities. More diversified learning and teaching strategies should be adopted in lesson delivery in response to students’ learning progress and to cater for their learning differences.

3.6.1 Lessons are well prepared with generally clear learning objectives. Teachers’ explanation is clear and systematic; and good rapport is found between teachers and students. To facilitate students’ understanding of abstract concepts and arouse their interest, some teachers make good use of visual aids and PowerPoint slides. Students are attentive and possess good learning attitudes. They participate actively in the learning activities.

3.6.2 SDL and collaborative learning are emphasised in the last two SDPs. As reflected in lessons, the habit of note-taking has been formed among students. A couple of students are able to raise questions for clarification or even point out misconceptions held by their peers. In lessons where pre-lesson tasks are assigned, most students can accomplish the tasks well. In effective lessons, the pre-lesson tasks are well linked with the lesson content; and teachers can make good use of the pre-lesson preparation to engage students meaningfully in their learning. There is also purposeful grouping of students to facilitate more interactive and participative learning. Students in general are able to share their views and exchange ideas.

3.6.3 Teachers often ask questions to check students’ understanding of the lesson content. Some teachers can make good use of prompts and probes to promote students’ more in-depth thinking. Based on students’ response, some teachers are able to provide useful feedback to facilitate students’ further elaboration, thus imparting a deeper learning impact on them. In lessons where peer assessment and feedback are encouraged, students are able to provide specific feedback to their peers for improvement.

3.6.4 On the other hand, there are lessons with low expectation of the students. Questions asked are of a limited range. Teachers focus more on the coverage of the lesson content than being alert of students’ learning progress and flexibly adjust the learning content. Some teachers fail to make use of student response to build on or extend their learning. Notwithstanding that the classes are with specific grouping of students according to their ability, learner diversity inside the classroom still deserves teachers’ attention. To stretch students’ potential, more thought-provoking questions could be asked to stimulate students’ higher order thinking, followed with specific feedback for students to make improvement. Taking into consideration the good learning abilities and attitudes of students, more opportunities should be opened up for students’ demonstration of learning and self-reflective learning.

3.6.5 Mobile computing devices are used in a few lessons. The effectiveness varies as sometimes, teachers grasp only the form but not the essence of e-learning for more independent and interactive learning to take place. Teachers' pedagogy in this aspect need to be strengthened. In line with the school's development focus on promoting IT in Education, a wider application of e-resources in facilitating assessment for learning should as well be explored.

3.7 Measures are well in place to develop students' positive values and attitude. Greater emphasis has been put to help students develop a more balanced outlook on learning.

3.7.1 In enhancing students' positive personal attributes in this SDP, focuses are put on inculcating students' positive values and attitudes, their sense of responsibility, and personal values. Students' positive values and attitudes are cultivated through co-curricular activities, morning assemblies and school-based moral education curriculum. Starting from S1, there is "one student one sport/ music programme". Morning assemblies are deliberated with talks, sharing and flag-raising ceremony. There are formal lessons on moral education in both the junior and senior levels. Elements of moral education are embedded across different subjects. Basic Law education is incorporated into Life and Society and Chinese History; and students are given the first-handed opportunities of joining the Mainland study tours for their national identity. Visits and overseas study tours are also arranged to integrate students' subject knowledge and skills and to build up positive self-perception.

3.7.2 To help students' self-management and to celebrate greater success among a larger group of students, the school has recently revised the Student Performance Grading System (SPGS) and Co-curricular Activity (CCA) Award Scheme. The former is becoming an effective tool in aiding students develop a more balanced outlook on their learning experiences. Students are enabled to self-manage on a daily basis. In addition to performance, more emphasis is now placed on students' conduct and learning attitude. To further improve, there could be better alignment in the scoring standard among teachers. The CCA Award Scheme awards students for their achievement and making good progress in CCA. Through greater recognition given to their attitude, such as persistence and perseverance, students display greater confidence and commitment.

3.7.3 The "class management scheme" has been successful in internalising students' self-discipline. Class rules are set up and reviewed by students themselves. Their team spirit and sense of belonging to the class have been enhanced. To foster their sense of responsibilities, students are provided with ample opportunities to organise various types of activities. Through

organising these activities, students can develop and make use of their knowledge and generic skills.

3.7.4 Another positive attribute promoted this year is environmental protection. Environmental education has been integrated at the KLA level, with cross-KLA collaboration on a STEM project, and visits to institutions of recycling resources and the ecology systems. Students' awareness of the importance of environmental protection has also been heightened.

3.8 Life planning education enables students' better understanding of themselves in both academic and career pursuit. Student voice is heard and properly addressed.

3.8.1 There is close and effective collaboration among functional committees in providing support on student development. A wide range of life planning education programmes have been organised for students across different year levels, including life education form period in S1 to 2, subject selection talk in S3, and talks on career and further studies in the senior forms. Solid support is elicited from the alumni for experience sharing, delivery of career and subject selection talks. There are also visits to and consultation sessions held by the tertiary institutes. The life planning education strengthens students' self-understanding and helps them to have a clearer focus on their career and academic pursuit. This in turn fosters students' realisation of their academic aspirations. With the use of assessment data, students are well informed of their choice of electives in the senior form. The senior form students also have a good understanding of their performance in school in meeting with their aspirations in local tertiary institutes.

3.8.2 To assist the senior form students lead a more balanced life in face of academic work and personal growth, stress management has been a recent priority for the senior form students. Related workshops are organised to aid students tackle life difficulties and lead a healthy life. Student voice is given proper attention. Students have chance to express their opinions on school policies through the questionnaire survey and consultative meeting with teachers. Their views on the arrangements of some co-curricular activities have been suitably addressed.

3.9 Students are benevolent and committed to learning. They perform well in both academic and non-academic aspects.

3.9.1 Students are smart, self-disciplined and committed to learning. They are benevolent and always show consideration for others. Students enjoy a good relationship with both their peers and teachers. They are proud of their school and exhibit a strong sense of self-reflection on their performance to strive for excellence. Most are confident, eloquent and presentable. Student leaders show great sense of responsibility and dedication in serving the school and their junior counterparts.

3.9.2 Students participate actively in a wide array of activities and competitions both within and outside school. They have won numerous individual and group awards in territory-wide and district competitions, including Chinese and English debates, sports, music, speech, and social services. They have obtained outstanding achievements in the international activity “Odyssey of the Mind”, having been the champions at regional level and first and second runners-up in the world finals in recent years.

3.9.3 In the past three years, the percentages of students meeting the general entrance requirements for local undergraduate university programmes and sub-degree courses in the HKDSE Examination were well above the territory averages of day school students. Taking into account the S1 intake, the school performed well in the HKDSE Examination in the past three years.

4. Suggestions for Improvement

- 4.1 In view of students' general high ability and good potential, more opportunities should be given to enhance their self-directed learning through self-reflection and goal setting. Teachers' professional capacity could be further strengthened with greater exchange of professional dialogues both within and beyond the school. Specific and constructive feedback has to be given to students to extend their learning in classroom learning and teaching. E-learning should as well be further explored to effectuate greater learning and teaching effectiveness.