

External School Review Report

St. Joseph's College

Address of School : 7 Kennedy Road, Central, H.K.

External Review Period : 5, 7-9 and 14 October 2009

**Quality Assurance Division
Education Bureau**

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1. Introduction

1.1 External review methodology

- The previous Quality Assurance Inspection (QAI) was conducted to the school from 11 to 19 January 2001.
- The ESR team conducted the review on 5, 7-9 and 14 October 2009 to evaluate the school performance in school self-evaluation (SSE) and various domains.
- 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 49 lessons taught by 49 teachers;
 - Observation of various school activities, including self-reading session, Recruitment Week activities, lunchtime and after-school activities;
 - Meetings and interviews with the Supervisor, 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)

- Established in the year 1875, St. Joseph's College (SJC) will be celebrating its 135th Anniversary this year. The sponsoring body of the School is the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools (The De La Salle Brothers).
- The vision of the School Sponsoring Body is to touch the hearts of the students confided to its care; in turn they touch the hearts of many more in society, the country and the world with the talents and virtues they developed in their young years. In line with the school's mission, it aims to educate its students in the areas of moral, intellectual, physical, social, aesthetic and emotional development. The process will take place in an environment conducive to learning and in the context of interaction between teachers and students. The school motto "Labore et Virtute" expresses the spirit of the School. It is by hard work and virtue that a student will make a success of his life and so remains true to the best traditions of SJC.

- As at 16 September 2009, the class structure and number of students are as follows:

Level	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	Total
No. of classes	5	5	5	5	5	3	3	31
No. of students	190	200	196	211	205	102	74	1,178

- English is the medium of instruction in SJC. Apart from placing a strong emphasis on students' language competency: bi-literacy and tri-lingualism, St. Joseph's makes every effort to foster a holistic and all-round development of individuals. It endeavours to nurture in its students an active and responsible learning attitude, cognitive thinking skills, social awareness, a sense of responsibility and belonging as well as a commitment to serve society. Besides academic excellence, it strongly encourages and promotes students' participation in sports, extra-curricular activities and study trips. Through these activities, students can acquire skills and knowledge that cannot be learned inside the classroom.
- The school believes that a successful school is self-evaluating in a shared belief that school improvement is the right and responsibility of every single member of the school community. The "Planning-Implementation-Evaluation" (P-I-E) cycle is carried out with a whole school approach. The School Development Committee (SDC)/School Improvement Team (SIT) starts the whole process by formulating major concerns with reference to the Holistic Review, the analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT), the Annual Report and surveys such as the Assessment Programme for Affective and Social Outcomes (APASO), Schools Value-added Information System (SVAIS) and the Stakeholder Survey (SHS). The major concerns are then discussed and finalised by all teachers so that they are in alignment with the current education trends and students' needs. Subject panels and functional teams then formulate concrete operational plans in line with the school's major concerns. Panel/functional heads regularly report work progress by submitting their minutes, sharing reports and subject reports to the School Executive Committee. SSE is conducted at three levels: school, subject/functional team and subject teacher.
- St. Joseph's had its QAI in 2001 and also a Focus Inspection on Life Wide Learning in 2007. The two reports provided the school with clear and specific directives. Discussions were held by the SIT and action plans were drawn up by different panels and functional teams to cater for areas which need improvement and reinforcement.

2. School Performance

2.1 Continuous Development of the School

- The school is sponsored by the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools (The De La Salle Brothers) and has a long history of over a hundred and thirty years. The school's vision and mission are clear with strong emphasis on students' all-round development, in line with the aims of curriculum reform and social expectations of cultivating the life-wide and life-long capabilities of students. Over the years, strenuous efforts have been made by the school in fostering the holistic development of students. The school has maintained a high level of performance and demonstrated a formidable capacity to meet the challenges of educational development. The key recommendations of the previous QAI have been taken into full consideration by the school. Good development has been made in the SSE work, planning of school curriculum, staff communication, upgrading of information technology (IT) equipment for promotion of IT in learning and teaching.
- The school management is reflective and committed to continuing improvement in the pursuit of excellence. Great efforts have been made in improving its SSE work. These include the reorganisation of its management structure to involve more teachers in SSE at school level and the setting up of three working groups, each led by a prefect-of-studies, to formulate the expected outcomes and implementation strategies systematically. By adopting a whole-school approach, teachers have sufficient participation and deliberation in the formulation process of the school's major concerns. The SWOT analysis is suitably conducted for setting the school's development priorities. Much effort is given to building consensus on development priorities and the implementation strategies at school level to cultivate a higher sense of ownership among teachers. Teachers, generally, have a clear understanding of the school heritage and tradition. They have a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and the direction of school development.
- The SDC takes a leading role in overseeing SSE at school and subject/committee levels. In an effort to make SSE an on-going process to support school development, different subject panels and committees always fully consider the school major concerns when devising their programme plans. The school major concerns have, in implementation, been rightly cascaded to the subject panel and committee levels. The data derived from the SVAIS, APASO, SHS and school-based questionnaire surveys are studied and taken into account in the P-I-E process. The importance of P-I-E is well understood and accepted by teachers.

- The school major concerns for 2006–2009 have been suitably evaluated and most of them have been rated as either fully or partially achieved. There is an apparent link between the previous and the current (2009–2012) cycles of School Development Plan (SDP). The major concerns encompassing “Building a harmonious school environment”, “Catering for learner diversity in Chinese, English and Mathematics subjects”, and “Ensuring the smooth and successful implementation of the new senior secondary curriculum (NSSC)”, are in line with the school’s vision, mission and the curriculum reform and are geared to the developmental needs of both the students and teachers. Taking the first major concern as an example, the school aims to further extend the scope of its previous SDP on “Upholding school ethos and maintain the Josephian culture” to enhance students’ moral values, foster among them loving relationships and strengthen their sense of self-discipline, responsibility and spirit of service. The three major concerns are also closely followed in the annual school plans (ASP). Realistic targets, implementation schedules and strategies have been formulated in both SDP and ASP. For the school major concern relating to NSSC, the implementation strategies are comprehensive enough to cover various aspects of curriculum, learning and teaching, assessment and resources which, in turn, provide a clear direction for implementation. Resources are, in general, suitably deployed to support the implementation of school plans. Appropriate staff development programmes have been organised to equip teachers with the skills to implement the school major concerns related to learning and teaching.
- Although the evaluation of most plans and individual programmes is conducted with deep reflection, it focuses chiefly on task completion. For further development of SSE, the evaluation, especially of the programme plans of subject panels and committees, could be improved with a sharper focus on outcomes, particularly in terms of student learning. The recommendations made for further improvement could be more specific to inform subsequent planning by subject panels and committees.
- Given the school’s long history, the School Management Committee (SMC), senior¹ and middle managers are keen to uphold the school’s tradition and heritage. They demonstrate strong leaderships and lead the school in accordance with the school’s vision and mission, and the current educational trends. The students enjoy their life at school and see it as a happy place for learning and character formation. The school management comprises experienced and committed professionals with a sound grasp of current educational developments in Hong Kong. It makes full use of the school premises, although there is limited space in the school compound. The SMC is very much concerned with school development. The Supervisor, who was the former principal, is very approachable and is popular with students and

¹ The senior managers are the Principal and Vice Principals.

teachers. He serves well as a role model for the students by manifesting his care and love and practising his servant leadership. The senior managers have a strong aspiration to turn the school into a learning organisation, and many related professional development activities are organised to achieve this goal. A systematic induction programme is arranged and is found to be helpful by new teachers. Mentors are arranged for the new teachers to facilitate their adjustment and growth. The staff appraisal system is well developed, with due emphasis on the continuous professional development of teachers. The Principal, who subscribes to the school's vision and mission, keeps the school motto of "Labore et Virtute" alive and strives to maintain the Josephian culture. He leads and is transforming the school to meet the challenges of the NSSC. The Vice Principals are supportive of the Principal, and have good communication with middle managers and teachers. They adopt an incremental approach in the planning of future development to enhance smooth transition to the new senior secondary (NSS) system. All middle managers can position themselves appropriately, and collaboration among teams and subject panels is increasing. Most of them are ready to provide guidance and support for their colleagues.

2.2 Learning and Teaching

- Curriculum planning is in close alignment with the school's vision and mission of fostering students' all-round development. The school-based curriculum is broad and balanced, with a rich variety of co-curricular activities organised at school and subject panel levels to supplement the formal curriculum. A good range of subjects is offered. Since the previous QAI, the school has effectively extended its curriculum provision, including the introduction of Visual Arts to promote aesthetic education, the use of Putonghua in the teaching of Chinese, and the development of language arts, such as English drama, to promote students' interest. Another significant practice is the embedding of debating in the Chinese and English curriculum, which enhances students' communication and presentation skills significantly. The arrangement of having different co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, including an option for junior-form students to attend design and technology classes at the Arts and Technology Education Centre, on Wednesday afternoons also deserves credit.
- The school has, in recent years, made good preparation for the implementation of the NSSC. This includes consulting stakeholders' views on subject choices, formulating the subject combinations and planning for staff manpower. A school-based junior-form Integrated Humanities (IH) curriculum has been developed with the adoption of a project-based and enquiry approach. Together with the cross-disciplinary project learning, they help to lay a good foundation for students in their independent enquiry study of Liberal Studies (LS) in the NSSC. Teachers are keen on improving their subject knowledge

and teaching methodology by attending various seminars and training courses related to the NSSC. Building on the previous good preparatory work, the school continues to put effort into “Ensuring the smooth and successful implementation of the NSSC”, which is one of the major concerns for the current SDP cycle. Split-class teaching for the core subjects is arranged in S4 to foster a learning environment more conducive to catering for learner diversity by creating a smaller class size. Learning time is flexibly arranged, with the effective use of block timetabling for a wide range of the NSS elective subjects offered to students. Opportunities for introducing Applied Learning and network programmes for other subjects are being explored to cater for different learning needs. Meticulous efforts have been made in the design of plans for Other Learning Experiences (OLE), with due attention given to coverage and solicitation of external resources, such as alumni support. The assessment policy for OLE, after adequate consultation, is also well-defined. The Student Learning Profile (SLP) is properly planned, with a new students’ portfolio system “I-Portfolio” being set up to record and organise students’ performance and their achievements in OLE. Students are appropriately guided on what should be recorded in the SLP and the items will be checked and endorsed by teachers. A good attempt is also made in training students to write personal reflections.

- In addressing learner diversity, another major concern, a comprehensive and thoughtful range of measures has been meticulously devised. An appropriate incremental approach, covering the core subjects, is adopted. The school has devoted many resources and adopted ability grouping in the form of split-class teaching and small classes for these subjects, in both junior and senior forms. The small class size provides a supportive environment for enhanced class interaction, although there is still generally a need for more varied pedagogy and learning activities to be adopted to meet students’ needs. Clear and specific learning outcomes and assignment guidelines, based on student abilities, have been devised to address learner diversity. Moreover, a pilot programme has been implemented in a selected class in S3 to enhance peer learning in the core subjects. Besides the core subjects, different subject panels also regularly organise tutorial classes to support the less able students. The most able students are encouraged to attend enhancement programmes organised by the Education Bureau (EDB) and to join competitions, such as the Physics and Mathematics Olympiad. These activities sufficiently stretch the potential of this group of students. To cater for the different cultural and educational backgrounds of students, French is offered as an alternative subject to Chinese Language. With the launching of the NSSC this year, extra Chinese lessons are organised for those students taking French to prepare them for the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) examination.
- Apart from the implementation of project learning, some efforts have been

made to help students to develop independent learning capabilities through the promotion of reading to learn, information technology for interactive learning and Moral and Civic Education (MCE). The school has adopted a whole-school approach to fostering a reading culture with a fair variety of reading activities being organised, including the timetabled weekly self-reading periods and opportunities for peer and class sharing of reading materials. Most students are seen to read with concentration during the reading period. In recent years, there has been continual work on hardware replacement and enhancement of the e-learning online platform to strengthen students' independent learning skills. Several web-based, self-directed programmes have also been devised to facilitate students' self learning. The school stresses the promotion of students' positive values and attitudes. Values education is suitably incorporated into the curriculum.

- High priority is always given to providing an English-rich environment in the school. English is commonly used inside classroom and for school functions, announcements and presentations. A good range of English activities is organised from time to time, including drama, debates, film appreciation and public speaking. On the whole, the school has successfully cultivated an English-rich learning environment that fosters students' confident, effective and efficient use of the language.
- The school has made conscientious efforts to enhance communication and collaboration among teachers, and to solicit support from external organisations, so as to bring about more effective curriculum planning and implementation. In-house workshops, led by educational experts, have been organised to foster common understanding of issues such as the NSSC, project learning and small class teaching. Support is sought from the EDB to develop the IH and LS subjects. From time to time, visits are arranged with schools in the mainland and overseas for teachers' professional exchange. In the light of the NSSC, there has been more frequent exchange and collaboration among subject panels in developing students' learning skills through cross-curricular project learning and joint study tours. Lesson study and collaborative lesson preparation have been conducted in some subjects. Teachers are also encouraged to share their teaching materials with each other. Some subject panels have made use of peer observation to promote professional exchange. A culture which is fully accepting of pedagogical sharing is developing. To align with the school's major concern on catering for learner diversity, it would be of greater benefit if pedagogical interchange and dialogue on this topic could be further enhanced.
- Most of the subject programme plans align with the school's major concerns. The monitoring of curriculum implementation takes place through regular panel meetings, lesson observation, checking of exercise books and frequent reference to internal and public examination results. In addition, there is frequent use of school data, including assessment and questionnaire survey data,

for streaming of students and assessing their performance in examination at school level. Year-end reviews are conducted, but the depth and practices of curriculum evaluation vary from panel to panel. In some cases, reviews are insufficiently focused on achievement against the objectives and the evaluation results are not well used to inform curriculum planning and teaching strategies.

- Clear guidelines on the types and frequency of assignments and assessment have been set out for every subject. Both continuous and summative assessments are duly emphasised. Students' performance is assessed on the basis of a wide range of assessment data, including projects, book reports, oral presentation and learning tasks. A wide range of assessment methods, including teacher assessment and peer assessment, are in evidence. Some assignments, such as those of Business Accounting and Financial Studies, Putonghua and Mathematics can develop students' generic skills, particularly critical thinking and creativity, while others incorporate elements of social issues, such as drug testing and drink driving.
- With regard to the major concern on the implementation of the NSSC, school-based assessment (SBA) is well arranged to align with the reading schemes of the Chinese and English subject panels. There is a three year plan for the implementation of SBA in the relevant subjects, providing guidelines for subject teachers and students on the frequency of assessments and reading activities to be held each year. Intra-class moderation has also been suitably conducted by teachers.
- The vetting of assignment and assessment papers is prudent and post-examination reviews are conducted in a timely manner. There is detailed analysis of internal and public examinations, highlighting specific areas for reinforcement. However, the findings of the review could be further used to inform pedagogy.
- Most lessons are effective, well-planned and organised with clear objectives. Teachers show enthusiasm for their work. They possess good subject knowledge and their command of English is very good. The school's policy on the use of English as the medium of instruction is properly adhered to in the classrooms. Presentation, explanation and demonstration are clear and smoothly accomplished. Teachers are friendly, responsible and supportive and the learning atmosphere is harmonious. The rapport between teachers and students is, on the whole, very good. Subject resources and information technology are rightly used to facilitate understanding. For some lessons, teachers gather suitable teaching resources from the web to arouse students' interest and effectively help them to construct knowledge. Teachers also do well in drawing on students' daily life experiences and incorporating elements of values education into relevant topics.
- Students demonstrate a very positive learning attitude. They show high intellectual capability. They are attentive and demonstrate great interest in

learning. Some are quite spontaneous in answering questions, contributing ideas and even raising questions. Students participate actively and confidently in discussions and presentations. Their communication skills are excellent. They can sum up and organise their ideas skilfully and present them logically in front of the class. They present information and ideas fluently, both in English and Chinese, based on their own background information and knowledge. Their written English is also excellent, with prolific ideas and few grammatical errors. In some lessons, students exhibit independent learning strategies, such as note-taking and pre-lesson preparation.

- In some more effective lessons, questions are tactfully asked to provoke students' thinking, and feedback given by teachers is specific and timely. Students are often provided with opportunities to strengthen their generic skills, such as critical thinking. Peer assessment is practised in some lessons, with a view to collecting peer feedback for improvement. However, in the majority of lessons, questions are generally used to check students' understanding of the lesson content. There is room for improvement in teachers' questioning techniques and feedback so as to further develop students' critical thinking skills and to cater for learner diversity. In a few lessons, time management could be improved so that there is adequate time left for consolidating student learning.
- With catering for learner diversity as one of the major concerns, teachers often offer students individual help in the classrooms. In some lessons, group and pair work are evident, with appropriate challenging focus, to develop students' higher-order thinking skills. When opportunities for discussion and interaction are provided in these lessons, students demonstrate a high level of participation and enthusiasm, and collaborate well in accomplishing the tasks assigned. In a few small-size classes, by using as much questioning as possible, teachers put effort into maximising teacher-student interaction. However, there is a need for greater effort in catering for learner diversity at classroom level. Teachers could consider giving students more opportunities to demonstrate their learning outcomes. Peer interaction, especially in smaller classes, could be further enhanced to facilitate collaborative learning so that students assume more responsibility for their learning.

2.3 Student Support and School Ethos

- In line with its motto, the school places strong emphasis on touching the hearts of the students and hopes that they, in turn, will touch the hearts of many more in society. With this shared vision, the school is adopting a whole-school approach to facilitate the holistic development of students, in collaboration with parents, alumni and external organisations. Different student support teams devise their own plans and implementation strategies that are commensurate with students' needs and in accordance with the major concerns. Programmes

drawn up by the relevant student support teams are, on the whole, in alignment with these concerns. Increasing co-ordination among the various student support teams/committees is evident under the guidance of the Vice Principal in charge of Student Affairs. Some good collaboration is observed among the student support teams in terms of the delivery of MCE and guidance activities. On the whole, student support services run smoothly. Nevertheless, stronger partnership in the overall evaluation of the effectiveness of school plans, focusing on students' outcomes rather than the implementation of individual programmes, could facilitate subsequent planning of student support services.

- The school places great emphasis on strengthening school culture, stressing both instillation of Christian and moral values and the maintenance of Josephian culture. Alongside the Adolescent Health Programme offered by the Department of Health, a coherent school-based curriculum with elements of values education, commensurate with the developmental needs of the students, is in place. Values education is systematically implemented in MCE, Religious Studies lessons and assemblies. Current issues are appropriately used as topics for discussions. Moral and religious values are also appropriately infused in students' daily life via display boards, school activities and programmes such as the Police-student Mentor Interact Scheme. Sex and health education are properly included to address the developmental needs of the students. National identity and environmental awareness are rightly stressed and fostered by various campaigns and projects. On the whole, students are well-mannered and have a good grasp of moral values.
- To address the school's concern to "Build a Harmonious Environment" and to perpetuate a caring Josephian ethos, the school has set up a good supporting network for students and rendered appropriate support where necessary. The well-organised orientation and summer bridging programmes, together with the support of the teachers and student counsellors, help S1 students to adjust and adapt to their secondary school life easily. The Student Support Scheme, with dual form teachers working collaboratively, has strengthened the link between the form teachers and S1 and S2 students. The School-based Interpersonal Skills Training Camp functions well to extend the collegiate network of S1 students. Regular meetings of form teachers and assistant form teachers effectively enhance teachers' understanding of the students' problems and the ways of helping them. Individual counselling services and interventions are effectively offered to students by form teachers, the social worker, the Principal and the La Sallian brothers. Student guidance services could be further enhanced if more teachers are trained in counselling and the early identification mechanism refined. This latter should then include systematic identification of students at risk and those with emotional difficulties, in addition to those with other special educational needs.
- In realisation of the goal to foster students' commitment to themselves and

society, the school provides students with ample service opportunities both within and outside school. Quality service training activities are offered to all S1 and S3 students, arousing their concern for others. The students, on the whole, are eager to take up social responsibility. To sustain students' impetus to contribute to society, the school might also consider introducing service learning systematically as a continuation of, and to pave the way for, the NSSC.

- In line with the school's aim to promote the all-round development of students, learning outside the classroom is always actively promoted. Students can widen their exposure to the outside world and cultivate a sense of self-confidence through participating in a wide range of tailored programmes and activities organised by the school, such as various cultural and study trips outside Hong Kong, overseas sports training camps, exchange programmes and mainland visits. The school's tradition of developing students' leadership potential has been vital to the success of extra-curricular activities (ECA). Student leaders, who are mostly appointed by teachers, are given great autonomy in planning and organising activities and student exchanges, both within and outside school. Suitable leadership training programmes and workshops are regularly arranged for the student leaders to develop their leadership skills. As a result, student leaders are very effective in discharging their duties and in planning, organising and evaluating activities. Apart from providing opportunities for the able and willing students to excel, it would be beneficial for the less active students to be given more encouragement to contribute service so as to enhance their self-confidence and realise their potential.
- To enhance students' understanding of the world of work, the school provides adequate career information. Appropriate career guidance programmes are organised, from S2 onwards, to inform students about future academic and career opportunities. Suitable reference materials are found on the careers notice-board and in the reference corner. A good attempt is made to widen students' career-related exposure and facilitate their decision making by the initiation of various job-shadowing schemes, such as Legal Chapter, and the business partnership programme "Junior Achievement HK". On the whole, students' understanding of the world of work is increasing.
- The school places emphasis on home-school co-operation. Good and effective communication has been maintained between parents and the school. Parents are well informed of the learning progress of their children and of the latest school development. They are also provided with a profile with teachers' phone numbers for easy access. Parents appreciate the school's provision of quality all-round education, as well as teachers' caring attitude. They are supportive of, and have strong trust in, the school. The Parent-teacher Association (PTA) plays an active role in promoting parenting skills, enhancing home-school co-operation, supporting students' learning and

sponsoring club activities. It also helps, on informal occasions, to collect views and suggestions from parents on school improvement. There are, for example, Coffee Corners organised by the PTA, inviting parents of students at the same level to share experiences on parenting and express their views on school improvement. Their views are seriously considered and school responses are given to parents promptly. The alumni value the school's tradition and heritage and show strong affiliation. They actively participate in a range of activities and are ready to make valuable contributions to the school. These include fund-raising to improve facilities, serving as speakers on various school functions, rendering support for ECA, sponsoring scholarships to promote learning and providing job-shadowing placements to widen students' exposure. On the whole, the support of alumni is very strong and has proved to be conducive to the school's development and students' growth.

- The school has been extending its links with external organisations, from government bodies and tertiary institutions to local and overseas schools, to enhance teachers' professionalism and to widen students' exposure. External resources are appropriately utilised to support school curricula and activities, such as leadership training, religious and social services. There are also good cultural exchanges locally, overseas and with Mainland China, to broaden students' horizons.
- The school has a free and open learning atmosphere and students clearly take pride in being a member of the Josephian family. They enjoy their school life and have a strong sense of commitment and belonging to the school. This is evidenced by the joy they shared when an alumnus of the school, Professor Charles Kao, was awarded a Nobel Prize. All in all, students are supportive of each other and collaborate well in class activities, treasuring their friendships with their classmates. The senior form students, who actively take up different leadership roles, are willing to take good care of their junior form counterparts and organise activities to enrich school life. Students are provided with, and use, formal and informal channels, such as meetings with the Principal, to voice their opinions. Their suggestions are seriously taken into consideration by the school management.
- The school staff members respect each other and cooperate well. They enjoy a good rapport with students. Teachers, in general, are aware of the need for change for the school to progress. Since the previous QAI, there has been increasing involvement and collaboration of teachers in school administration, curriculum and programme planning and professional sharing. Teachers, on the whole, adopt a professional attitude in enhancing the effectiveness of learning and teaching, and the culture of a learning organisation is developing.

2.4 Student Performance

- Students, in general, have a positive self concept and are well-disciplined. They are attentive and hold positive attitude towards learning. They possess excellent communication skills and demonstrate full confidence in expressing their own views during class and school functions. Most students are capable of self-management and demonstrate good social and interpersonal skills. They enjoy a close relationship with their teachers and peers, characterised by mutual trust and acceptance. They also show a strong affiliation to their school and are proud of being members of the Josephian family. Student leaders are responsible, presentable and are effective in guiding their junior counterparts. They demonstrate strong leadership and a sense of commitment in leading the Student Union, the Christian Union and organising various ECA with minimal supervision from teachers. Students are eager to participate in community service and this helps to enhance their sense of responsibility and civic-mindedness. High levels of social responsibility and willingness to serve others are demonstrated by the student counsellors and peer tutors who help S1 and other junior students in their adaptation to secondary school life and academic pursuits respectively.
- 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 much higher than the territory averages for day-school students. In comparison with schools with similar S1 intake, the school performed excellently in the HKCEE for the past three years and the performance far exceeded the expected level. In the Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination, the percentages of students awarded the minimum entrance requirements for local degree courses were well above the territory averages for day-school students over the past three years. Besides, quite a number of students have been admitted to local universities through the Early Admission Scheme. Students are enthusiastic about, and zealous in, participating in ECA. They demonstrate outstanding achievements in debate and water polo, with a record of nine consecutive champions for the latter. They also perform very well in various competitions, such as speech festivals, football, basketball, swimming and Mathematics Olympiad competitions.

3. Concluding Remarks

St. Joseph's College is a popular school with a long tradition and heritage, having a clear vision and mission of fostering students' all-round development. It is well led and managed by an effective school management team. The Supervisor is a caring and loving individual and is practising servant leadership. The Principal provides strong leadership, and is well supported by the Vice Principals and middle managers. Teachers are knowledgeable, committed and conscientious. The school gives full consideration to the recommendations made in the previous QAI reports in formulating the follow-up actions for improvement, with good progress and great effectiveness. With sustained effort, the school has made significant progress in improving its work in SSE. The school's major concerns are in line with curriculum reform and geared to the developmental needs of both the students and teachers. The curriculum, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities serve to achieve the goal of all-round student development. Classroom learning and teaching is generally good. Student support services and programmes are suitably organised to cater for students' personal development needs. Students are very proud of their school, taking full advantage of its many extra-curricular opportunities to foster their holistic development. The school has maintained good relationships with its parents and alumni, and links with external organisations are well developed. The cultivation of students' leadership qualities is one of the notable features of the school.

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

3.1 Exploring and implementing strategies for catering for learner diversity

- Learner diversity is a shared concern among staff and is a major concern for 2009-2012. While active steps are being taken in providing remedial support and enhancement programmes for students in need, and launching self-directed programmes for students and a pilot programme on peer learning in S3, there needs to be more exploration and deliberation of pedagogical strategies related to catering for learner diversity in classrooms. Possible strategies could include improving teachers' techniques of questioning and giving feedback, the promotion of graded tasks and cooperative learning. Further, teachers could be encouraged to familiarise themselves with such strategies through existing school-based professional development sharing, peer observation, lesson study and collaborative lesson planning.

3.2 Improving evaluation to better inform subsequent planning

- Instead of continuing with the current programme-by-programme evaluation, the school could engage subject panels and committees in a more sharply focused evaluation of outcomes, particularly described in terms of student learning. Specific recommendations for improvement could be made to better inform subsequent planning by subject panels and committees.