

External School Review Report

Po Leung Kuk Ngan Po Ling College

School Address: 26 Sung On Street, Tokwawan, Kowloon

Review Period: 7, 8, 10, 14 and 20 June 2022

**Quality Assurance Division
Education Bureau
December 2022**

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, specialist staff, 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 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.

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1. External School Review Methodology

- 1.1 The ESR team conducted the review in June 2022 to validate the school's 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 In view of the development of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) epidemic, some of the inspection activities were conducted online. 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 44 lessons, including real-time online lessons, taught by 44 teachers;
 - observation of various school activities, such as morning assemblies, morning reading sessions, Robotics Team training, Course Selection Structure Introduction session, Gratitude Day; and
 - conducting 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 Established in September 2003, Po Leung Kuk Ngan Po Ling College is the sponsoring body's first secondary school under Direct Subsidy Scheme. The school's vision is to provide students with a happy, harmonious and positive learning environment conducive to their moral, academic, physical, social, personal and artistic development. The school also aims at nurturing students with the solid foundation for further studies and better career prospects, sharpening students' language skills, IT skills, thinking skills and analytical skills as well as developing their confidence, to prepare them for the challenges of the 21st century.
- 2.2 The class structure approved by the Education Bureau (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	3	4	4	5	24
Number of Students	142	130	112	125	112	124	745

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

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

- 2.3 The school has a multi-cultural background with more than 15% of the students being non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students of different nationalities, such as Indian, Japanese and Pilipino. Starting from the 2015/16 school year, the school offers the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme. Since the last ESR, there have been major changes in the key school personnel, including the appointment of Principal, Vice Principals (VPs) and middle management. More than 40% of the teaching force have 5 years or less experience serving in the school.
- 2.4 In the previous ESR report of February 2016, recommendations were given in two aspects: (1) devising and employing more diversified instructional strategies to support differentiation and extending student learning through learning tasks and consolidation; and (2) further enhancing school self-evaluation by specifying and sharing the intended targets of the major concerns (MCs) for achieving synergy and facilitating holistic evaluation to inform planning.
- 2.5 The MCs of the previous school development cycle (the 2018/19 to 2020/21 school years) are to: (1) cultivate a positive learning community which enhances academic and non-academic excellence; (2) foster whole-person education with 21st century skills and (3) create new development opportunities.
- 2.6 The MCs of the current school development cycle (the 2021/22 to 2023/24 school years) are to: (1) cultivate a spirit of self-motivation, experiential learning, quest for excellence and creativity; (2) foster life-long learning and whole-person development via value and career education and (3) develop a professional, supportive and harmonious school community.

3. External School Review Findings

3.1 The school has made commendable improvement in fulfilling its educational aspirations and attained good progress in student performance. Teachers' professional capacity should be strengthened to bring the school to the next stage of development.

3.1.1 With concerted effort and commitment of the school personnel, continuous improvement in the school has been witnessed in recent years. The IMC provides vigorous support and trust to facilitate ongoing development of the school, such as offering expert advice in the development of the Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) education. Under the leadership of the Principal, the school development needs are suitably identified and incorporated in the setting of MCs. The administrative structure has also been streamlined since the last school development cycle to facilitate closer communication and monitoring of work among committees

and subject panels. This results in better collaboration and alignment among committees and subject panels in implementing the various developmental strategies to foster whole-person development of students. The promotion of values education and provision of all-rounded student support services and diversified life-wide learning (LWL) activities are effectively conducted. Besides, the school continues to enrich learning opportunities to stretch the potential of students. Prominent examples are scientific research teams and astronomy programmes of the STEAM education with the upgraded Chinese Medicine Research Centre and Astronomy and Planetarium Centre. All these have contributed to the great improvement in student performance in academic and non-academic aspects.

3.1.2 The school has a teaching force of diversified experiences. Most of its middle managers have also been newly appointed. Their professional capacity in general needs to be enhanced, especially in leading holistic planning and evaluation of the school development work. Besides, in view of ongoing curriculum development and varied learning and teaching effectiveness in class, further enrichment of professional knowledge and skills of teachers, such as curriculum planning and pedagogy, are essential for improving the learning and teaching of the school and expediting their professional growth as a whole.

3.2 There is greater transparency in the setting of MCs to foster the SSE. More specific targets are needed for eliciting a whole-school effort towards the next level of development.

3.2.1 Following the suggestions from the last ESR report, there is greater transparency in the SSE, including the formulation of school's MCs, and sharing of intended targets and success criteria. The MCs, such as promotion of e-learning for cultivating a spirit of self-motivation and enrichment of national education for promoting values education in recent school development cycles, have been properly set to address the developmental needs of students and respond to the educational trends. There is careful consideration of the evaluation and subsequent suggestions made by committees and subject panels. Appropriate implementation strategies are then devised to address the MCs. However, the targets set under the MCs are sometimes too broad and general for the committees and subject panels to make effective evaluation against the intended learning outcomes. For example, there are no specific targets or detailed elaboration on the expected learning outcomes of students for the promotion of self-directed learning (SDL) and 21st century skills. As a result, very similar strategies or routine work across different school development cycles are found. Building on the strong executive capability of the middle management, to facilitate ongoing development, there should be more deliberation on the setting of specific and progressive targets so that more aligned and focused corresponding strategies

could be set at different levels.

3.2.2 In recent years, a more systematic and effective monitoring mechanism has been established, such as the introduction of a comprehensive document submission and record system at different levels which facilitates the management to give timely feedback and advice for improvement. Evaluation of effectiveness of MCs through surveys, meetings and annual evaluation is regularly done at different levels. While evaluation is made with proper reference to various kinds of statistical data, it often focuses on completion and are task-based. Evaluation of the effectiveness on student learning, for example, students' demonstration of SDL skills, should be further enhanced. The effective use of qualitative success criteria, such as students' behaviour and performance in learning tasks, should also be improved to substantiate a more holistic evaluation for provision of more concrete feedback or suggestions for improvement to inform future planning.

3.3 A supportive and professional community is being gradually formed in some subjects. The professional capacity of teachers as a whole should be further strengthened.

3.3.1 The school puts good effort on developing a professional community by setting it as a MC or a target in recent school development cycles. The Staff Development Committee, which is set up in recent years, plays a pivotal role in the noticeable improvement of professional development activities in the school. In view of the staff profile, a number of staff development programmes, such as the "Mentor-Mentee Programme" and the "Open Classrooms" are suitably organised to support new teachers to adapt to the school environment and improve learning and teaching strategies. Such arrangements are conducive to the development of a collaborative and supportive school community. At present, professional sharing culture is being cultivated in some subject panels which make effective reflection on learning and teaching strategies through collaborative lesson planning and peer lesson observations. Such good practices could be further promoted across different subject panels to accelerate the development of a professional community. Feedback on learning and teaching for teachers is provided through a number of channels, such as regular assignment inspections and lesson observations. In view of the diversified experiences of the teachers, more focused and in-depth professional development programmes on enriching the professional capacity of teachers in different aspects, such as curriculum planning and pedagogy at the KLA or subject levels, could be enhanced.

3.4 Different curriculum options and arrangements are thoughtfully offered to address the diversified needs and aspirations of students. The learning elements of some Key Learning Areas (KLAs) at the junior secondary (JS) level have to be enriched.

3.4.1 The school offers different curriculum options to students to cater for

their diversified needs and aspirations. After completing the JS curriculum, students are offered with different curricula leading to the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) Examination or the IB Diploma Programme. For the local senior secondary (SS) curriculum, a wide range of elective and foreign language subjects, such as French, are aptly offered to meet the needs of students with different backgrounds.

3.4.2 In response to the latest curriculum development, sustained effort is put on making appropriate adaptation, such as incorporating the Constitution and Basic Law module into the Life and Society curriculum at the JS level. Upon the optimisation of four SS core subjects, the school has made appropriate adjustments with the released lesson time, such as arranging more remedial or enhancement sessions and incorporating the Extended Part of Mathematics into regular timetables, to better support student learning and cater for students' diversified learning needs. However, under the existing provision, there is inadequate coverage of some essential learning elements at the JS level, such as in Technology Education and Personal, Social and Humanities Education KLAs. It is necessary for the school to review and enrich the existing JS curriculum with sufficient coverage of essential learning elements, so as to equip students with a solid foundation of knowledge and skills for their progression to the next key stage of learning. In this connection, the school could consider assigning KLA coordinators to help enhance the overall curriculum planning at the KLA level.

3.4.3 To cater for the diversified needs of students, appropriate measures, including adapted curriculum, remedial and enhancement lessons with tailor-made learning content, are properly arranged. SS students' performance is timely reviewed for providing additional support, such as forming learning circles, for helping them set attainable goals to strive for improvement. Individualised study plans and strategies, such as workshops on study skills, are also devised for repeaters. Yet, analysis of the assessment data by some subjects is too general, and students' learning difficulties cannot be thoroughly delineated. More professional exchanges on good use of assessment data for improving student learning are needed.

3.4.4 The school has provided suitable support on the learning of Chinese language and understanding of the Chinese culture of NCS students, facilitating their integration into the mainstream society. For example, an adapted curriculum with reference to the "Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework" of the EDB is suitably implemented. Appropriate strategies, such as pull-out arrangements and tiered curriculum, are in place to cater for their diversified needs and abilities in learning Chinese. Meaningful LWL activities, such as Fai Chun Design Competition and Chinese Culture Day, are organised for NCS students to immerse into the Chinese culture outside the classroom. However, Chinese History is not offered to

NCS students at present. With reference to the requirement that Chinese History has to be offered as an independent compulsory subject at the JS level, the school should make necessary arrangement for offering Chinese History to all students.

3.5 Progressive development of STEAM education unleashes the potential of students. Cross-KLA collaboration could be strengthened for further development of STEAM education and cultivation of reading habits.

3.5.1 To echo the MC on cultivating students' self-motivation and experiential learning, a STEAM Committee is aptly established to plan and implement related strategies from organising extended learning activities to integration of relevant elements into the formal curriculum. Students are given ample learning opportunities to apply and integrate knowledge and skills learnt. Students' research skills and application of inter-disciplinary knowledge and skills in solving real-life problems are fostered through some meaningful projects, such as underwater robot for monitoring water quality and the Smart Disinfection Station to improve the hygienic conditions during the epidemic. Moreover, STEAM education is being progressively integrated into the curriculum, such as the well-designed "Incubator" project at Secondary 1 and 2. At present, activities and programmes of STEAM education are mainly organised by the Science Education KLA. To accelerate the promotion of STEAM education, more cross-KLA collaboration in the planning of curriculum and learning activities could be further strengthened.

3.5.2 Reading is emphasised in the school. Students read a variety of English or Chinese books, and materials by different subjects in the timetabled reading sessions. Great effort is put on strengthening the reading culture in the school, such as the recent launching of the book promotion page at social network to encourage more book sharing. Students' book borrowing rate has been slightly raised. Looking forward, through more collaboration with the school library, subject panels could further encourage students to read widely across the subjects and for leisure, and to play a more active role in sharing their reading experience. Reading ambassadors and reading club activities could also be organised to create a stronger reading atmosphere in the school.

3.6 Students are engaged in lesson activities with gradual cultivation of self-learning habits. More effective differentiation strategies could be adopted to enhance classroom learning and teaching effectiveness.

3.6.1 A good learning routine under the blended mode of learning and teaching is established. As observed in both online and face-to-face lessons, students are engaged in the learning activities. They closely follow teachers' instructions and are able to apply knowledge and skills to accomplish the learning tasks. In general, students are willing to share their views with peers in presentations with proficient English and demonstrate good communication skills. Some students take initiatives to raise questions for clarification or

present their ideas. In alignment with the school's MC on cultivating students' self-motivation, the school is progressively promoting e-learning, including the implementation of the "Bring Your Own Device" policy and development of resourceful e-learning platforms in some subjects. In addition, students demonstrate competent information technology skills in flexibly using different e-learning tools for doing pre-lesson preparation as well as assignments to consolidate and extend their learning, leading to gradual development of self-learning habits. Building on this foundation, more SDL skills, such as setting the learning goals and adopting reflective and personalised learning strategies, could be gradually deployed for nurturing students to be self-directed and active learners in the 21st century.

3.6.2 Teachers are open-minded and approachable, creating a positive learning atmosphere. Lessons are systematically planned with clear learning objectives and delivery of content. Classroom management is largely in order. Teachers properly activate students' prior knowledge before constructing new learning with them. Daily examples and multimedia resources are aptly used to facilitate learning. They frequently ask questions to check students' understanding with timely and encouraging feedback.

3.6.3 In response to the suggestions from the last ESR report, some teachers adopt appropriate diversified instructional strategies, such as heterogeneous grouping and tiered tasks to help the less able students learn in small and manageable steps. In the very effective lessons observed, learning activities are well-organised and can stimulate deep learning. Learning activities which require higher-order skills, such as exploratory learning tasks, are suitably arranged. Dynamic and lively interaction with good rapport between teachers and students is seen. With teachers' effective questioning and constructive feedback given to students, not only are students' doubts clarified but their critical and deeper thinking is also duly stimulated. However, higher-order questions, in general, are less common and lessons are sometimes concluded without adequate consolidation. Given students' generally high ability, more time and more higher-order questions could be given for them to reflect on and consolidate their learning. A wider range of differentiation strategies and various pedagogical skills, for instance, collaborative learning and providing flexibility for students to demonstrate their understanding of content in a variety of ways, could be adopted not only to help students achieve the lesson objectives but also stretch their potential and stimulate deeper thinking and learning.

3.7 A whole-school approach in cultivating positive values and attitudes of students is adopted. Good effort is made in enhancing students' sense of national identity.

3.7.1 In response to the MC of fostering life-long learning and whole-person development through values and career education, values education is

well promoted through a whole-school approach under the coordination of Moral, Civic and National Education Committee and collaboration among committees and subject panels. The Life Education curriculum is designed and refined with suitable mapping with the ten priority values and attitudes promulgated by the EDB. Various whole-school programmes, for example the Guidance Week, the Gratitude Week and the Thanks-giving Week are held to strengthen students' positive values and attitudes, with meaningful connection to subject learning, such as writing tasks in language subjects and designing thank you cards in Visual Arts. Building on the good collaboration among committees and subject panels, the school could further deepen the implementation of values education by setting focuses at different key stages, so as to optimise the deployment of resources and facilitate evaluation on the overall effectiveness in promoting values education.

3.7.2 Much effort is put on enhancing students' sense of national identity inside and outside the classroom, such as the appointment of Basic Law Student Ambassadors, sharing of videos on current issues of our country in class periods and introduction of our country's recent development in the Life Education curriculum. With the launching of national security education (NSE), a working group is formed to oversee and review the holistic planning and collaborative implementation of the relevant policies and strategies in different aspects. Initial plans to incorporate NSE elements in different subject curricula have been devised. Individual subjects, such as Chinese History, have thoughtfully incorporated NSE elements into curriculum planning and design of learning and teaching activities.

3.8 Student well-being and holistic development are properly catered for with the provision of all-rounded support and plentiful LWL opportunities.

3.8.1 With the concerted effort on fostering whole-person education in the previous school development cycle, a whole-school approach is adopted to provide all-rounded support to cater for the well-being of students. Different kinds of preventive, developmental and remedial support measures, such as seminars on stress management, student mentorship programmes and counselling services by professionals, are rightly in place to address the developmental needs of students. A comprehensive mechanism is successfully implemented with clear guidelines on referral of cases while the roles of class teachers as guidance and discipline teachers are enhanced. Abundant human resources, including guidance teachers, discipline teachers and social workers are assigned for each level, effectively facilitating the early identification of students' needs and offering of timely follow-up measures. Since the epidemic, additional measures and arrangements have been continuously enforced and refined, such as rearrangements of class periods for class teachers to closely monitor students' development and offer immediate support. The effectiveness of adopting a whole-school approach is pleasing,

as evident from a significant drop in the number of counselling cases and punishment rates of students in the past few years.

3.8.2 Students' aspirations on life planning, particularly on articulation to further studies, are supported with different measures. Since the JS level, the Life Education curriculum facilitates students to understand their needs and set goals. Information on different curriculum options and further studies are aptly provided through talks and counseling sessions to assist students to make informed choices. A University Programme Research is purposefully designed at the SS level. Under the guidance of teachers, students conduct research of possible study pathways. They can better understand their needs and interests to plan their future pathways, hence boosting up their self-motivation and aspiration. The sharing of personal experiences at universities and workplaces by the alumni provides valuable insights for their career and life planning.

3.8.3 The school has established a strong and close relationship with parents. Conscientious effort has been made to maintain timely and effective communication with parents. For example, parents are well informed of the development progress of their children through regular contacts and their opinions can be expressed through appropriate and open channels, such as the Parent-teacher Association, with timely responses given by the school. Besides, different talks and workshops are systematically organised to help improve parent-child relationship, such as thematic talks on effective parenting styles. Parents are eager to support and show appreciation to the school by volunteering in different school events, such as the Fruit Day and the Open Day. With the diversified backgrounds and support of parents, the school could also enhance the collaboration with parents by inviting them to provide career talks and placement opportunities for students, so as to foster the promotion of career and life planning of students.

3.8.4 The school offers ample and diversified LWL activities, such as extra-curricular activities, interest clubs and uniform teams, to enrich learning experiences and develop multiple intelligences of students. Students demonstrate good leadership skills and care for others in student-led bodies and self-initiated community service programmes, such as the Student Union and the UNICEF Club. Precious learning opportunities to broaden their horizons are provided with external collaboration, such as live broadcast of astronomical phenomena in partnership with the Hong Kong Observatory and cultural exchange tours with sisters schools on the Mainland and overseas. Nevertheless, many of the activities have been affected during the epidemic, and some SS students are not active in participating in the LWL activities. The school could explore organising virtual gatherings for students to maintain the activities. To maximise the benefits on students from a wide range of extended learning opportunities for their whole-person development, the

school could consider implementing an effective mechanism for ensuring students' active participation in the LWL activities, as well as enhancing the promotion of the concept of healthy lifestyle to different stakeholders.

3.9 Students contribute to an inclusive and embracing school environment. The overall academic performance of students is excellent. Their non-academic achievements are pleasing.

3.9.1 Students are well-behaved, industrious and with high aspiration. They are outgoing and expressive, displaying proficient language skills and can communicate fluently and confidently in English. Students with diverse nationalities and backgrounds are able to show respect and support to each other, contributing to an inclusive and embracing school environment. They enjoy their school life. A harmonious school ethos is evident.

3.9.2 Students' academic performance is excellent. In the past three years, the percentages of students meeting the general entrance requirements for local undergraduate university programmes and sub-degree courses in the HKDSE Examination were above the territory averages of day school students. Taking into account of the S1 intake, the school performed excellently in the HKDSE Examination in the past three years.

3.9.3 Students show eagerness in joining a wide array of co-curricular activities, for example, physical and cultural activities, uniformed groups and social services. They also participate in various territory-wide and district competitions in the fields of art, music, speech and sports. They perform well and have won several group and individual awards in inter-school competitions, such as the Hong Kong Schools Speech Festival and the Hong Kong Schools Music Festival. Remarkable results are also achieved in some worldwide competitions and international symposiums, such as the World Scholar's Cup and the Science Congress.

4. Suggestions for Improvement

- 4.1 To facilitate ongoing development of the school, the SSE should be further enhanced by setting more specific and progressive targets in terms of students' learning outcomes. This would not only allow different committees and subject panels to reach deeper consensus but also align their formulation and implementation of corresponding strategies towards the targets at the school level. Committees and subject panels should make better use of evaluation to inform future planning with concrete suggestions for continuous development of the school.
- 4.2 With the varied experience and needs of teachers, the school should further support and expedite their professional growth by providing diversified, in-depth and structured professional development programmes and encouraging participation in external professional development activities to enrich their knowledge and skills in different aspects, including management, curriculum planning and pedagogy. More focused sharing on effective differentiated instructional strategies could help improve learning and teaching effectiveness of teachers.