



External School Review Report

Sha Tin Methodist College

School Address: Estate Secondary School, Sun Tin Wai Estate,
Shatin, Area 10, New Territories

Review Period: 14 to 15, 18, 21 and 24 October 2024

**Quality Assurance Division
Education Bureau
February 2025**

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.

Contents

	Page
1. External School Review Methodology	1
2. Current Development of the School	1
3. External School Review Findings	2
4. Conclusion and Way Forward	10
5. Appendix	11
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 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 40 lessons taught by 40 teachers;
 - Observation of various school activities, such as morning assembly, life-wide learning activities and S1 Benediction Ceremony; 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 Founded in 1983, the school embraces its mission to provide whole-person education according to the spirit of Jesus Christ. It strives to nurture students to live an abundant life through the preaching of the gospel.

- 2.2 The class structure approved by the EDB 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	5	4	4	25
Number of Students	129	128	114	121	111	87	690

- 2.3 The Principal has taken up the post in the school since 2020. About half of the teachers have been serving in the school for more than 10 years, and the other half less than 5 years.
- 2.4 The previous ESR report (2010) made the following recommendations: (1) strengthening the existing assurance mechanism to align and maintain the quality of follow-up actions; and (2) strengthening the existing sharing culture to further improve the outcomes of learning and teaching.
- 2.5 The major concerns (MCs) of the previous school development cycle (2018/19 to 2021/22 school years) were: (1) strengthening students' ability of self- and peer learning; (2) facilitating experiential learning with flexible application of

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

knowledge and creativity; and (3) cultivating the spirit of grit, thankfulness and the attitude of embracing challenges with optimism.

- 2.6 The MCs of the current school development cycle (2022/23 to 2024/25 school years) are: (1) strengthening students' learning ownership; unleashing learning potential; (2) opening up global perspectives; deepening learning's meaning; and (3) nurturing positive attitudes; living a flourishing life.

3. External School Review Findings

3.1 The school's developmental focuses are student-centred; the SSE data could be better used to expedite school improvement

3.1.1 Under the leadership and support of the IMC, the school continues to nurture students for whole-person development in the missions of Christianity. The SSE work is properly implemented at the school and subject department and committee levels, facilitating the school to identify students' needs, including the promotion of physical and mental health development, in formulating the current school development plan (SDP). During the SSE process, different channels, including formal and informal meetings, are well in place for teachers to exchange views and share their evaluation findings. The targets of the MCs of the current SDP, which are student-oriented, have been drawn up through considerable deliberation among all teachers, contributing to consensus building among teachers on the direction of the school's development.

3.1.2 In general, practical implementation strategies in the annual school plans (ASPs) are formulated in response to the MCs and targets of the SDP. The meticulous coordination of the respective vice-principals and middle managers, together with the contribution of various subject departments and committees, greatly facilitates the smooth implementation of the strategies, such as promoting students' global competence and health awareness. However, some implementation strategies are routine work, for example, establishing classroom rules, which weaken the purpose of the ASP being a concrete action plan for implementing priority tasks. Subject departments and committees draw up their programme plans in alignment with the MCs. To follow up on the recommendations made in the previous ESR report, an assurance mechanism, including conducting regular meetings and submission of reports, has been established to properly monitor the implementation of priority tasks.

3.1.3 In conducting the SSE, the school continues to collect evaluation data and information from various sources, including the SSE tools provided by the EDB and teachers' observation. Relevant subscales of the Assessment Program for Affective and Social Outcomes (APASO) are appropriately

selected to understand students' situations relating to their generic skills and global perspectives. In the analysis of quantitative data, apart from student responses to individual question items, comparisons of data by class level are aptly employed. However, the depth of reflection on the effectiveness of the work done could be enhanced. For example, the school could conduct a holistic analysis about students' achievements and areas for improvement in reading through making reference to various APASO reports, and reviewing student performance in their assignments and reading periods in respect to their reading interests, habits and skills.

3.1.4 Some evaluation findings properly reflect student performance, such as their awareness of global issues and health. However, evaluations at the subject department and committee level are generally programme-based, and some focus on task completion, such as whether group activities have been arranged in class. It is advisable to review the effectiveness of school work according to the targets of the programme plans, so that the evaluation results can centre on students' learning performance, for example, their collaboration skills. The school has aptly replaced the school-based annual survey with the use of APASO. This initiative could be further extended for reviewing and streamlining the current practice of conducting school-based post-activity surveys.

3.2 A resourceful network has been built to widen students' horizons and enhance teachers' capacity; more focused teacher professional development activities on pedagogies could be organised

3.2.1 The school proactively capitalises on different resources to build a resourceful network for enriching students' learning experiences. The school actively arranges students to join international organisations and educational conferences to broaden their exposure to global issues. Alumni dedicatedly contribute to various student learning activities, such as guiding students in a school-based research project on climate change, so as to widen students' horizons.

3.2.2 In-house professional development programmes (PDPs), training courses organised by tertiary institutes and cross-school professional exchange activities are suitably arranged to address the school's development focuses, including the promotion of students' mental wellness and the use of artificial intelligence in education. Various subject teachers have purposefully joined training courses on questioning skills and the implementation of Language across the Curriculum (LaC). Effective questioning is exhibited in some lessons. The school has also strengthened teachers' in-house professional exchange. A mentoring scheme for new teachers, which involves lesson studies, effectively supports their professional growth. While collaborative lesson planning and peer lesson observation within subjects are now a regular practice, these platforms could be better used by focusing on pedagogies for

stretching students' potential, such as the promotion of peer learning. Systematic cross-key learning area (KLA) professional sharing could also be organised to further enhance learning and teaching effectiveness.

3.3 Diversified learning experiences are provided through well-structured cross-curricular activities

3.3.1 The school aligns with the latest developmental trends in education to offer students diversified learning experiences within and beyond the classroom. Subject departments and committees cohesively collaborate to organise an array of activities engaging students to learn across the curriculum. The "Friday Life-wide Learning (LWL) Zone" period covers a wide range of areas, including community services, field trips and sports, offering opportunities for students to learn according to their own interests. These activities not only appropriately enrich and extend students' classroom learning but also engage them in authentic learning experiences that facilitate their development of generic skills, and instillation of proper values and attitudes. For example, in the S3 field study, students can apply their knowledge of local history and IT skills to conduct research, and demonstrate their awareness of conservation and good presentation skills in Cantonese. Furthermore, the school deliberately guides students to reflect on their learning journey and provides opportunities, such as the annual LWL Sharing Day, to showcase their learning outcomes. As observed, students enjoy and vigorously learn in the activities. Meanwhile, a variety of assignments, including video production and presentations, is judiciously devised to reinforce students' learning and enhance their generic skills.

3.3.2 The school is committed to nurturing students' global competences. Learning elements relating to global issues are carefully embedded in subject curricula. Interdisciplinary group projects, such as "We are global citizens", are well designed for students to delve into various international matters at the junior secondary level. The school also organises multifarious learning activities such as Global Culture Week and overseas study tours, to widen students' perspective on global issues and diverse cultures. Notably, samples of students' works demonstrate their adept integration of knowledge of different subjects and display good analytical skills.

3.4 The gifted education programme is diligently enriched; reading and STEAM education should be enhanced to further equip students as self-directed learners

3.4.1 The school diligently enriches the school-based gifted education programme. A student talent pool is formed with students' various potential aptly identified and developed through the school-based pull-out programmes across domains, for example, the Model United Nations training and off-school support for specialised courses. The enriched school-based curriculum, including the infusion of elements of Chinese medicine and music composition,

is also conducive to stretching students' abilities. Yet, appropriate classroom pedagogy is to be devised to better cater for the more able students. Meanwhile, certain essential learning elements in the Technology Education KLA at the junior secondary level are lacking and need to be enhanced.

3.4.2 The school has been proactive in engaging external professionals to implement LaC to enhance students' language skills. Difficulties that students encounter in using English across various subjects, such as report writing, are explicitly addressed through close collaboration among relevant subjects. Continuous efforts have been made to promote reading through various measures. Besides regular reading sessions, a thematic reading activity "Alice in Wonderland" is offered to broaden students' knowledge in various disciplines through the assigned reading materials. However, students' motivation and habits in reading still need to be cultivated. To further equip students as self-directed learners, effective strategies that address their interests and help develop their reading habits should be devised.

3.4.3 The school has progressively integrated learning elements of STEAM education into the curriculum. Good attempts have been made to incorporate the use of hands-on design tools in S1 and S2 STEAM lessons. This offers students opportunities to design and make products through applying knowledge and skills across relevant subjects in STEAM projects. For instance, S2 students are able to apply coding skills, the knowledge of energy transfer and hands-on tools to make a foam racer. However, the design of some learning tasks is not conducive to actualising students' design thinking into the final products. The school should review the design of these tasks and bolster elements of innovation and technology. Students' interest in science and technology is sparked through various activities, such as the STEAM week and coding courses. The more able students participate in external STEAM-related competitions to realise their potential. Currently, the role of the STEAM coordinator is not clearly defined. The school should empower the coordinator to lead related KLAs for driving the school's STEAM education development.

3.5 Students possess a serious learning attitude and good independent learning skills; peer learning should be enhanced to stretch their potential

3.5.1 Students are highly attentive and exhibit a sincere learning attitude in lessons. They pay close attention to teachers' instructions and are receptive to teachers' advice. Lessons are generally planned with clear learning objectives. For classroom assessment, e-learning tools are aptly used, followed by appropriate teachers' feedback. A few teachers are able to use e-learning tools to facilitate students' understanding of abstract concepts. Students are accustomed to using their tablet computers to produce notes, refer to learning materials and search for information from the internet. Beyond the classroom, they also exhibit desirable independent learning skills in using

e-learning tools for online assessment and organising learning materials to develop their personal learning portfolios. While learning management systems and e-learning tools are frequently used by teachers to assign pre-learning tasks and upload reference materials for students, further steps could be taken to leverage these e-learning tools in enhancing interactive learning and co-construction of knowledge within and beyond the classroom.

3.5.2 In response to the MC relating to the promotion of collaborative learning, various group activities, such as discussions and debates, are arranged to enhance students' participation. In lessons with higher effectiveness, students engage in the tasks and work collaboratively to support each other's learning. Under teachers' suitable guidance, students' learning outcomes are improved through their conscious reflection on their work and learning process. However, in most lessons, the effectiveness of group activities is hindered by the task design, which lacks elements of collaborative learning. The tasks are mostly completed by students individually. The design of learning tasks should be reviewed so as to engage students in purposeful and meaningful activities, and thus enhance peer interaction.

3.5.3 Questioning is widely adopted to check students' understanding and maintain their engagement. Some teachers are able to ask different levels of questions to provoke students' higher-order thinking, and use effective probing questions to help students elaborate or justify their answers. In a few lessons, teachers skillfully rephrase or ask prompting questions to scaffold students to build new arguments based on their peers' views. While most students are able to answer teachers' questions in English, they tend to discuss with their peers in Cantonese. Only a few students can clearly explain their ideas in fluent English. Yet, in general, students' confidence in using English is to be enhanced.

3.5.4 To cater for learning diversity, teachers usually provide individual support to students in need. In a few lessons, teachers' expectation is relatively low, with simple learning content delivered. Sometimes, students are idle and wait for teachers' further instructions after they complete the assigned tasks. Learning content with suitable challenges should be devised to stretch students' potential, especially that of the more able ones. In lessons with low learning and teaching effectiveness, teachers' instructions are unclear for students to complete the learning tasks. Students' learning progress is not properly monitored and their learning support needs are not attended in time. The teaching pace and strategies should be flexibly and properly adjusted to improve student learning.

3.6 Values education is systematically promoted to nurture students' whole-person development

3.6.1 Building on the foundation of Christianity, the school systematically promotes values education for nurturing students' proper values and attitudes.

Priority values and attitudes such as love and care are well embedded in subjects and LWL activities. Form teacher periods (FTP) and assemblies are well designed to address students' developmental needs, such as focusing on students' self-understanding in S1 and helping them to face challenges in S5. The school suitably identifies students' growth needs and refines support measures accordingly. For instance, learning elements related to interpersonal relationships and sex education have been enriched at the junior and senior secondary levels respectively.

3.6.2 To cultivate students' national identity, elements of national education, including national security education, are organically incorporated across KLAs. Various learning activities are properly arranged to promote national education, including traditional Chinese arts and crafts in the "Friday LWL Zone" and theme-based Mainland study tours. Students actively take part in these activities to deepen their understanding of the recent development of our country. Students display appropriate etiquette in the national flag-raising ceremony observed. At present, joint effort of parents and the school in nurturing students' national identity is limited. The school should arrange related activities for parents so as to promote national education in a whole school approach.

3.7 The school successfully sustains a caring culture and is dedicated to nurturing students as servant leaders

3.7.1 A caring and supportive culture is well maintained in the school. Different class-based activities are suitably provided to strengthen the bonding among students and develop their sense of belonging to the class. The school sponsoring body renders strong pastoral support in various programmes and events for cultivating the caring environment. For example, the S1 Benediction Ceremony and S6 Celebration of Adulthood provide favourable opportunities for students to express deep appreciation and gratitude to their parents and teachers for their care and support. The close collaboration among teachers, specialists and Special Educational Needs Coordinator forms a seamless network to ensure that support for individual students is provided in a timely manner to address their developmental needs, such as emotional and social issues.

3.7.2 Adhering to the Christianity missions, the school is committed to developing students to be servant leaders to contribute to society. Students passionately organise service learning activities by themselves for the service targets. They show respect and empathy towards the elderly and mentally handicapped persons that they visited. The "Big Brothers and Big Sisters" from different year levels are devoted to rendering significant support for S1 students to facilitate their adaptation to secondary school life. Furthermore, leadership training programmes are suitably provided to equip students with essential leadership skills in various aspects, including sports and community

services. As observed, student leaders faithfully perform their duties to serve others, and demonstrate effective capabilities in organising and coordinating activities, such as the “Balloon Volleyball Competition”.

3.8 Positive steps have been taken to raise parents and students’ awareness of well-being, particularly in “mind well” and “work well”

3.8.1 The school puts great effort into promoting a healthy lifestyle through the “7 Wellness³” in the current SDP. Various measures, such as the “7 Wellness Journey” award scheme and mindfulness time, are aptly introduced to help students build a positive mindset and strengthen their resilience. The “sportACT” scheme and running event are also put in place, with an attempt to encourage students to do exercise. Thematic talks and workshops on maintaining positive family relationships and reducing students’ study pressure are deliberately organised for parents. These measures raise both students and parents’ awareness of the importance of developing their well-being. In view that there is still room for improvement in developing students’ healthy lifestyle, the school could further explore effective measures in helping students relieve their academic anxiety and develop the habit of regular exercise.

3.8.2 In line with one of the school’s development focuses on “work well”, career and life planning education is systematically implemented. Through FTPs and LWL activities, junior secondary students can understand their ambitions and interests, and develop career-related competencies, such as time management and learning skills, which are suitably deepened at the senior secondary level. While students set their study and personal growth goals, form teachers provide on-going guidance to monitor their learning progress and help them self-reflect to adjust their goals. Different stakeholders, including alumni, parents and school managers, contribute significantly by sharing their career experiences. To cater for students’ interests, job shadowing and visits to companies covering different industries are judiciously provided to widen their exposure, from traditional professions to emerging careers, such as founding a multimedia start-up.

3.9 Students are studious, self-disciplined and willing to serve; their academic and non-academic performance is good

3.9.1 Students are humble, self-disciplined and respectful towards teachers. They possess a serious learning attitude, with good self-learning skills and communication skills. Students are eager to help their fellow schoolmates and have a strong sense of belonging to the school. They enthusiastically participate in different community services. Student leaders confidently perform duties and efficiently organise activities by themselves.

³ The “7 wellness” promoted in the school refers to exercise well, eat well, sleep well, love well, play well, mind well and work well

3.9.2 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 Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) Examination were 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.

3.9.3 Students actively participate in a range of territory-wide activities and competitions, winning a number of prizes in the Hong Kong School Music Festival, Hong Kong School Drama Festival and inter-school sports competitions. They have made impressive achievements in dodgeball competitions in recent years.

4. Conclusion and Way Forward

Under the leadership of the missionary school management, the school has been successful in sustaining a caring culture and providing a conducive learning environment. In the school self-evaluation (SSE) process, the school upholds the student-centred principle and formulates development priorities according to the students' needs that are appropriately identified. A splendid array of cross-curricular learning activities, including projects and field trips, are systematically organised to develop students' generic skills in authentic settings. With the significant support from stakeholders, including alumni and parents, the school offers rich learning experiences within and beyond the classroom to widen students' exposure. Building on the Christian values, the school is dedicated to nurturing students' whole-person development through comprehensive values education, particularly in nurturing them to be servant leaders to contribute to society. Students are self-disciplined, humble and respectful to others. They possess a serious learning attitude, and are enthusiastic about serving the community. Student leaders are competent in planning and organising activities by themselves. A strong sense of belonging to the school has been maintained among teachers and students. Students enjoy the harmonious and diversified school life.

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

- 4.1 There is room for improvement in catering for learner diversity. The school should pay more attention to extending the learning of the more able students in class. In view of students' positive learning attitudes, peer learning within and beyond the classroom, as well as reading, should be further promoted so as to develop them into self-directed learners. To enhance learning and teaching effectiveness, more focused teacher professional development activities, such as on the promotion of peer learning, could be organised.
- 4.2 The depth of reflection on the effectiveness of the work done towards student performance could be enhanced. Building on the established SSE mechanism at different levels, the school could further improve the use of the SSE data and information in an integrative manner to better understand the impact of school work on student learning.