

# **External School Review Report**

## **Wah Yan College (Kowloon)**

**School Address: 56 Waterloo Road, Kowloon**

**Review Period : 28, 29 October and 1, 4, 7 November 2019**

**Quality Assurance and School-based Support Division  
Education Bureau**

**February 2020**

## **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.

# Contents

	Page
1. External School Review Methodology	1
2. Current Development of the School	1
3. External School Review Findings	3
4. Suggestions for Improvement	11
5. Appendices	12
I. Overall Performance in Classroom Learning and Teaching	
II. School Response	

## 1. External School Review Methodology

- 1.1 The ESR team conducted the review in October and November 2019 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 36 lessons taught by 36 teachers;
  - Observation of various school activities, including Morning Formation, Examen, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) enrichment course, bazaar pre-sale, field events and choirs; and
  - Meetings and interviews with the Supervisor and members of the IMC, Principal, Vice Principals (VP), teachers, educational psychologist, school social worker, parents and students.

## 2. Current Development of the School

- 2.1 Wah Yan College (Kowloon), founded in 1924, is a member of the Jesuit School Network. The school vision is to “offer a holistic, liberating and transforming Catholic education within a learning community for students and staff to become progressively competent, committed, compassionate, spiritual, and ethically discerning persons with a universal heart contributing to the welfare and happiness of all, in particular the poor and the neglected”. The school mission is to “form Men for and with Others”. The school motto is *Ad majorem Dei gloriam* (For the greater glory of God) and *In Hoc Signo Vinces* (By this sign, you shall conquer). Emphasis is put on fostering students' whole-person development and nurturing their life-long and self-directed learning capabilities.
- 2.2 The class structure approved by the Education Bureau and the number of students<sup>1</sup> in the current school year are as follows:

Level	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	Total
Number of Classes	5	5	5	5	5	5	30
Number of Students	165	159	158	156	149	159	946

<sup>1</sup> Based on administrative records kept in the Bureau's information system



- 2.3 The school has a continual intake of S1 students with good abilities. English is the medium of instruction for most subjects. Around 60% of teachers have taught in the school for over 10 years. The current principal joined the school in 2013/14. One VP overseeing the Prefect of Studies assumed his role in 2014/15, and the other VP overseeing the Student Affairs assumed her role in 2018/19. In recent years, new committees have been set up to support school development. They include School Improvement Committee, Staff Development Committee, and Assessment and Examination Committee.
- 2.4 The last ESR was conducted to the school in 2011. The key recommendations were: 1) strengthening the P-I-E cycle and improving the quality of SSE for continuous school development; and 2) enhancing classroom strategies for raising learning and teaching effectiveness.
- 2.5 The current School Development Plan (SDP) is from 2017/18 to 2019/20, and the school major concerns are 1) to form self-directed and reflective learners, with attributes of competence, commitment, creativity and cultural curiosity; 2) to strengthen students' character formation within a positive learning community that encompasses compassion, respect, collaboration, conscience and reconciliation; and 3) to enhance school facilities to support student learning and development.

## 3. External School Review Findings

### 3.1 **The Jesuit values are exhibited in students' daily school life. Proper measures have been taken to elevate the school development.**

3.1.1 Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm (IPP), a teaching-learning process characteristic of Jesuit education, is well practised in school to enhance students' reflective learning. Systematic cultivation of students' values and attitudes, and the building up of teacher-student rapport, are facilitated through the Examen and Morning Formation. The former is with particular impact on students' well-being through their regular self-contemplation. Various school personnel, including the school principal and the chaplain, has been exemplary in accompanying the students during difficult times. Trust and respect are always present between the students and the school.

3.1.2 To live out the Jesuit value of "Magis", the school has been endeavouring for betterment. Learning and teaching effectiveness is enhanced through small class teaching (SCT) across S1-6. Under the leadership of the current principal, more teachers have been empowered to take up administrative roles for succession and development purposes. Greater emphasis has been put on the use of data in facilitating school self-evaluation (SSE) and enhancing students' academic performance. An increasing number of students have been provided with experiential learning experiences to broaden their horizons. The impact of the above is evident in the pleasing outcomes of students' both academic and non-academic performance in recent years.

3.1.3 One school major concern of the last SDP (2014-17) on building a learning community has yet to be strived for, in particular in areas of teachers' professional dialogue to facilitate better learning and teaching, and the use of information technology (IT) to foster students' self-directed learning (SDL). Building on students' strength as reflective learners, more focus could be placed on students' own goal setting. "Assessment as learning" could as well be attempted with students making good use of self-reflection, teacher and peer feedback, to monitor and adjust own learning objectives and strategies.

### 3.2 **Concerted effort and thought are put on SSE. The planning-implementation-evaluation (P-I-E) cycle at the subject and committee levels has to be strengthened.**

3.2.1 SSE is conscientiously conducted using a whole-school approach, and with good collaboration among committees and subject departments. Data from school-based surveys are aptly drawn for a holistic review of the school situation. The SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and

Threats) analysis is conducted upon the concerted efforts of different school personnel, who then work on the formulation of school major concerns based on students' needs, the school vision and the school's development pace. The draft SDP is then put forward for further discussion during the staff development day. Improvements are discerned in the 2019/20 Annual School Plan (ASP) when compared with that of 2018/19 in that there is clearer direction in teachers' professional development and more specific focuses of SDL strategies.

3.2.2 Starting from last year, a half-yearly evaluation of the ASP is required for more timely adjustments as necessary. One such example is to reinstate Uniform Test upon teachers' review and discussion on the try-out Standardised Test.

3.2.3 More subject and committee annual plans in 2019/20 well echo the school major concerns when compared with those in 2018/19. However, the evaluation of the subjects and committees on their implementation plans is a bit brief, some of which is mainly on task completion or teachers' perception. The P-I-E cycle at the subject and committee levels has to be strengthened.

### **3.3 Streamlining of the school organisation is necessary for more focused and effective management. Teachers' professional development has to be enhanced to form a learning community.**

3.3.1 Currently, there are around 60 committees/teams in the school organisation. While some have been recently set up to support the school development, others have existed for long without much review on their functions and effectiveness. For more focused and effective school management, the school organisation needs to be streamlined, and with clear delineation of duties among the committees/teams.

3.3.2 The "Staff meeting without the School Principal" is intended for more open expression of teacher voice, and has served so in reflecting views to the senior management. Teachers' views are mostly followed up with explanation and action. While due consideration is given to the school's development focuses and number of student beneficiaries in allocating resources and manpower, transparency in the decision-making process is to be ensured. As variations are noted among teachers in carrying out school policies, a more concerted effort in reaching consensus on the implementation strategies is necessary.

3.3.3 Attempts are made to enhance teachers' professional development. A positive and necessary step is taken by the school in introducing a new appraisal system, covering various aspects of teachers' professional development. It is pleasing to see teachers make the move from attending workshops to having their lessons observed. Apart from this, there needs to

be greater professional sharing among teachers, and followed up with concrete actions. More learning from local like schools will surely benefit teachers' professional growth.

3.3.4 A strong network is established with the alumni who have rendered invaluable support to the school through the Wah Yan One Family Foundation and different "fraternities". Parents actively participate in various school activities and help the school in areas such as fund raising and monitoring of catering services.

### **3.4 Review has to be made to ensure a balanced curriculum is provided in the junior forms. STEM education is making promising progress.**

3.4.1 The school curriculum is broad. There has been an increasing number of experiential learning and life-wide learning activities to enrich students' learning experiences. Elective subjects offered at the senior levels are under regular review to cater for students' interests and needs. In response to the last ESR report, attempts have been made to accommodate students' learning needs in Technology Education (TE) KLA in the junior forms, with Computer Literacy (CL) offered. While the school has plans to cover the knowledge contexts of "materials and structure" and "operations and management" in the near future, concepts on business and management covered under the knowledge context of "strategies and management" have to be enriched to build a solid foundation for students' senior form studies. An inadequate coverage of the essential learning elements of "resources and economic activities" and "social systems and citizenship" in the Personal, Social and Humanities Education KLA is observed. To ensure the junior form students are provided with a solid knowledge base, a holistic review of the junior form curriculum has to be made. The Science Education (SE) KLA has conscientiously followed up the recommendations of the last Focus Inspection, and the major learning elements of the SE curriculum are now well covered in the junior forms. Currently, subjects of the senior forms in the SE KLA are found in S3. Adjustments should be made to have proper names used in line with the recommendations of the Curriculum Development Council.

3.4.2 A working group led by SE KLA has been recently formed to promote STEM education. Elements of STEM education have been properly infused in certain science projects. Thought is given to integrating the knowledge and skills acquired through SE KLA and CL to strengthen students' inquiry and problem-solving skills. The more able students are encouraged to participate in STEM-related external competitions; and through the experience, some are able to develop a better understanding of own academic potential and start setting goals for their further studies. For the future development of STEM education, there needs to be closer collaboration among



related subjects in strengthening students' ability to integrate and apply related knowledge and skills. A concrete plan on specific goals to be attained at different year levels could be worked out. Partnership with universities could as well be explored.

3.4.3 A library lesson per week is provided in S1 to equip students with necessary library skills. While reading skills are systematically scheduled, more thought could be given to the class delivery, in making the lesson more interactive and with greater hands-on experiences for the students. Joint-subject efforts are made to foster students' reading of more diversified materials and sharing of their reading experience through more lively means, such as role play. Junior form students generally show interest in reading. Good attempts are made to promote "reading across the curriculum" through cross-curricular projects.

### **3.5 Values education has been effectively promoted. Students' discipline is suitably managed using a positive approach.**

3.5.1 Great emphasis has been put on the Jesuit values and students' character formation. Virtues such as love and care, respect and justice are well fostered through assemblies, Morning Formation, as well as social services and experiential learning activities. Contents of Morning Formation are carefully worked out for S1-S6, with each level having one core Jesuit value, including responsibility, compassion, forgiveness and service. Enhancement is made to the materials in response to school's development focuses and student needs. With the special care given to the selection of S1-2 class teachers, students are nurtured to form positive characters at an early stage. Junior form students benefit much from the Examen in developing a habit of reflection, some of whom have practised such in their everyday life.

3.5.2 Basic Law education is covered at appropriate junctures in the learning and teaching of Chinese History and History. To develop students' national identity, activities including flag-raising ceremony, military summer camp and game stalls in bazaar are held. Study tours to the Mainland are organised by the National Education Committee in collaboration with other school teams. At present, the planning for nurturing students' national identity is rather random. A more structured approach with better co-ordination among related committees is necessary.

3.5.3 A positive approach is adopted in student discipline with emphasis on students' self-reflection. Regular class teacher meetings are held to discuss the disciplinary affairs. With the recent setting up of form co-ordinators, there has been greater collaboration between the Discipline Committee and class teachers for more prompt follow-up of students' discipline. Some improvements are noted in students' punctuality and tardiness. Continual effort has still to be made to bring about students' better

self-management, such as the use of electronic gadgets in school.

**3.6 Most students are nurtured to be reflective learners. Greater determination is needed to make better use of assessment data to improve student learning.**

3.6.1 In the current SDP, emphasis is placed on helping students develop SDL skills, which aligns well with elements of reflection and action emphasised in the IPP. A repertoire of SDL strategies, including note-taking and pre-lesson tasks, is incorporated in the schemes of work of different subjects. Four specific SDL strategies, namely concept mapping, note-taking, collaborative learning and e-learning, are the focus of the current year. As observed, students are well-versed in using mind maps to organise their ideas. Some are able to develop personalised notes, with jotting of key learning points and representative examples. On-line learning platforms are also well used by most subjects to enhance students' pre-lesson preparation and post-lesson extended learning.

3.6.2 Most students are nurtured to be reflective learners. Their reflective ability is well-embedded in their mini-projects and chapter summaries. Given students' good abilities and potential, more impetus should be given to promoting their SDL through goal setting. Authentic contexts such as students' daily learning and experiential learning outside the campus could well serve such purpose.

3.6.3 There has been greater importance attached to the use of "assessment for learning" in an attempt to improve student learning. Student performance data in the internal and public assessments are under close review. The Student Data Analysis System (SDAS) on eClass is tried out this year to analyse student assessment data and to gain a more holistic view on student performance across different year levels. Markers' reports reveal that in-depth analysis of student performance is done by some subject panels, but suggested follow-up measures are sometimes too general or not well addressing students' learning difficulties as identified. To yield the desired results, more thought has to be given to the use of assessment data to inform curriculum planning and classroom pedagogy.' The impact of the SDAS on enhancing learning and teaching is still to be seen.

**3.7 At classroom level, teachers make good use of questioning techniques to enhance students' reflective learning. e-Learning could be more widely adopted.**

3.7.1 Students display good learning attitudes and abilities. Most are attentive and willing to express themselves in class activities. While conducting presentations, some students can provide substantial elaborations with clear organisation, exhibiting higher-order thinking. Some students

raise questions proactively, showing a high motivation to learn. A few students take the initiative to take notes in learning, showing the mastery of using concept mapping to organise the learning content.

3.7.2 Teachers possess sound subject knowledge and good presentation skills. Some teachers are able to adopt suitable strategies to develop students' SDL habits and skills. In lessons with pre-lesson preparation tasks arranged, they are generally well linked to the lesson content and activities, which can boost student learning. e-Learning is found in individual lessons to arouse students' learning interest and enhance their understanding of the learning content. However, the effectiveness varies. In the more effective lesson, students are provided with the opportunities to apply knowledge and skills to probe deeper into the topic by using a mobile app. To nurture students' SDL skills, e-learning has to be more widely used in class. One example is using e-learning tools to provide more instant feedback to students to enhance their reflection and adjustment in learning, so as to attain "assessment as learning". As e-learning is only observed in individual lessons, teachers need to be more well-versed in using IT in learning and teaching, with the good support of school's infrastructure.

3.7.3 In addition to checking students' understanding, questions are effectively used to provoke their thinking. Prompts and probes are at times used to encourage students' elaboration of answers and facilitate their reflective learning. While teachers' feedback is mostly positive and timely, more concrete feedback could be given to the class after students' group discussions or presentations.

3.7.4 Strategies to cater for learner diversity are limited. Teachers mostly walk around to monitor students' learning progress and render individual support to those in need during pair or group work. To address better students' different learning needs, more challenging tasks could be assigned to the more able students to sustain their interest and engage them. In lessons with group activities, teachers could assign different roles to students with different needs and make good use of their discussion outcomes to deepen student learning. Peer learning and support could be mobilised to help individual students, when necessary. Facilities in a few classrooms are found not conducive to effective learning, and have to be improved.

3.7.5 In the very effective lessons, teachers make good use of students' pre-lesson preparation to facilitate discussion and inquiry learning. Teachers possess good questioning skills and ask a wide range of questions to provoke students' thinking. Activities are well sequenced to scaffold students' learning. Students are fully engaged in learning. Upon student presentations, vibrant peer interaction is observed with dynamic and fruitful discussions.

**3.8 A rich variety of life-wide learning activities is provided to manifest students' leadership skills. Careers and life planning programmes are systematically developed for students.**

3.8.1 A good variety of life-wide learning activities are provided to develop students' different potential, such as in sports, music, religious and academic. Exchange programmes are well in place to develop students' global outlook. Co-curricular activities taken place in school are largely organised by students themselves, with assistance of the advisory teachers. The Students' Association and Students' Council have been playing an effective role in planning and organising school activities, overseeing the running of clubs and societies, as well as providing a proper channel for students to reflect their opinions towards school policies. Through participating in these, students develop their leadership skills and sense of responsibility. Currently, leadership training programmes are mostly organised in response to the needs of different student units. A more structured and holistic leadership training programme is preferred to groom more student leaders or develop leadership skills among students.

3.8.2 Career and life planning (CLP) programmes are systematically developed for S1-6, with each level having a specific focus, including understanding personal aptitudes, subject choices, studies and career planning. The school has also made good use of its strong parents and alumni network to hold career talks and sharing for the students. The sharing in the "Golden Library" has enabled the senior form students to have a good understanding of the professions, and reflect on their life goals. At present, services provided for and time spent on junior forms students in their CLP are rather limited. Reviews could be made on the coverage and intended learning outcomes of the CLP programmes. In view of the overwhelming demand from the senior form students for work experience and mentorship programmes, more external support could be sought to further explore students' career aspirations and orientations.

**3.9 Brotherhood is found among students. A professional team is well in place to support students with special educational needs.**

3.9.1 The mentorship programme "Men for and with Others" is organised to match the S1 students with senior form students. Some close contact is established with the senior form mentors and the S1 students are able to seek support from them whenever in need. Brotherhood is also enhanced through the "Magis" tutorial service, in which voluntary academic help is rendered to the lower form students.

3.9.2 The school has a professional team to support students with special educational needs. In addition to training on social skills, structured meetings are held to discuss student cases with relevant school personnel, so as to



provide timely individual services to students. For the more talented students, pull-out educational training programmes and nominations to join local and overseas competitions are the current practice. While the school support for the talented students is mainly on their academic and skills development, more thought could be given to address their socio-psychological needs.

**3.10 Students are reflective and respectful. Both their academic and non-academic performance is good.**

3.10.1 Students love the school and their sense of belonging to the school is very strong. They are in general polite. They enjoy a good rapport with the teachers and the autonomy granted by the school. Mutual respect and trust are found between students and the school. Most students are reflective in their learning, with some applying similar skills in their daily life. Some students have to improve their self-management skills.

3.10.2 Students actively participate in a wide range of co-curricular activities, covering academic, music and sports aspects. Many take part and receive awards in various inter-school and territory-wide competitions, including speech, music, sports, science, as well as debating competitions. Students have obtained outstanding achievements in international and inter-school choir competitions and inter-school ice hockey competitions.

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

## 4. Suggestions for Improvement

- 4.1 For the school to further progress, consensus has to be reached among teachers on the implementation strategies of school policies, complemented with clear work delineation among committees. More vigorous professional sharing within and beyond the school has to take place for teachers' greater professional development. Measures to cater for learner diversity at classroom level have to be explored and implemented. The school still needs to deliberate further on IT in education, with students' SDL skills augmented through goal setting and the use of "assessment as learning". More support could be sought through networking with universities to realise students' different potential. With the good modelling of different school personnel, the Jesuit values are to be sustained at every school corner *Ad majorem Dei gloriam*.

## 5. Appendices

Appendix I

### Overall Performance in Classroom Learning and Teaching

No. of Lessons Observed	Overall Performance in Classroom Learning and Teaching			
	Excellent	Good	Acceptable	Unsatisfactory
36	11%	39%	47%	3%

## School Response

The school response on the draft ESR report was received on 23 January 2020. The original text of the school response is incorporated as follows.

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A Jesuit Secondary School

20 January 2020

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Dear Ms. LOH,

### School Response to the Draft External School Review (ESR) Report

Thank you for the encouraging Draft ESR Report, which endorses the efforts of our students and teachers, and at the same time provides constructive suggestions for improvement.

We are grateful to the ESR team for recognising the good performance of our students and acknowledging the commitment of our teachers. Remarks such as "*Students display good learning attitudes and abilities. Students are reflective and respectful. Both their academic and non-academic performance is good.*" and "*The school has been endeavouring for betterment, to live out the Jesuit value of Magis. Concerted effort and thought are put on School Self-evaluation.*" are heartening.

Our school is a Catholic school sponsored by the Society of Jesus, which has been running plenty of schools across the globe for nearly five centuries. The school advocates the use of the Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm (IPP) to educate our students into young gentlemen with human excellence, i.e., commitment, compassion, competence and conscience, which is also a shared vision of our colleagues. The use of the IPP in teaching and learning and its promotion to our young gentlemen would serve as a common ground between our school and other Jesuit educational institutes. Simply put, the proactive use of the IPP, which should also be integrated into our daily life, is the Wah Yan consensus.



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Achieving consensus is our ultimate goal. But it is understandable that the school management proceeds with the strategic implementation of school policies if support is obtained from the majority, for the betterment of the students and the school. More vigorous professional sharing can definitely help to reach consensus as it can agglomerate staff on the same level and contribute to a shared vision.

"Social Systems and Citizens" in the PSHE KLA is in fact covered in the curriculum of Ethics and Religious Education (ERE) for the junior forms, and nurturing students' national identity is systematically included in the curriculum planning of ERE.

Concerning goal setting, indeed it is in progress across levels. Students do get to set their own learning goals through reflection and exercising Examen, a deeply reflective methodology. Such evidence can be found in the implementation of goal setting in English lessons, formation lessons and the monthly goal setting section in the Reflective Journal. It is true that goal setting can be further enhanced through our major concern of forming self-directed learners. It can be made more tangible on a larger scale where students map out their own learning goals, which ensures clearer setting of goals.

Thank you once again for the reassuring Draft ESR Report.

Yours sincerely,



Rev. Stephen Chow, S.J.  
School Supervisor and Chairman of the IMC

