



# **External School Review Report**

## **Yuen Long Public Secondary School**

**School Address:** Town Park Road South, Shui Ngau Leng,  
Yuen Long, N.T.

**Review Period :** 25, 26, 28 September and 4, 10 October 2023

**Quality Assurance Division  
Education Bureau**

**February 2024**

## **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 School Management Committee (SMC), teachers, specialist staff, parents and students.
3. The Education Bureau (EDB) will upload the concluding chapter of the ESR reports 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 encouraged to upload the report to its homepage.
4. The SMC 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.

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## 1. External School Review Methodology

- 1.1 The ESR team conducted the review in September and October 2023 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 39 lessons taught by 39 teachers;
  - Observation of various school activities, such as flag-raising ceremony, morning assemblies, lunchtime and after-school activities; and
  - Meetings and interviews with the key stakeholders of the school, including the school management<sup>1</sup>, teachers, specialist staff, parents and students.

## 2. Current Development of the School

- 2.1 Yuen Long Public Secondary School was founded in 1946. The school aims to develop and implement innovative teaching and learning strategies that maximise students' learning outcomes, and nurture a safe and supportive learning environment to cater for students' individual needs.
- 2.2 The class structure approved by the Education Bureau and the number of students<sup>2</sup> 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	142	136	130	140	114	124	786

- 2.3 Two of the three assistant principals have joined the school for one year. About one-third of the subject panel heads have taken up their current posts for less than two years and around 20% of the teaching staff are temporary teachers. The medium of instruction of two classes in S1 and S2 has been changed from English to Chinese since the 2022/23 school year.
- 2.4 The recommendations of the last ESR conducted in 2011 are: (1) strengthening the P-I-E cycle and improving the quality of SSE for continuous school development; and (2) enhancing classroom strategies for raising learning and teaching effectiveness.

<sup>1</sup> The school management generally refers to the SMC, school heads and deputy heads

<sup>2</sup> Based on administrative records kept in the Bureau's information system during the ESR

- 2.5 The major concerns (MCs) of the current school development cycle (SDC) (2022/23 to 2024/25) are (1) to embrace and cater for learner diversity through adjusted learning environment, differentiated learning content, diversified learning process and various modes of assessment; and (2) to promote values education through nurturing in students the ten priority values and attitudes.

## 3. External School Review Findings

- 3.1 **The direction of school development in the current SDC is clear and the formulation of the MCs is transparent; yet evaluation has to be more focused on students' learning outcomes, with more integrative use of data to formulate specific follow-up strategies.**

3.1.1 The school strives hard to foster students' development in a supportive environment. It has been extending its link with external organisations to widen students' exposure. Together with the strong support from different stakeholders, including alumni and parents, a wide variety of activities has been organised to develop students' potential. Students are encouraged to take part in various competitions to display their talents. A strong sense of belonging, which is displayed among students and teachers, has been built in the past few years.

3.1.2 The MCs in the current SDC can largely address the needs of students and foster their all-round development. As compared with the observation in the last ESR, teachers of all levels are more engaged in the SSE process. Some good attempts have been made to refine the scope of the MCs, with a view to giving a clear direction for school development. For example, in the current Annual School Plan, students at the junior secondary level are guided to set not only academic but also non-academic goals. The programme plans of the subject panels and committees generally address the MCs. However, there are too many strategies under the MCs. For example, various measures covering the learning environment, curriculum content, pedagogies and modes of assessment are devised to cater for learner diversity under the first MC. Different subjects have their own interpretation of the strategies and do not have consensus on the expected students' learning outcomes of the measures. Moreover, the evaluation of the MCs mainly focuses on the completion of tasks instead of students' learning outcomes.

3.1.3 The school has increased teachers' awareness of using evaluation findings to inform improvement measures. An SSE team is set up to provide training on the use of school data to all teachers. The school refers to the data gathered from the latest stakeholder surveys, Assessment Program for Affective and Social Outcomes (APASO) and school-based questionnaires when evaluating the achievements of some targets. However, the data

analysis conducted lacks sufficient depth to accurately identify the specific needs of students of different year levels. Some of the measures are not strategically drawn up to facilitate improvement. To enhance the effectiveness of evaluation, the school should focus more on students' performance, analyse the success and hindering factors of the implementation measures through making integrative use of data, and formulate specific follow-up strategies for continuous improvement.

**3.2 Due effort has been made to sustain school development; professional development programmes have to be planned and tailored correspondingly to enhance the capacity of the teachers.**

3.2.1 There is a harmonious relationship among the staff. Despite the staff changes in recent years, mutual trust is sustained by a "companionship" culture. For better succession, two panel heads are appropriately assigned in some subject panels. New teachers are purposefully deployed to those subject panels with a small number of members to inject impetus into their implementation of school initiatives. The school has established the School Development Committee (SDC) to provide a platform to facilitate communication among the school management and heads of subject panels and committees. At present, the SDC meeting is rather administrative in nature and the evaluation conducted mainly focuses on operational details. Its function could be enhanced to focus more on consensus building on expected students' learning outcomes, fostering collaboration among different subject panels and committees, and conducting holistic review of curriculum, pedagogical practices and student support measures.

3.2.2 The school has put due effort into following up on the recommendations of the last ESR, including devising measures such as designing tiered learning materials and use of group work to raise students' motivation and interest. As a result, students are more motivated with greater participation in the lesson. The school also incorporates collaborative lesson planning (CLP) into the regular timetables and promotes peer lesson observation (PLO). However, the focuses on CLP and PLO are not concrete in some subject panels. A discrepancy is observed among subject panels in the pace of carrying out the strategies promoted by the school. The school management should plan and tailor corresponding professional development programmes to equip teachers with relevant pedagogical knowledge and skills. More support should also be provided to strengthen the roles of panel heads in leading and monitoring their members in implementing the strategies.

**3.3 The school curriculum is generally broad and balanced; the promotion of STEAM education should be stepped up through greater collaboration among subject panels.**

3.3.1 The school curriculum is generally broad and balanced, covering five essential learning experiences and comprising different types of school-based

programmes to engage students in life-wide learning. Following up on the recommendations made in the last ESR and the recent Key Learning Area (KLA) focus inspection, the school has appropriately reviewed and adjusted the curriculum of the Personal, Social and Humanities Education and Science Education Key Learning Areas to cover all essential learning elements at the junior secondary level. At the senior secondary level, a much wider range of elective subjects, including Music and Applied Learning (ApL) courses, is provided to suit students' needs and diverse interests. Capitalising on the optimisation measures for the four senior secondary core subjects, the released lesson time is properly used to create space for enriching students' exposure through school-based Other Learning Experiences (OLE) programmes. For example, the "Subject-based Feature Curriculum", including Language Arts lessons, stimulates students' learning interest and develops their creativity through fun-filled activities. In addressing learner diversity, conscientious efforts have been made to devise various types of assignments, such as mind maps, picture drawing and model making. Some tiered assignments are appropriately designed to support student learning while challenging questions are set to stretch students' potential.

3.3.2 In promoting STEAM education, "hands-on and minds-on" learning activities are suitably offered in the project of Rubber Band Paddle Boat, in which students at the junior secondary level can apply the knowledge in an integrative manner such as design cycle in Design and Technology and energy conversion in Science. This raises their interest in learning science and technology during the process of scientific investigation. The learning elements of Artificial Intelligence, information literacy and coding education are also properly incorporated in the Computer Literacy curriculum. Beyond the classroom, the more able students are encouraged to demonstrate design thinking and creativity through participating in extra-curricular activities of the STEAM club and external competitions, with pleasing results obtained. At present, students are provided with limited learning opportunities to integrate and apply knowledge and skills across subjects to solve real-life problems. When opportunities arise, other STEAM-related subject panels should take a more active role to collaborate among themselves to facilitate students' application of the knowledge and skills learnt through cross-disciplinary learning activities.

**3.4 Good attempts have been made in equipping students with self-directed learning skills; students should be offered more opportunities to apply the skills acquired in order to consolidate their learning.**

3.4.1 With the emphasis on promoting e-learning in the last SDC, a database has been established by most subject panels to create an e-learning knowledge pool for sharing learning and teaching materials. In the classroom, students are familiar with the e-learning routines and the more able

ones can effectively make use of e-learning tools to search for information and share ideas. A wide range of programmes, covering note-taking, study methods and goal setting, has been systematically arranged in Guided Activity Periods (GAP) to equip students with self-directed learning skills. At present, there is no consensus on the skills that students of different abilities or year levels are expected to master for self-directed learning. There is also no concrete follow-up plan to encourage students to make use of the skills learnt in GAP in their daily learning.

3.4.2 Beyond the classroom, “My Goal Setting Pledge 2.0” is implemented at the junior secondary level in the current SDC with an aim to raise students’ awareness of all-round development by helping them set goals with a sharper focus in both academic and non-academic areas. Students are encouraged to set goals related to their emotional and social wellbeing. With structured Life Planning Education, workshops on goal-setting, frequent self-reflections and reviews with class teachers and parents, some students are able to set specific goals and take concrete actions to actualise their goals at their own pace. Apart from organising career talks, the school has made good use of the network of the alumni to offer a wide range of sharing to empower students to make informed choices on their study and career pursuits. Students’ exposure is widened by the experiential learning programmes arranged by the school, which facilitate students’ self-understanding of their strengths and career aspiration. Building on “My Goal Setting Pledge 2.0”, students at the senior secondary level could be encouraged to set non-academic goals on developing a good character and healthy lifestyles.

3.4.3 In recent years, the school library has promoted reading actively with a range of strategies, such as organising theme-based book exhibitions and follow-up workshops which provide hands-on experience for students to reflect on and share the fun of reading. In the morning reading sessions, students at the junior level read attentively while students at the senior level are often occupied with classroom routines or assignments. The reading culture should be strengthened. To cultivate an English-rich learning environment, students are provided with opportunities to use English to conduct sharing in assemblies and join the activities on English Day and in the English Café during lunchtime. Students enjoy the English activities outside the classroom and are willing to play games with peers in English. Dedicated efforts are made to conduct curriculum mapping among different subjects and develop language across the curriculum packages to support students’ learning in English. Building on this foundation, learning activities in and outside the classroom could be better connected to help students apply the enabling skills, such as word attack strategies, to facilitate their learning in different subjects.

**3.5 A wide range of programmes beyond the classroom is systematically implemented to foster students’ leadership skills and promote values**



**education; cross-domain collaboration should be strengthened to cultivate students' positive values and attitudes.**

3.5.1 The school has made sustained efforts in nurturing student leaders and further established a three-tier framework to foster students' self-management and leadership skills systematically from the junior secondary to senior secondary level. Ample opportunities are provided for students to serve the school through taking up student leader roles in different student bodies. With strengthened leadership training provided in recent years, student leaders are taking a more active role in organising school events. Through organising student-led activities for fellow students, student leaders' sense of ownership, collaboration skills and problem-solving skills are nurtured. For example, not only do house committee members at the senior secondary level demonstrate strong leadership, but members at the junior level are also empowered to organise the activities on the One Club One Activity Day.

3.5.2 The school advocates the promotion of values education. Eye-catching slogans designed by students are displayed on campus to raise students' awareness of the yearly priority values including cultivating a respectful mind and the spirit of caring. An array of activities such as Moral and Civic Education Week and thematic talks is duly organised to enhance their understanding of the target values. Students' perseverance and sense of responsibility are developed through the whole school cleansing day and marine conservation community service. Currently, students are seldom encouraged to consolidate and reflect on the experience after the activities so as to connect their learning in the classroom. Besides, few subject panels have incorporated the yearly priority values in their curricula.

3.5.3 In promoting national education, a wide range of activities such as competitions and Mainland study tours is suitably arranged to enhance students' understanding of our country and Chinese culture. Some subject panels have duly incorporated elements of traditional Chinese culture, such as Cantonese opera and traditional board games, into the curriculum. As seen from the students' reflections, their understanding of the development of the country has been deepened and they show eagerness to visit the Mainland in person. Besides, related talks and exhibitions are aptly organised for parents and alumni respectively to enlist their support in promoting national security education (NSE). At present, the elements of NSE are only found in some subjects, and teachers' understanding of NSE varies. The school has to step up its efforts to ensure that the NSE elements are infused into all KLAs/ subjects properly. The subject panels and committees draw up their own work plans with reference to the National Education – Event Planning Calendar with inadequate overall coordination. The school should devise a holistic plan to connect the activities organised across domains to help students

consolidate their learning and further enhance their national identity.

**3.6 Lessons are well prepared with the adoption of group learning tasks to increase students' participation; students should be guided to take a more active role in learning.**

3.6.1 Lessons are well prepared with clear learning objectives. The delivery of lesson content is systematic. Some teachers draw on students' daily-life experiences to arouse their interest and facilitate their understanding. In effective lessons, students demonstrate higher-order thinking skills through completing the challenging questions or tasks. They also collaborate with other classmates, present their ideas, and sometimes correct their own mistakes in response to peers' comments, displaying self-reflection on their learning.

3.6.2 In response to the MC of catering for learner diversity, strategies such as providing appropriate tiered learning materials are devised to support student learning. Choices are given to address students' different learning styles and needs. Group discussion and pair work are duly adopted to facilitate peer learning and nurture their communication skills. In general, students are not confident in expressing their ideas. At times, insufficient support is given to guide the students, especially the less able ones, to complete the learning tasks. At the end of some lessons, there is a lack of effective consolidation to summarise key learning points and extend student learning. As observed, students are instructed to copy key learning points on their notebooks but they seldom take the initiative to do so or raise questions to clarify their doubts in learning. Strategies to encourage students to take a more active role in learning are limited. In a few lessons taught in English, some students display difficulty in comprehending abstract concepts. Cantonese is sometimes used in group activities. To engage students in the learning process, more opportunities, such as sharing of learning outcomes and peer evaluation, should be given to them. Pre-lesson tasks to facilitate the understanding of basic concepts could be adopted in order to reserve more room for in-depth discussion in class.

**3.7 Students display a strong sense of belonging towards the school and actively participate in a wide range of school activities; the academic performance of students is satisfactory.**

3.7.1 Students are well-mannered and display a strong sense of belonging towards the school. They are caring and get along well with one another. Student leaders demonstrate leadership skills in organising activities. They are willing to serve their peers, the school and the community. Students actively participate in the activities related to national education. In the national flag raising ceremony hosted by a well-trained student uniform team in the hall, students understand the etiquette, stand solemnly and show respect to the ceremony.

3.7.2 In the past three years, the percentage of students meeting the general entrance requirements for local undergraduate university programmes in the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) Examination was below the territory average of day school students while the percentage of students meeting the general entrance requirements for sub-degree courses in the HKDSE Examination was close to the territory average of day school students. Taking into account the S1 intake, the school performed satisfactorily in the HKDSE Examination in the past three years.

3.7.3 Students take an active part in various extra-curricular activities and territory-wide and inter-school competitions, performing well and attaining a number of group and individual awards in areas such as inter-school sports competitions, speech and music festivals, and science-related competitions.

## 4. Conclusion and Way Forward

The school has placed significant importance on fostering communication among the school management and heads of subject panels and committees. A harmonious relationship is maintained among staff. The school curriculum is generally broad and balanced, addressing the diverse needs of the students. Good attempts have been made to equip students with self-directed learning skills. With the contribution of all stakeholders, including alumni and parents, various activities have been organised to develop students' potential. Students are well-mannered with a strong sense of belonging towards the school. They get along well with one another and actively take part in various competitions to showcase their talents. Student leaders are empowered to organise a wide range of student-led activities independently, demonstrating good leadership skills.

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

- 4.1 The school should provide students with ample opportunities to integrate and apply their knowledge and skills. A holistic review should be conducted to strengthen the connection between learning activities in and outside the classroom and optimise the learning time of students. When conducting SSE, the school should focus on students' learning outcomes, make integrative use of data, and formulate specific follow-up strategies for continuous improvement.
- 4.2 The school has to step up relevant measures to enhance teachers' professional capacity in delivering effective pedagogical practices, with a view to improving learning and teaching effectiveness. To empower teachers in various aspects, such as catering for learner diversity in the classroom and supporting students to take a more active role and build self-confidence in learning, professional development programmes should be planned and tailored correspondingly.

## School Response

The school response on the draft ESR report was received on 26 January 2024. The original text of the school response is incorporated as follows.

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19 Jan 2024

### Feedback to ESR Draft Report

The School Management Committee and teaching staff sincerely thank the External School Review Team for their valuable insights, recognition of our effective practices, and constructive suggestions for improvement.

We assure you that the school is committed to embracing future challenges with dedication to education and a genuine love for young people. In response to the ESR findings, we will initiate strategic planning to provide students with enhanced opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills inside and outside the classroom. We will conduct in-depth analysis of students' learning outcomes to drive continuous improvement. Additionally, we will allocate more resources to empower our teaching staff, enhance pedagogical practices, and cultivate curriculum leaders who can prepare the next generation for an ever-changing world.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chan Kit-ling'.

(Ms. CHAN Kit-ling)

Chairperson of the School Management Committee

Yuen Long Public Secondary School