External School Review Report

Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) College

Address of School: 4 Sheung Wo Street, Homantin, Kowloon
External Review Period: 17, 19-20, 24 and 27 May 2010

Quality Assurance Division
Education Bureau
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External School Review Team

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1. Introduction

1.1 External review methodology

- The previous Quality Assurance Inspection (QAI) was conducted at the school from 11 to 20 December 2000.
- The External School Review (ESR) team conducted the review on 17, 19-20, 24 and 27 May 2010 to evaluate the school performance in school self-evaluation (SSE) and other areas of school work.
- 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 42 lessons taught by 42 teachers;
  - Observation of various school activities, including drama lessons, lunch-time reading lessons and after-school activities;
  - Meetings and interviews with the Supervisor, School Management Committee (SMC) members, Principal, Vice-principals, panel chairpersons, heads of functional committees, teachers, school social worker, parents and students; and
  - Shadowing of a sample of 2 students for a half-day period to observe their school life.
- The review findings presented in this report were derived from the corporate judgment of the ESR team based on the information collected through the above-mentioned methods during the review period.

1.2 Basic information about the school (original text provided by the school)

- Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) College is an English as the Medium of Instruction (EMI) Catholic boys’ school founded by the De La Salle Brothers in 1969. The name “Chan Sui Ki” was included for memory of the father of Mr Chan King-luen whose family donated 25 percent of the building cost of the school.
- As at 1st September 2010, the class structure and number of students are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>S1</th>
<th>S2</th>
<th>S3</th>
<th>S4</th>
<th>S5</th>
<th>S6</th>
<th>S7</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of classes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of students</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>1091</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The vision of the school is touching hearts – to touch the minds and hearts of the students who will then be moved to have excellent development in their potentials.

The school is able to touch the hearts of the students because the school acts according to its Lasallian spirit of faith, zeal and community. Faith refers to the Catholic faith and is expressed by the school motto, “Laus Deo Semper” or “Praise God Always”. The school mission is the provision of human and Christian education which means the provision of high-quality whole-person education to students who will become persons of integrity and eager to serve others. Currently, the school has three development goals, namely “Learning Community, Serving People and Acquiring Knowledge”. In order to realise its vision, mission and goals, the school puts tremendous effort into providing students with values education, self-learning skills and a balanced curriculum with emphasis on both studies and other learning experiences.

Since the QAI in 2000 and the QAI Follow-up Inspection in 2004, the school keeps on a gradual approach in refining its organisational structure, improving its learning and teaching efficiencies and building up a process of school self-evaluation mechanism. In recent years, the “Planning-Implementation-Evaluation” (P-I-E) cycle becomes a whole-school routine practice. The School Administrative Committee is to monitor the holistic review process and it appoints working committees to coordinate different levels of self evaluation. In the P-I-E process, all teachers are engaged and the evaluation tools and data in support of schools’ self-evaluation work provided by the Education Bureau (EDB) are used. With such a mechanism, the school is able to design policies, strategies and measures in alignment with the current education trends and meeting the needs of students.
2. School Performance

2.1 Continuous Development of the School

- Upholding the Lasallian spirit which centres around faith, zeal and community, the school works strenuously to provide students with an all-round education that includes moral, academic, physical, social and aesthetic development. With its strong culture of extra-curricular activities (ECA), the school strives to help students develop their potential to the fullest. The school has demonstrated an admirable capacity to deal with change. When the “fine-tuning of the medium of instruction in secondary schools” policy has brought about a change in the school’s language policy causing apparent concern from stakeholders, the school has been able to meet the challenge and explain the rationales, advantages and arrangements of the new policy to the stakeholders. In anticipation of the forthcoming retirement of the Principal, the school has already made plans to help the new Principal-elect adapt to the school. More importantly, in response to the recommendations of the last inspection reports, the school leadership has gradually brought about perceptible improvement in the school, both in management and organisation and in learning and teaching.

- Firstly, in the school management structure, a clearly defined framework of duties and responsibilities and a clear line of reporting for monitoring and evaluation of the work of subject departments, committees and teachers have been gradually established in the past few years. The committee system is generally effective in organising human resources to carry out the different strategies and plans for the development of the school. For instance, the Reading To Learn Committee and the Language Across the Curriculum Committee have put into effect a number of programmes for improving students’ performance in academic studies. However, as work increases and some middle managers and teachers are facing the danger of being overloaded, it is imperative that the school management periodically reviews its organisation structure, paying attention to streamlining, avoiding overlap of duties and ensuring an even distribution of teaching and non-teaching workload among teachers.

- Furthermore, a structured mechanism for the cycle of planning, implementation and evaluation has been gradually established. SSE has been steadily embedded in the work of the different subject panels and functional committees, and in the school-based management as a whole. The major concerns, disseminated to the departments and committees for alignment of their programme plans with the Annual School Plan, have been addressed and implemented by the various departments and committees. With the annual “point evaluation” conducted by the individual subject departments and
functional committees, the subsequent “line evaluation” by the Major Concerns Coordinating Committees and the holistic “area evaluation” by the School Administrative Committee at the end of the three year School Development Plan (SDP) cycle, a tight chain of systematic evaluation of the school’s development around the major concerns has been well established. However, in the annual school plans, the success criteria of some of the strategies such as “students’ conduct and personal qualities are improved” and “high participation rate and good response of students” are not specific enough. Clearly articulated and measurable criteria, focusing on student learning and development, are needed to facilitate more quality evaluation to feed into future planning. For example, while the training programme for gifted students and the lesson study programme for teachers are both appropriate strategies for catering for learner diversity, in evaluating the effectiveness of the programmes, it is important to measure the extent to which the target of “students of diversity show improvement in academic results” has been achieved.

- The major concerns of the school are well geared towards the developmental needs of the students. There is an apparent link between the previous and the current cycles of SDP for 2009-12. The achievement of targets in the strategies and programmes of the last SDP has been duly evaluated and follow-up actions identified. The school has incorporated the previous targets of improving students’ English proficiency, providing an English-rich environment and improving students’ performance in academic studies into the current major concerns “to improve the language ability of our students” and “to cater for learner diversity through enhancing students’ attitude, skills and knowledge in learning”. In view of the steady progress made in the last cycle, through the various strategies to establish an English-rich environment and to promote reading, a sharper focus on the “adoption of student-centred teaching pedagogies” has been identified and the scope extended from improving students’ English proficiency to improving their language ability in English, Chinese and Putonghua (PTH) in the current cycle. Pleasing progress can be seen when students actively participate in English and Chinese class activities. Likewise, the current concern “to foster students’ positive values through life-wide learning experiences” (LWL) can be seen as a continuation of the last cycle’s concern “to strengthen support to the all-round personal development of students”. In the current SDP, that the goal is to cultivate the positive values in students through their participation in the LWL activities is clearly articulated. For each of the three school years in succession, a theme is set as the core value for the students to develop – namely responsibility, love and care, and respect.

- The SMC, comprising representatives of the sponsoring body, teachers, parents and old boys, is committed to rendering full support to the school to fulfill its mission of providing an all-round education for the students. It is also keen to uphold the heritage of the school, including that of maintaining the standard of
English. The foresight of the SMC is commendable, as demonstrated by its timely concern about the succession plans for the school leadership. The Supervisor is at the school almost every day, meeting and talking to the students and attending wholeheartedly to their behaviour.

- The Principal demonstrates commendable leadership in mobilising the teachers to implement various improvement and control measures in the different aspects of the school, particularly in the setting up of a stringent SSE mechanism. He has also been able to effectively allocate and utilise different resources to help the development of the major concerns and implementation of the school’s priority tasks. Credit should also be given to the Vice-principals for positioning themselves appropriately to assist the Principal in fostering the various improvement measures, especially in monitoring the work of the various panels and committees.

- In response to the recommendations of the last inspection reports, a systematic mechanism has been set up whereby the panel chairpersons are playing a more prominent leadership and monitoring role. Closer monitoring of curriculum implementation has been achieved through various strategies and mechanisms, including lesson observation and assignment checking. There are differences between the leadership roles as performed by the different panel chairpersons. Thus, implementation of the strategies and programmes still needs to be enhanced within some subject panels. There is at present some sporadic cooperation between the departments and committees. However, to better coordinate the concerted efforts of the departments and committees and make more effective collaborative plans and programmes, the senior management and middle managers could further enhance their roles in carrying out holistic planning. For instance, they could have an overview of the various programmes in Other Learning Experiences (OLE) to ensure even development of the five areas of OLE.

- An appraisal system has been set up with clearly defined policies, procedures and guidelines. However, the school could place more emphasis on identifying individual teachers’ professional development needs. The staff development activities, such as seminars on learning diversity and preparation for the New Senior Secondary (NSS) Curriculum, can usually meet the immediate needs of the teachers and the latest trends in education development. Awards, such as those for Outstanding Collaboration and Best Scores in examinations, have been presented to teachers or subject panels to recognise their outstanding performance in enhancing learning and teaching. Nevertheless, the school could arrange more peer lesson observation and collaborative lesson preparation, with a clear focus and purpose of facilitating effective implementation of the school’s major concerns. This would also help to promote professional dialogue among teachers and a sharing culture in the school.
2.2 Learning and Teaching

- In line with its mission, the school has formulated a clear curriculum framework to provide students with diversified learning experiences, facilitating the development of their knowledge, generic skills, positive values and attitudes. Values education is appropriately promoted in Religious Studies lessons, Home-room Periods, the S4 Moral and Civic Education (MCE) periods and through various moral and civic themes in morning assemblies, talks and LWL activities.

- As a continuation of the last SDP, the school’s current plan focuses on promoting students’ language ability in English, Chinese and PTH. A series of measures has been implemented since the last SDP to support the use of EMI. The school’s policy on EMI is properly implemented in the classroom. This year, the English and Integrated Science panels are working collaboratively to develop students’ reading and writing skills, addressing students’ specific needs in using English to acquire the subject content knowledge. The school provides various opportunities for students to use English, including presentation in morning assemblies, participation in inter-class and inter-school English-speaking activities and publication of students’ written works. Drama and debating activities are suitably included in the English language curriculum at the junior and senior levels, respectively, to motivate learning. The English Learning Centre serves effectively as a place for students to learn English with pleasure. To further improve the English language environment, students could be encouraged to use English more in their daily school life and not only for formal school functions. This year, the school has suitably adopted the use of “student-centered teaching pedagogies” in English and Chinese lessons to develop students’ language ability. Some teachers are able to use questioning and involve students in presentation to help them develop their communication skills. The school aims to provide more opportunities for students to speak PTH through PTH lessons at S1-3 and co-curricular activities, such as the PTH week. Nevertheless, more strategic measures are needed so that a rich PTH environment can be developed in the school.

- Promoting reading is another key initiative that the school has adopted to develop students’ language ability. Students’ reading habits are being cultivated through various strategies, including timetabled reading periods, S1 lunch English reading lessons and different reading schemes. The holiday reading scheme for parents and students, which has values education incorporated, is particularly commendable. Moreover, the Film and Fiction reading activities can motivate students’ interest in reading and develop their analytical skills in comparing the original written fiction with the filmed version. At present, many of the effective reading strategies are initiated by the Reading to Learn Committee. The library could be more proactively used to promote collaboration between subject departments, and to serve as the resource and
information centre to support and enhance students’ learning in the era of curriculum reform.

- Some subject departments promote self-directed learning by uploading materials onto the school’s E-learning platform for students to use at their own pace. Nevertheless, to maximise the outcome, the school could consider implementing strategies for promoting students’ self-directed learning at the classroom level.

- To cater for learner diversity is another major concern in the current SDP. Sufficient support measures are provided at the school level, including the junior form streaming system, split class arrangement in English Language and Liberal Studies for targeted classes, and various enhancement and remedial programmes. In general, subject departments are able to adjust the depth of learning content and set different requirements in learning tasks to cater for students’ learning needs.

- Students’ project learning and generic skills are systematically developed through Integrated Humanities at S1-3 to prepare them for studying at the senior secondary level. Project learning tasks are duly arranged in S2 and S3 for students to acquire and apply various generic skills, including those of data handling and analysis, collaboration and communication. However, many of the essential learning elements in the Technology Education KLA are not covered by the Computer Literacy subject - the only subject offered in the KLA. The school could make better use of its self-audit findings to ensure that a broad and balanced curriculum is offered to students for whole-person development.

- Efforts have been made in communicating with different stakeholders, making arrangements for classroom allocation and staff development in the implementation of the NSS curriculum. Although there are a variety of elective subjects to be taken, the allocation of subjects is very similar to the traditional Arts and Science streams arrangement. To better cater for students’ learning needs and interest, the school may consider changing the existing grouping and devising a more flexible NSS curriculum framework. The school has formulated a detailed plan to offer Applied Learning courses as one of the electives. MCE and Visual Arts lessons in the S4 timetable provide structured learning in OLE. The planning of the five areas of OLE is worked out by the respective committees but there is little coordination among them. To ensure students have balanced exposure to, and progressive development in, the five areas of learning experiences, the school should develop a holistic planning of OLE throughout the three years of NSS education. An electronic platform, adopting a student-led and reflection-oriented approach, to maintain the Student Learning Profile has been duly set up.

- The programme plans of the subject departments are generally in line with the school’s major concerns. Implementation of the plans is monitored through various means, including lesson observation and exercise book inspections. A
clear mechanism is in place to strengthen the evaluation of the effectiveness of curriculum planning, including the use of student performance data. Some subject departments can identify the students' learning needs clearly and devise concrete follow-up actions. However, evaluation within many subject departments mainly accounts for the work done and programmes conducted. There is a need to focus on evaluating the impact on student learning and to strengthen the use of evaluation findings to inform curriculum planning.

- The school’s assessment mechanism is multi-faceted, comprising uniform tests, examinations and continuous assessment. There is variety in the assignments given to students and the learning tasks are well designed to allow them to apply the knowledge and skills learnt. To cater for learner diversity, in addition to the different levels of difficulty in test and examination questions, there are optional “value-added questions” in the papers at junior levels to stretch the students’ ability. School level and subject level guidelines, and quality assurance mechanisms such as the Annual Assignment Checking Scheme, are in place to ensure quality and proper administration of examinations, tests and assignments. Some subject departments have been able to make use of the data from the Markers’ Report, Panel Chairperson’s Report and other detailed data analyses to refine the design of examinations, tests and assignments and also to improve teaching strategies to help students overcome their weaknesses. This could set as a good example for other subject departments to follow.

- The teachers are friendly and have a positive attitude. Their lessons are generally well prepared, with objectives clearly conveyed to the students. Teacher-student relationships are good. The classroom atmosphere in most of the lessons is warm, open and conducive to learning. Routine classroom practices are properly established. The students are keen to learn. They take their studies seriously and are very attentive and cooperative in the learning process. They participate actively in learning activities and are conscientious in completing class assignments.

- In most lessons, the subject content is delivered in a clear, accurate and systematic manner. Questioning is often used to check students’ understanding of the subject matter and to stimulate thought and participation. In some lessons the teachers are able to reformulate the questions to enhance students’ understanding or to direct students’ questions to their fellow classmates for more creative or in-depth answers. Moreover, to help consolidate students’ learning, the teachers usually sum up the main learning points at the end of the lessons. Some of the lessons consist of interactive activities, including pair discussion, group discussion, group presentation and peer feedback, to provide students with more opportunities to enhance their language ability and to help them develop the generic skills of critical thinking and communication. The students are mostly responsive and keen to answer teachers’ questions. Their answers are often rich in perspective and with good
reasoning. The students’ communication skills are good and, in answering teachers’ questions and in presentations, they have the capability and confidence to express their views clearly in both Chinese and English. Furthermore, the students often comment on the answers and views of fellow classmates sensibly and in a polite and constructive manner, reflecting their analytical and critical thinking.

- To cater for learner diversity, a few teachers provide more choices for the less motivated students to perform or slow the pace of the lesson to give them more time to complete the class assignments. However, on the whole, there is still room for enhancing the support for these students. For example, the teachers could provide more scaffolding, prompts and cues to help the students answer their questions, give them more positive feedback and more frequently express appreciation of their responses.

- Given the generally good potential of the students, the teachers could set higher expectations and engage them in more challenging tasks. For instance, to stretch the ability of the students further, the teachers could ask them more probing questions to stimulate their higher-order thinking and prompt them to delve deeper into questions. Furthermore, the teachers could encourage students to take charge of their own learning by providing them with more independent learning opportunities. For example, students could be asked to search for information, prepare for lessons and be encouraged to ask more probing questions. Besides, where appropriate, more peer learning opportunities could be arranged.

2.3 Student Support & School Ethos

- Adopting a whole-school approach and attaching great importance to students’ whole-person development, the school provides comprehensive student support services. The Guidance and Counseling Committee, Disciplinary Board and school social worker complement one another to provide timely guidance and counseling service for the students in need and to create a safe and harmonious environment for learning and teaching. Various remedial, preventive and developmental activities, covering major personal growth and student guidance elements, are organised by the various functional committees, such as the Peer Counselling Scheme, Life-wide Learning Scheme, and Teacher-student Mentorship Programme, to suit students’ developmental needs at their various stages of growth. The setting up of a form coordinating meeting system provides good support for the teachers in taking care of the students in need. Values education, covering the elements of civic and moral education, community service, environmental, health and sex education are properly infused through various programmes organised by the committees.

- Evaluations are conducted regularly through surveys, questionnaires and regular meetings to check the effectiveness of the student support services, as well as
the developmental needs of the students. However, some of the success criteria in the programme plans are rather vague and not able to provide sufficient valuable information to feedback on future planning. For example, the success criteria of “good performance of students” and “good behaviors of students” in the Peer Counseling Programme could be stipulated in more specific and measurable terms.

- In line with the school’s major concern “to foster students’ positive values through life-wide learning experiences”, the functional committees devise various corresponding action plans and strategies; and organise various corresponding whole school promotional and LWL activities. For example, various award and service schemes, such as the Cleanliness campaign, rehabilitation scheme and School Service Order, are organised to promote students’ conduct and self-discipline. The Attitude Improvement Class also helps in enhancing the learning attitude of disruptive students. These programmes and activities have been effective in nurturing positive values and attitudes in students, enhancing their ability to withstand social temptation, particularly in instilling this year’s core value of “responsibility” in students. To raise students’ civic awareness and also to cultivate a sense of responsibility in students, the school provides them with opportunities to participate in different community services. Student leaders, equipped with various leadership training courses to enhance their leadership skills, are given much autonomy to plan and organise activities within and outside the school. Moreover, the school offers structured career guidance to students. Various talks, visits and mentorship schemes have been organised for upper form students to help them make decisions on subject selection and plan their future studies and careers. Career-oriented talks have also been offered to lower form students to enhance their understanding of the world of work and facilitate their goal-setting, bringing about an improvement in students’ learning attitude along the way.

- In the current SDP the school puts much emphasis on providing support for students with special educational needs (SEN). Being aware of the need for early identification and intervention, the teachers offer various supporting measures to address the students’ individual learning and adaptation needs, e.g. social skill training programme for SEN students. However, the number of teacher trained to support these students is currently rather small. There is a need to enhance teacher professional development to ensure more teachers are equipped with the skills needed.

- The school values home-school co-operation and uses various channels, to maintain good contact with parents, including the Parent Teachers Association (PTA), parent representatives in SMC, meetings with form teachers and Short Message Service (SMS) to parents. The PTA has been able to maintain a strong network among parents who, in general, show appreciation of the school culture, recognise and support school policies. To further utilise this strong
partnership with the parents, the school could organise more parent education activities. The Old Boys’ Association (OBA) also plays an important role in supporting current student development and preserving the sense of brotherhood and heritage in the school. Many old boys serve as speakers in career talks and mentors and tutors for school activities. Working hand in hand with the PTA, the OBA provides subsidies for different LWL activities, e.g. the overseas study tours. Furthermore, to enhance learning and teaching effectiveness, the school has secured external professional support, including participation in schemes co-organised with the Language Support Unit of the EDB.

- The school is keen to equip itself to sustain heritage, seek improvement and face the challenges ahead. Teachers, in general, share the school goals. They are respectful and co-operate with one another. They care for their students and are concerned about their development. The students enjoy school life and have developed a sense of belonging to the school. They get along well with their classmates and have developed a spirit of brotherhood among themselves. They also take an active part in ECA, both as participants and organisers. To move further as a learning community, the school could still strengthen measures for enhancing teacher professional development, such as organising more quality internal sharing and peer lesson observation.

2.4 Student Performance

- Students are well behaved and polite. They maintain a harmonious relationship with their peers and teachers. The senior level students are willing to render support to their junior level schoolmates. Student leaders, acting as good role models, demonstrate good leadership qualities and are responsible and dedicated to serving the school and the community. On the whole, students display a positive learning attitude and are very attentive in class. With higher expectations set for them by teachers, their learning initiative and self-motivation could be further enhanced and their potential further developed.

- In the past three years, the percentages of students with 14 or more points in the best six subjects in the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination were above the territory averages for day-school students. In comparison with schools with similar S1 intake, the school performed satisfactorily in the HKCEE in the past three years and the performance met the expected level. In the Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination, the percentages of students in the school meeting the minimum entrance requirements for local degree courses were much higher than the territory averages for day-school students over the past three years.

- Students show commitment in serving the community. They participate enthusiastically and have gained awards in the Boy Scouts, the Red Cross and
the Voluntary Services Group of the Social Welfare Department. The students also take an active part in a wide variety of ECA and have achieved good results in sports, particularly in track-and-field, badminton, cross-country and football. Furthermore, they have won prizes in inter-school speech, drama and music competitions.
3. Concluding Remarks

The school has well demonstrated its capacity to deal with change. Perceptible improvement both in management and organisation as well as in learning and teaching can be seen in recent years. With a clearly defined framework of duties and responsibilities in the school management structure, SSE has been embedded in the work of the different subject panels, functional committees and in the management as a whole. In the school-based curriculum, while there is a clear focus on promotion of students’ language ability, attention is paid to the development of students’ knowledge, generic skills, positive values and attitudes. Emphasising providing students with an all-round education by enriching their LWL experiences, the school spares no effort in cultivating the positive values in the students through their participation in the LWL programmes and activities. Furthermore, the school adopts a whole-school approach and provides comprehensive student support services, well catering for the development needs of the students at their different stages of growth.

In order to build further on these significant strengths, the school should address the following issues

3.1 Strengthening the P-I-E cycle and improving the quality of SSE for continuous school development

- To strengthen the P-I-E cycle, the school management and middle managers could further enhance their roles in the planning, coordination and monitoring work of the departments and committees. This could facilitate more effective collaboration between the departments and committees. Furthermore, to ensure quality evaluation to feed back on future planning, more specific and measurable success criteria, focusing on student learning and development, could be developed in the school plans. More specific recommendations could also be made in the evaluation made by individual departments and committees.

3.2 Enhancing the school-based curriculum and classroom strategies for raising learning and teaching effectiveness

- While enhancing students’ language ability is a major concern, the school still needs to work towards building a strong language-rich environment, both for the English Language and PTH. To better cater for the different learning needs and interest of the students, the school should ensure that a broad and balanced curriculum is offered. With the launching of the NSS Curriculum, it could review the school-based curriculum, provide students with a flexible curriculum framework and develop a holistic planning of the OLE. For the students with high potential, the teachers could set higher expectations of them and improve classroom strategies to help develop their potential to the fullest. The teachers could engage the students in more challenging tasks, stimulate their higher-order thinking and prompt them to explore the subjects further. More self-directed and peer learning opportunities could also be provided to encourage students to take charge of their own learning.