External School Review Report

ECF Saint Too Canaan College

School Address: 6 Lee On Lane, Kwun Tong, Kowloon

Review Period : 18 to 20, 23 and 26 November 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 School Management Committee (SMC), 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. To further enhance transparency, the school is encouraged to upload the report to its homepage for access by the public.

4. The SMC 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.

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1. External School Review Methodology

1.1   The ESR team conducted the review in November 2020 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 34 lessons taught by 34 teachers;
- Observation of various school activities, such as morning assembly, weekly assembly, life-wide learning activities and a pre-lesson preparation meeting; and
- Meetings and interviews with the key stakeholders of the school including the school management[1], teachers, parents and students.

2. Current Development of the School

2.1   The school began its operation in 2003. The mission is to create a learning environment filled with creativity, initiative, care and trust based on the teaching of the Bible and through the practice of love. The school aims to help students build harmonious relationship with others, and to develop their own potential in the areas of intellect, character and temperament. The school also aspires to cultivate students with a sense of responsibility, rationality and affection, who pursue excellence in life with vision and passion.

2.2   The class structure approved by the Education Bureau (EDB) and the number of students[2] in the current school year are as follows:

Level	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	Total
Number of Classes	4	3	3	4	5	5	24
Number of Students	148	128	125	120	115	93	729

2.3   The Principal, who was an experienced Vice Principal of the school, took up her post in 2019 upon the retirement of the ex-principal at the end of the last school development cycle. The two Vice Principals (VPs) were newly promoted in this school year. Around 60% of the teachers have been working

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[1] The school management generally refers to the SMC, Principal and Vice Principals
[2] Based on administrative records kept in the Bureau's information system

in the school for more than 10 years. The change in student profile in recent years has widened the learner diversity.

2.4 The recommendations made in the last ESR report in 2016 were as follows:

- Professional capabilities of teachers could be further enhanced in terms of instructional leadership. A sharper focus could be placed on identifying students' learning difficulties and the roots of their problems as well as pedagogy for enhancing deep learning among students. Teachers' role as facilitators in nurturing self-directed learning skills among students could be strengthened. More thorough discussion with theoretical basis and in-depth reflection on how to make the best use of learning and teaching strategies such as differentiated instructions to cater for learner diversity could be conducted and translated in classroom practices for triangulation.

- In further advancing school development, some in-depth and holistic evaluation rather than program-by-program evaluation is needed. With in-depth analysis and synthesis of the related evaluation findings at the whole-school level, critical factors for success and implementation gaps could be more readily identified for coherent planning and achieving a synergising effect.

2.5 The school's major concerns (MCs) in the current development cycle (2018/19 to 2020/21) are (i) to enhance learning and teaching effectiveness; (ii) to nurture students to be servant leaders; and (iii) to nurture inclusive culture.

3. External School Review Findings

3.1 Considerable efforts are made to enhance the professional capacity of teachers. More strategic planning for facilitation of the school's continuous development is needed to scale new heights.

3.1.1 Supported by the SMC and a stable team of dedicated teachers who are caring and willing to strive for improvement in teaching, the school has developed the learning community mentioned in the previous ESR report further at a steady pace. Strenuous efforts are made to enhance the professional capacity of teachers. Strong support is enlisted from resource persons like the school managers and teaching consultants who bring in knowledge, skills as well as resources to help the school develop environmental education and provide guidance to teachers. Besides, peer lesson observation and other forms of lesson observation are aptly arranged to address the development focuses of the school, such as the promotion of e-learning. Frequent and regular pre-lesson preparation meetings (PLP) are held in all Key Learning Areas (KLAs) /subjects, contributing to the enhancement of learning and teaching effectiveness in general. Support from external professional bodies is appropriately sought to strengthen teachers' professional exchange. For example, training and sharing sessions on pedagogies and assessment have been provided by experts from tertiary institutions as well as the EDB. An

atmosphere conducive to professional sharing has been effectively cultivated.

3.1.2   During the period of class suspension in the last school year, the school took prompt action to manage potential crises by reviewing measures and strategies to support student learning and development with due consideration to students' needs.   In the early stage of class suspension, uploading of reading materials and assignments to the school intranet was adopted as the major interim arrangements.   The school had promptly introduced real-time online teaching starting from February 2020 and pre-recorded teaching videos to explain learning concepts to students at all year levels or provide feedback on students' learning difficulties.   Form teachers maintained good communication with parents to understand the needs of students for provision of necessary support to them.   Suitable resources, such as anti-epidemic information and career information were provided to support students' various needs.

3.1.3   Taking into consideration the needs of students and the recommendations of the previous ESR report, the school has drawn up its School Development Plan (SDP) (2018-21) with three MCs focusing on enhancing learning and teaching effectiveness, nurturing students to be servant leaders and fostering an inclusive culture.   In line with the MCs of the SDP, annual school plans (ASP) with targets and implementation strategies have been formulated.   However, the yearly targets are not clearly articulated in the ASP in terms of progressive expectation on students' learning performance, such as the mastery of self-directed skills and the demonstration of specific quality of servant leaders .   To better support the implementation of the MCs, the school should devise its ASP more strategically by setting clearer targets specifying expected student performance in stages.

3.1.4   In realising the MCs, subject panels and student support committees have formulated corresponding work plans and appropriate strategies that are in line with the annual concerns of the Learning and Teaching (L&T) Department and the Student Development (SD) Department respectively. Apart from the MCs, subject specific concerns are also suitably identified and addressed by some subjects with reference to the education trends and students' performance.   Such practice is conducive to the future development of the subjects and could be promulgated across all subjects.   Nevertheless, some of the objectives of the student support committees are not clearly set, hindering effective evaluation of attainment of those objectives.

3.2   **Notwithstanding the due emphasis put on the use of data, the self-evaluation at both the school and KLA/committee levels could be further strengthened.**

3.2.1   The school is aware of the importance of using data at both the school and subject levels.   Good attempts are made in using the value-added data to analyse students' academic performance.   Data collected through Stakeholder

Survey (SHS) and Assessment Programme for Affective and Social Outcomes (APASO) are also carefully discussed at the School Evaluation Committee (SEC) and School Administrative Committee (SAC) meetings to review the effectiveness of school work. However, in evaluating the effectiveness of the implementation strategies of the ASP, the success criteria mostly focus on completion of tasks or percentages of positive response in the school-based questionnaire surveys. It is advisable to put the focus of evaluation on students' learning outcomes so that the extent of achievement of targets can be truly reflected.

3.2.2 The school conducts analyses of assessment data in both internal and public examinations to understand the performance of students. Post-examination evaluation is conducted in all subjects to identify the weaknesses of the students as well as to draw up suggestions for improvement. However, only a few subjects can identify the specific learning difficulties of the students with reference to the assessment data. In some subjects, the evaluation often focuses on the attitude and general performance of the students. The follow-up suggestions are mostly restricted to providing more practices and extra lessons to students. Apart from the general analyses of students' performance, a more in-depth analysis should be conducted to identify students' learning difficulties so that more specific suggestions on curriculum adaptation and pedagogies could be made accordingly to improve student learning.

3.2.3 The Principal understands the culture and characteristics of the school and is well supported by the two VPs who oversee work in the areas of learning and teaching, and student development respectively. Both VPs are well versed in their own areas of responsibility despite being new to their leadership role in the school. The subject panel heads and committee heads are experienced teachers who strive to support the implementation of the school policy by leading the subject panels and committees in aligning the KLA-level and committee-level planning with the major concerns of the school. They are generally able to facilitate collaboration across KLAs and committees, monitor the progress of work and conduct continuous reviews through daily meetings and discussion. Yet, there is still room for improvement in self-evaluation at KLA and committee levels, which mainly focuses on reporting the tasks done and the statistical results of questionnaire surveys. Besides, the questions set in the surveys are rather broad, making it difficult to inform the planning for future development.

3.3 The school offers a multitude of cross-curricular programmes and activities. The PSHE KLA curriculum at the junior secondary level should be reviewed to help students build a solid foundation for further studies.

3.3.1 A broad curriculum covering all the KLAs, complementing a

multitude of cross-curricular programmes and activities, is offered at the junior secondary level. A good attempt is made by the school to start revamping the school-based curriculum at the junior secondary level with reference to the updated central curriculum in this school development cycle. For instance, the subject Life and Society is offered in S1 to S3 starting from this school year to replace the school-based "liberal studies". However, some essential learning elements of the Personal, Social and Humanities Education (PSHE) KLA are not adequately covered at the junior secondary level. A holistic review of the PSHE KLA curriculum to help students build a solid foundation of knowledge and skills in preparation for their future studies is necessary.

3.3.2   At the senior secondary level, the school currently offers nine elective subjects and students may choose 2 or 3 elective subjects. As suggested in the previous ESR, the school could continue to explore providing a wider choice of elective subjects including Applied Learning subjects to suit students' different interests and needs.

3.3.3   Some of the learning and teaching materials for Liberal Studies are not appropriately selected in terms of text content. The school management should step up monitoring and ensure that lessons and learning and teaching materials are planned and used in accordance with the curriculum aims and objectives stipulated in the "Liberal Studies Curriculum and Assessment Guide (Secondary 4-6)" to help students construct knowledge and develop skills as well as positive values and attitudes.

3.4   Appropriate strategies are properly set to enhance learning and teaching effectiveness. More deliberation on adoption of effective pedagogical approaches could be made to complement the use of e-learning.

3.4.1   Improving learning and teaching has been one of the school's long-term development focuses. In this development cycle, advancing teaching through professional development and different strategies such as e-teaching, Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education and equipping students with self-directed skills are rightly set as the development targets of the school major concern "to enhance learning and teaching effectiveness". Much emphasis is put on the promotion of information technology to enhance teaching effectiveness, and the related strategies are suitably implemented in general. For example, Learning Management System (LMS) is used for uploading of learning and teaching materials as pre-tasks, and different apps are introduced to enhance students' motivation in learning, check their understanding and illustrate learning concepts.

3.4.2   Dedicated efforts are made by some subject panels in adopting the flipped classroom approach in designing pre-lesson tasks on the LMS. For instance, students are assigned to search for information related to the learning tasks in the following lessons and their learning outcomes are uploaded to the LMS. Active student learning is observed in those lessons where pre-tasks

are assigned as additional input to enhance students' understanding of the topics. The effectiveness of e-learning in classroom is yet to be reviewed. Now that the lesson time is relatively shorter, the provision of pre-lesson tasks and online assignments is becoming more important, more in-depth discussion and exploration on effective pedagogical approaches to complement the use of e-learning should be continuously and further promoted.

3.4.3 Due emphasis is placed on the development of STEM education through co-curricular activities. In addition to the newly furnished i-Lab, a designated STEM Committee comprising teaching staff of relevant KLAs, has been duly set up to oversee the development of STEM education. An array of STEM-related activities including STEM Day, a student presentation booth on STEM 3-dimensional Art in the Learning and Teaching Expo 2019 and the STEM Society and STEM Study Tour are appropriately organised to nurture students' interest in STEM education. Interested students are encouraged to participate in external competitions or projects, and some awards are obtained. Initial steps are taken by individual KLAs to start planning for the incorporation of STEM education elements in their curricula. Looking forward, the school. could explore more opportunities for all students to apply and integrate knowledge and skills within and across different STEM disciplines and to nurture their creativity, collaboration and problem-solving skills.

3.4.4 Good efforts are made to promote extensive reading with a view to enhancing student learning. In addition to the morning reading sessions, a reading lesson conducted by form teachers is arranged each week to equip students with basic e-resource research skills and knowledge. Book crossing activity and a mobile library are suitably arranged on different school floors to promote reading. Reading Days, reading exhibitions and theme-based reading activities collaborated with subject panels are properly organised to foster a reading culture. Subscription to e-reading platforms, reading award schemes and a reading club are in place to develop students' reading interest. As observed, the reading atmosphere of individual classes during morning reading sessions is good. Alongside the promotion of cross-curricular learning and STEM education, the whole-school reading culture and reading across the curriculum could be further fostered through encouraging students to read widely.

3.5 Good endeavors are made in deepening student learning through well-coordinated cross-curricular activities and collaboration between subjects and committees.

3.5.1 In response to the previous ESR recommendation to promote deep learning, led by the Curriculum Development Committee of the school, there is a whole-school endeavor in promoting cross-curricular collaboration with the aim of equipping students with self-directed skills. A multitude of theme-based cross-curricular programmes and activities have been appropriately

conducted by the joint efforts among subject departments as well as functional committees in recent years to extend students' learning within and beyond the classroom. These examples include the curriculum mapping among the Chinese Language, English Language, Science and PSHE departments. In line with the school spirit of green education, the topic "pollution" is identified as the common theme as the entry point for cross-curricular learning. Students are given the opportunity to give a speech about the prevention of air pollution in Hong Kong based on the relevant concepts and information learnt in the related subjects. Other examples include the collaboration between Integrated Humanities and Visual Arts in the learning of the topic of "the Renaissance", and the business talks co-organised by the Economics panel and the Career and Guidance Committee.

3.5.2   Another notable example to promote Language across the Curriculum is the school-based Language across the Curriculum lessons incorporated into the English subject for S1 students. The English panel takes the lead in liaising with other content subject teachers to understand the learning needs of students when English is used as the medium of instruction and collects relevant examples of the learning and teaching materials from different subjects. After identifying students' learning needs, topic focuses and contents are suitably devised accordingly to promote Language across the Curriculum. For example, word formation, rhetorical functions used in academic writing and phonics skills are aptly taught to equip students with the enabling skills in the learning of non-language subjects with English as the medium of instruction. All in all, through the well-coordinated cross-curricular programmes and activities, students' learning needs are properly addressed, as they are led to connect and apply their knowledge gained from different subjects and deepen their learning.

3.6   A range of suitable measures are in place to address the diverse needs of students.

3.6.1   The school aptly considers the needs of students in different key stages in designing the school-based life planning curriculum. A wide range of programmes, including Career days, S3 Mini Expo and Local and Overseas Studies Expo in S5 and S6, have been organised to meet the needs of students of different year levels. While recognition of personal uniqueness is emphasised in the junior forms, sharing of life-planning experiences by alumni of diverse academic background and visits to workplace are organised for senior form students to widen their horizon. These programmes are useful in helping students to make informed choices in relation to their further studies and future career. Collaboration among KLAs and committees in promoting life planning is evident. For example, the English Language KLA designs worksheets for students' self-reflection on goal setting.

3.6.2   In response to the MC "To nurture inclusive culture", appropriate

support has been provided to help Non-Chinese Speaking (NCS) students adapt to the school life and the life in Hong Kong. The career program for the NCS students is organised to help them as well as their parents to gain more information about the study paths in Hong Kong. Board decoration competition is organised in the junior forms to arouse students' awareness of accepting different cultures. Moreover, experiential learning activities, such as visiting the homeless people in Hong Kong, have been suitably arranged for NCS students to raise their awareness about the community of Hong Kong. Life-wide learning activities, including Harmony Day, allow the NCS students and the exchange students to share their cultural features, such as their food and clothing, with local students. Various non-local trips are arranged to enhance students' understanding of different cultures in different countries. On the whole, students with different cultural backgrounds have maintained a harmonious relationship in the school.

3.6.3   In view of the growing learner diversity due to the change of student profiles in recent years, importance has been attached to accommodating the needs of the students of different ability levels at both the school and curriculum levels. Resources are suitably tapped to arrange split-class teaching, and classes are properly streamed according to students' learning abilities with the learning and teaching materials adapted to suit their level. Remedial classes conducted after school by alumni are arranged for students in need to consolidate their learning, while talented students are nominated by the school to attend courses from external institutions to unleash their potentials. While graded materials are usually designed with more guidance and input provided for the less able students, the differentiation is limited in terms of task complexity or demand as reflected from the sample materials.

3.6.4   Support measures to cater for the students with special education needs (SEN), such as special arrangements in examinations, the establishment of the Chinese writing and reading groups and the summer internship programme, have been adequately provided. Manpower resources, such as teacher assistants and the social workers, are rightly deployed to provide the necessary support, for example, organising focus groups and activities for SEN students to enhance their interpersonal skills as well as providing individual counselling support if they have encountered social and emotional problems. However, the number of teachers who have received training on SEN is lower than that recommended by the EDB. The school is advised to formulate related plans to ensure teachers will receive the relevant training to support the needs of students.

3.7   A whole-school approach is aptly adopted to nurture students' positive values. Promotion of values education could be further reviewed holistically.

3.7.1   The school puts great emphasis on promoting the whole-person

development of students. It has all along been cultivating the sense of respect and responsibility among students. To enhance students' perseverance in face of adversities, building their resilience is also emphasised in this development cycle. The fostering of the values of respect, responsibility and resilience (3R) is properly infused in the class teacher periods, assemblies, the Bible Knowledge lessons, and the Life Education for junior secondary students and Moral Education lessons at the senior level. The 5S practice (Structurise, Systematise, Sanitise, Standardise and Self-discipline) is taught in the Life Education lessons to develop junior form students' self-management skills and sense of responsibility. In recent years, the school makes great effort to promote green education whereby students' awareness of "respect to the environment" is aroused. Some environmental-friendly activities, such as recycling and energy saving competitions, are duly organised to encourage students to live a green life. To nurture students' resilience when encountering emotional problems, programmes related to emotion management and mental health are suitably conducted. Students, in general, are respectful and have harmonious relationship with others in the school.

3.7.2   A wide range of activities, such as exhibitions with board display for introducing the Basic Law and national anthem, flag raising ceremonies and tours to the Mainland, are suitably arranged to nurture national identity of students. Nevertheless, Basic Law Education is not adequately covered at the junior secondary level. The lesson time of Chinese History in S1 and S2 is lower than that recommended in the Chinese History Curriculum Guide. While an array of activities is properly organised by different committees to promote values education, there is a lack of holistic planning of the systematic development of values education in students at different year levels. A holistic review of the positive values and attitudes covered in different subjects or KLAs as well as various programmes is needed to ensure values education are systematically instilled in students.

3.8   Ample opportunities are provided for students to develop their potentials. Characteristics of a servant leader could be further deliberated for better planning of the developmental programmes.

3.8.1   The school provides diverse local and non-local life-wide learning activities, which are well coordinated according to the five essential learning experiences, to develop students' potentials. Taking into consideration the suggestions of students, some newly arranged activities such as model club and cricket club have been added to meet students' diverse needs and interests. To further develop the potential of the students, the school sets up a talent pool in S1 to better record the interest and achievement of these students in this development cycle. Students are then recommended to participate in co-curricular activities or competitions in accordance with their interests and talents.

3.8.2   To further nurture the serving spirit and social responsibility of students, more opportunities are provided for students to serve within and outside school.   More service posts such as Environmental Ambassadors have been set up in recent years, encouraging students to serve others.   Various voluntary services, such as elderly home visits and service trips to Cambodia and Guangxi in which students served as student teachers are aptly organised to nurture students' serving spirit.   Reflecting on their learning experiences, students have learnt to be positive when facing difficulties in life and their passion to serve people in need has been aroused through the visits.   These activities are effective in cultivating the positive attitudes of students in showing care for the needy in the community.

3.8.3   In response to the MC of nurturing students to be servant leader, the school places great endeavour on developing students' leadership potential. The "Star of Canaan" is duly set up to encourage students to act as a role model with admirable characters.   Ample opportunities are given to students to develop their leadership.   Various leadership training programmes are suitably arranged to enhance students' communication skills as well as their ability to organise activities for their peers.   Students appreciate to have the autonomy to actualise their ideas in the services and their confidence in taking the leadership role is strengthened.   However, the key characteristics of a servant leader are not clearly spelt out and highlighted in the service or training programmes.   To better inform planning of the various training progammes and the voluntary service, the school could further deliberate the characteristics of a servant leader so as to build consensus among teachers for future planning.

3.9   Students are attentive in class.   Teachers' explanation of ideas is clear. Strategies to cater for learner diversity could be further explored to fully stretch the potential of the more able students.

3.9.1   Lessons are generally well-organised and conducted with clear learning objectives.   In general, a positive learning atmosphere prevails during lesson.   Students are attentive and engaged in class.   They follow instructions and are willing to answer questions.   Most students are able to respond in English with some of them displaying a good command of the language.   Some of them take the initiatives to discuss with peers and help their peers in need during the learning activities.   In some lessons, students raise questions to clarify doubts.   Teachers' explanation of ideas is clear. Suitable daily-life examples are sometimes used to arouse students' interest in learning.   Conclusions are usually made to consolidate student learning at the end of the lessons.   In some lessons, students can conclude their learning when prompted by teachers.

3.9.2   To address the major concern of enhancing learning and teaching, the school has taught students some note-taking skills in recent years.   Some students have developed a habit of note taking and highlighting the key learning

points.　Some aptly design pre-lesson tasks are adopted to prepare students for the learning in the following lesson.　For example, teachers upload video clips to the e-platform and set some questions in e-forms for students to answer after watching the video clips to equip them with the prerequisite knowledge.　Such practice allows teachers to understand students' learning difficulties in advance, which can then be better addressed during lessons.　As observed, students can generally make use of what they have learnt in the pre-lesson preparation to complete the learning tasks in the lessons.

3.9.3　To cater for learner diversity, teachers usually provide individual support to the students in need while they are doing the learning tasks.　In general, teachers make good effort in catering the learning needs of the less able students.　Nevertheless, the strategies for extending the learning of the more able students are limited.　To better cater for learner diversity, more challenging tasks could be assigned to the more able students after they have completed the general learning tasks.　More differentiated tasks with variation of support in terms of process and output could also be considered to cater for students' different learning needs.

3.9.4　Questioning is commonly used to check students' understanding and monitor their learning progress.　Some teachers display sound questioning techniques, including prompting, probing and using graded questions, to stimulate students' thinking.　Although teachers' feedback is positive, more concrete feedback could be provided to help students reflect on how they can further improve their learning.

3.10　Students show interest in participating in a wide range of activities and perform fairly well academically.

3.10.1　Students are courteous and friendly.　They enjoy a good relationship with their teachers and peers with various cultural backgrounds.　Students are willing to serve their teachers, peers and the needy in the community.　Student leaders, such as prefects and house committee members, are responsible and confident in carrying out their duties.　They show good leadership characters and serve as good role models for their peers.

3.10.2　Students are willing to participate in a wide range of academic as well as non-academic activities and competitions within and outside school.　They perform well and have gained some group and individual awards in inter-school competitions in verse speaking, sports as well as STEM education.

3.10.3　In the past three years, the percentages of students meeting the general entrance requirements for local undergraduate university programmes in the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE) and sub-degree courses were below the territory average of day school students. Taking into account the S1 intake, the school performed fairly well in the HKDSE in the past three years.

4. Suggestions for Improvement

4.1 To better address the learning and development needs of students, a holistic review on the school curriculum should be conducted to ensure that the essential learning elements are adequately covered at the junior secondary level. A wider choice of elective subjects, including Applied Learning subjects, could be provided to better suit students' interests and needs at the senior secondary level. To ensure that positive values and attitudes are nurtured in students systematically through the provision of balanced learning experiences, the learning elements of values education of different subjects as well as student support programmes should be reviewed holistically.

4.2 The school should have more strategic planning for its continuous development and conduct more in-depth evaluation to inform its planning. To facilitate the progressive implementation of the development focuses of the school set in its 3-year development plan, yearly targets should be clearly articulated after thorough deliberation among teachers. While the school is aware of the importance of using data in self-evaluation, a sharper focus should be placed on the impact of the implementation strategies on student learning and development.