

Comprehensive Review Report

Diocesan Boys' School

Address of School : 131 Argyle Street, Mong Kok, Kowloon
Review Period : 6-9, 12-13 & 15 January 2009

Quality Assurance Division
Education Bureau
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Contents

	Page
1 Introduction	1
2 Management and Organisation	5
3 Learning and Teaching	12
4 Student Support and School Ethos	18
5 Student Performance	22
6 Concluding Remarks	23

(Parents may contact school for the full report with appendices)

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1. Introduction

1.1 School vision and mission (original text provided by the school)

Mission and Objectives

The mission of the school is “to provide a liberal education based on Christian principles”. The guiding philosophy is to offer an all-rounded education. To realise this mission, both the Primary and the Secondary Divisions offer a broad and well-balanced education for the development of the **WHOLE** person. A seamless transition is made from the Primary Division into the Secondary Division to ensure continuity. Through curricular and extra-curricular activities (ECA), the school helps students acquire creative and critical thinking skills, and cultivate the development of self-respect and self-esteem. The school promotes multiple-intelligences and focuses on character building based on Christian principles. Ultimately, the aim is to nurture confident and responsible citizens, proud to share the unique cultural identity of DBS with the rest of the community.

To realise this stated mission the school has set the following objectives:

- To offer a well-balanced education for the development of the **WHOLE** person through effective means and agreeable strategies.
- To maintain the well-established school traditions.
- To evolve a unique cultural identity.
- To help students acquire creative and critical thinking skills.
- To provide opportunities for the development of good character based on Christian principles, and students are expected to have the following qualities: trustworthiness, a sense of responsibility, fairness, and considerateness.
- To cultivate self-respect and self-esteem through relevant activities so that each student can be a man of integrity, discipline, devotion, industriousness, courage, and gratitude.
- To promote multiple intelligence so that students can fully maximize their talents.
- The prime concern is to help students equip themselves with sound knowledge, essential qualities of good character, and social and technical skills to meet challenges, so that they would be creative and dynamic to achieve success in this rapidly advancing pluralistic society.

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

- **Introduction**

DBS began as “Diocesan Home and Orphanage” in 1869. The name “Diocesan Boys’ School” was first used by the School Committee in 1913. In the early days, under the Sheng Kung Hui, DBS served to nurture children of both Chinese and Caucasian origins. Nowadays, as a through-train school, DBS caters to a much more diverse group of people. The Primary Division, set up on the same grounds in 2004, further reinforces the fine traditions of the secondary school.

- **Current school development, objectives, strategies and implementation**

The prime concern is to equip students with sound knowledge, good moral qualities, social and technical skills to enable them to meet future challenges. Alternative curriculums are to be offered to enrich students’ learning experience. DBS will be offering 18 subjects in the coming New Senior Secondary Curriculum (NSSC) and the International Baccalaureate Diploma (IBD) curriculum is underway. Opportunities are created to enable the boys to have extensive exposure. For example, many students attended the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games while another contingent took part in the Choir Games 2008 in Austria.

- **Class structure and number of students**

Secondary Division	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7
Number of classes	6	6	6	6	6	4	4
Number of students	252	234	223	215	208	126	97
Primary Division	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	
Number of classes	5	5	5	5	5	5	
Number of students	152	150	157	151	150	150	

- **How the school actualises its initial proposal to secure DSS status**

Teachers are valuable assets of the school and turning into a DSS school has facilitated important structural changes. DBS has been able to ensure better employment terms and fringe benefits for staff; employing extra help to share in their workload. The school has been able to place teachers on the School Consultative Committee and the School Management Committee. Besides this, it has set up a Staff Appeal Panel to handle grievances to stabilize the teaching staff population and their morale. School administration policies and procedures are made known and open to the teaching staff. A Staff Development Fund was set up to support staff in their further studies to tackle

the ever-changing needs of education.

Apart from offering a diversified curriculum to meet the needs of students, the school encourages teachers to adopt various pedagogies to stimulate the interests of students. Visits, talks with public personalities, sharing sessions with alumni, and exchange programmes are among some of the more common ways employed to broaden students' learning experience. Internal and extra funds, some in the form of scholarships, are used to encourage boys to do better in both their academics and ECA. An Endowment Fund has been set up to help the financially needy by offering fee remissions. The school has raised funds to upgrade the infra-structure and the physical learning environment. Examples include topping up the School Improvement Programme, equipping all classrooms with computers and projectors and provisions for above-standard sporting facilities. Enumeration is kept low and affordable and the school bears all these extra costs.

Communication and co-operation with parents has been enhanced, not only through the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) and the regular circulars or meetings, but by inviting parents to be involved in administrative issues through channels such as the School Management Committee (SMC), the Appeals Panel, and bonus scheme for teachers. Parents are encouraged to voice their opinions at any time to the Headmaster (HM) and teachers. School management is always open for improvement.

1.3 Comprehensive Review methodology

- The Comprehensive Review (CR) was conducted on 6-9th, 12-13th & 15th January 2009 to evaluate the school performance in four domains of work; Management and Organisation, Learning and Teaching, Student Support and School Ethos and Student Performance. The CR team comprised 14 inspectors and a lay member.
- Before conducting the Review, the CR team scrutinised documents provided by the school and relevant information available from various sections of the Education Bureau (EDB).
- A preparatory visit to the school was made on 16th December 2008 to explain the objectives and operation of CR to the teaching staff and clarify their queries about the Review. A meeting was held with members of the School Committee (SC) to listen to their views on school management and development priorities. The HM and Headteacher (HT) of the Primary Division also took the opportunity to brief the CR team on the strengths and development priorities of the school.
- A meeting with parents was held on 16th December 2008 to solicit their views on the school. Over 200 parents attended the meeting.
- The CR team employed the following methods to review the performance of the school:

- scrutiny of documents and data provided by the school before and during the school visit;
 - observation of various school activities, including morning assemblies in both the Secondary (SD) and Primary Divisions (PD), PD 'School Cleaning Day', sports and music practices;
 - meetings and interviews with the HM and HT, Deputy Headmasters (DHM), Deputy Head Teacher (DHT), Assistant Head Teacher (AHT), panel chairpersons, heads of functional committees, teachers, school social worker/student guidance teachers and students;
 - scrutiny of samples of students' work and examination papers; and
 - observation of lessons.
- During the CR, 101 lessons taught by 101 teachers were observed. In addition, a total of 6 Religious Education (RE) lessons, 1 Moral Education and 2 Life Education lessons were also observed, as were three Physical Education (PE) lessons taught by outside coaches. The following subjects under the eight Key Learning Areas (KLA) were inspected:

KLA	Chi. Lang. Ed.	Eng. Lang. Ed.	Maths. Ed.	P.S.H. Ed.	Sci. Ed.	Tech. Ed.	Arts Ed.	P.E.
Subj. inspected	Chinese Language & Chinese Language & Culture	English Language & Use of English	Mathematics, Additional Mathematics, Pure Mathematics, Applied Mathematics & Mathematics & Statistics	Economics	Integrated Science & Chemistry	Computer Literacy, Computer & Information Technology, Computer Applications & Computer Studies (SD only)	Visual Arts	Physical Education
				General Studies for primary division				

- The findings presented in this report were derived from the corporate judgment of the CR team based on the information collected through the above mentioned methods during the review period.

2. Management and Organisation

- In support of its clear and concise mission statement, “to provide a liberal education based on Christian principles”, the school aims to realise a set of objectives that will prepare its students to find success in a pluralistic society. In summary, they centre on the development of the whole person, equipped with the knowledge, skills, and creativity to fully realise his potential across a range of intelligences. The aims envisage such personal qualities as trustworthiness, a sense of responsibility, integrity and considerateness. In pursuit of this goal the school has drawn up a three-year development plan (SDP) and short term annual plans (ASP), each of which centres on a limited set of priorities, or major concerns. It is the practice of DBS to produce separate plans for the primary (PD) and secondary divisions (SD). The current SDP of the PD is for the period 2007 to 2010 and for the SD 2006 to 2009. Both plans are appropriate to the needs of the students, the stage of the respective division’s development and both are in line with the direction and thrust of Hong Kong’s educational reform. There is an annual reporting process which aims to fully inform all stakeholders, particularly parents, as to the school’s current priorities and achievements, with reference to the major concerns. The Annual School Report (ASR) for each division is published on the school website, with hard copies also available, early in the subsequent school year.
- Overall, a cycle of planning, implementation and evaluation (P-I-E) is being developed to support school self-evaluation (SSE) and improvement. The importance for school improvement of SSE is understood by management and teachers and professional development in this context has been arranged. Help has been enlisted from a number of external sources, including higher education institutions and the Education Bureau (EDB). Whole-school staff development days are held several times a year and are used to discuss and share observations on the school’s performance under the headings of the four domains, as described in the EDB list of Performance Indicators.
- There is a logical and conventional organisational framework which allows for effective and efficient management of the school’s operation and the pursuit of its objectives. A clear & comprehensive structure, with lines of reporting/accountability, it describes the delegation of responsibilities by the SC through the HM, the HT and their separate senior management teams (SMT) to the middle managers, their subject departments and functional committees. The SC has appointed a sub-committee, chaired by one of its members, to oversee the work of the PD. This efficient arrangement ensures that the SC maintains a coherent view of the performance and progress of both divisions and supports the stated ambition to function as a ‘through-train’ primary / secondary school. The SC, with a membership of sixteen, has a strong commitment to the school and its stakeholders. With a large percentage of alumni amongst its members, it demonstrates a good understanding of the school’s long history and its current challenges in a changing educational landscape. This insight is enriched by members’ respect and affection for the school, its teachers and students, as well as by practical help in a variety of ways. Financial and legal advice, for example, is willingly made available to the school. An energetic and knowledgeable ‘working committee’, comprising nine SC members and ad hoc volunteers, meets more frequently than the SC itself and plays an active role in many

of the school's initiatives, such as the introduction of the International Baccalaureate Diploma (IBD).

- Appropriate use is made of resources, including specifically targeted additional government funding, and the school is very well equipped. The PD is housed in a recently purpose-built facility and a major upgrade of the campus is in progress, including a now completed new gymnasium and boarding accommodation. Efficient and effective budgeting procedures are overseen by the senior managers, the Financial Controller and an audit sub-committee of the SC.
- The school has formulated clear and comprehensive procedures, which are disseminated appropriately, to safeguard the interests of students and staff. Crisis management teams have been established in both divisions to ensure that all concerned are able to deal appropriately with unforeseen events and emergencies. There are comprehensive guidelines and procedures to ensure the school's safe and smooth daily operation. Staff and students cooperate well in daily routines. The clerical staff members have clearly defined roles and work efficiently to maintain the school's various administration systems. They are well supported by IT personnel, hardware and software.
- In accordance with the major concern of both divisions to increase teacher involvement in, and understanding of, school management and decision making, there is representation of stakeholders in the management structure through the two School Management Committees (SMC). A Consultative Committee (CC), including teachers, students, parents and alumni representatives, meets three times a year to discuss current issues, such as the introduction of a Student Union and its role with respect to the prefect system.
- The SMT of the PD comprises the HT, DHT and AHT. Although the last of these is new to the post this year, all are experienced primary educators. The three are joined by the subject leaders of English, Putonghua, Mathematics, General Studies and the Electives programme to form the Senior Teacher Team, which is a key decision-making group and meets fortnightly. The DHT chairs the Curriculum Development and Academic Affairs Committee (CDAAC), comprising subject leaders, and the AHT chairs the School Improvement Team (SIT) of senior managers and four middle managers. SMT members deliberately overlap their membership of these groups to ensure that they are mutually fully informed and to support consistency and efficiency.
- The SDP of the PD is expressed in terms of short, medium and long term objectives in management and organisation, learning and teaching and student support. The major concerns are multi-faceted and wide ranging, including developing the planning cycle itself, reviewing the assessment system and extending the scope of equal opportunities. The ASP for the current school year aligns well with the SDP and implementation strategies are described in a logical and detailed manner, both at the whole-school level and in separate subject department plans. The major concerns are derived from the analysis of the findings of EDB tools; the Assessment Programme for Affective and Social Outcomes (APASO), the Stakeholders' Survey of parental, teacher and student opinion, and Key Performance Measures. The school also uses its own tools in the form of questionnaires, focus interviews with

subject leaders and feedback from parent forums, SIT and SDAAC. The ASP also includes a detailed plan for the use of the Capacity Enhancement Grant (CEG) from the EDB. The plans of the separate departments are written to a common format, including an analysis of strengths and weaknesses and budget allocation.

- The ASR includes an end of year evaluation, at whole-school level, of achievements against the targets of the major concerns, an evaluation of the effectiveness of the use of the CEG and departmental evaluations written to a common format. The report, informed by data collection and analysis led by the Mathematics subject leader, is discussed by the senior managers, prior to the preparation of the subsequent ASP. Key issues for continued attention are identified, such as provision for learner differences. Thus, in the PD, a framework for P-I-E is being successfully developed, with all teachers fully informed at whole-school, subject department and functional committee levels.
- The SD also has, at present, three senior managers; the HM and two DHM, with the respective titles of Dean of Studies and Dean of Culture. A third deputy post of Dean of Students is vacant, following the retirement of the previous incumbent at the end of the last school year. A coordinator for the IBD, will be appointed this school year. The SMT meets informally but frequently in order for its members to mutually update and discuss currently emerging issues. The Dean of Studies has overall responsibility for academic affairs and line manages all heads of subject departments. He also oversees staff development, timetabling, examinations and school administration and is supported in these areas by other individuals and teams. To facilitate the administrative aspect of his role, he is based in the school's general office. The Dean of Studies and Dean of Culture also currently teach 15 lessons each cycle. The Dean of Culture is responsible for student support and chairs the Cultural Committee. His remit includes the fostering of DBS culture, oversight of the boarding school, Moral and Civic Education (MCE), Values Education, Guidance, the Arts and ECA. As the IBD Coordinator is not yet in post, preparation and planning for this innovation is being undertaken by the Dean of Culture, who also heads the Music department. As with his deputy colleague, he is assisted by other members of staff. The boarding school, for example, has its own manager and is also supported by the School Chaplain. The school leadership understands that the appointment of an additional deputy head to the SD SMT is a high priority. The current workload of the two Deans is unsustainable in the medium term. Consideration should also be given to the creation of an administrative/human resource officer post to assume responsibility for administrative duties. This, in turn, would allow the relocation of the Dean of Studies away from the general office to an area where he can perform his various roles with fewer interruptions.
- Subject departments enjoy a high level of autonomy and teachers and middle managers are trusted by the HM to perform their respective roles responsibly, as long as the teaching is seen to be effective. The HM receives an analysis, in standardized form, of the regular exercise book inspection from each subject department head.
- The monitoring of departmental reports is the responsibility of the Dean of Studies but there is insufficient time available for this task to be thoroughly executed. Periodic sampling is the adopted strategy. Trust, by senior managers, in the

professionalism of teachers is a positive attribute of the SD but the autonomy of the subject departments needs to be balanced with greater accountability. Closer monitoring of middle managers would reveal where support might be necessary as well as allowing the sharing of achievements of different departments. Trust and accountability are not incompatible.

- There are three major concerns in the current three-year plan for the SD, one each for the domains of management & organisation, curriculum and school culture. They were developed by the Dean of Studies, the Dean of Culture and the, then, Dean of Students and were informed by the views of the Academic and Cultural Committees. After discussion between the Deans and the HM, the concerns were submitted to the teaching staff for discussion before being ratified, as part of the SDP, by the SC. Departmental plans form part of the ASP and some of them include specific reference to the major concerns, although they vary in format and quality. Some, for example, list routine rather than developmental tasks, whilst the major concerns of others make scant reference to the school-level priorities.
- A key feature of SSE in the SD is the annual individual plan completed, to a common format, by every teacher. Those with additional school responsibilities complete further plans for these aspects of their work. The plans are submitted to the HM and each teacher has a face-to-face meeting with him to discuss them. There is also a required progress report on the plan's implementation, leading to a revised version, and an end of year summative report. This individual SSE exercise is seen to be developmental in nature and is separate from the annual appraisal process. Together with his lesson observation programme for newly appointed teachers, this represents a major investment of time and energy by the HM in the development of his teaching team and encourages a reflective and formative professional mind-set. SD teachers are involved in the SSE process at department and individual level, but the overall effectiveness of the framework would be enhanced by closer links between departments such that the objectives of the major concerns could be more consistently pursued. This could be developed from the good starting point of the whole-school sharing which takes place during staff development days.
- SSE in both divisions would be improved with the sharpening of success criteria so that they are more focused on learning outcomes for students. Evaluation of progress against targets needs to be more objective and qualitative in nature. Currently it is too subjective and descriptive of events held or programmes completed, with insufficient rigour in terms of measured gains in actual learning as opposed to quantified participation in events and activities.
- Students in the SD are able to use the 'Democracy Wall' to share their opinions with others and may also submit development proposals directly to the HM. These latter, when accepted, can attract start-up funding from the school. Their representatives are also able to raise issues in the CC. There is some gathering of primary students' views, particularly in relation to music and sports provision within the Electives programme. To further develop student independence, critical thinking and autonomy, the school as a whole could provide more opportunities for students to contribute towards school self-evaluation. Given the open-minded attitude which characterises teacher-student relationships at DBS, this would be a logical development. Students' feedback on teaching and learning could be systematically

sought and considered.

- The SC has high expectations of the school and offers its full support in a variety of ways. Some members attend staff development days as well as the more formal occasions, such as Speech Day. Individuals provide professional services, including educational consultancy. This latter category has included a classroom inspection programme by an SC member who is an education academic at a higher education institution. The working committee cooperates closely with teachers in, for example, the preparation for the introduction of the IBD.
- The HM's statement, entitled "Background, Culture, Learning", as submitted to the Review Team, is an eloquent, wise and honest description of the school, its values and heritage. It provides both a touchstone and a context for all teachers currently working for the success of its students. It reveals an intimate understanding of the school, its historical development and the forces that have influenced it and continue to shape it. More than a description of the life and mores of DBS, it highlights the challenges which a liberal regime poses in terms of student freedoms and responsibilities and their implications for their attitudes and behaviour. Elements of this reflection inform the school's major concerns.
- The HM and the HT work well together and the collaboration between senior managers of the two divisions provides a good model for the teaching team as a whole. The leadership teams of both divisions are committed and highly experienced professionals who have the best interests of students and colleagues at the forefront of their thinking. They work very hard to advance school improvement. Middle managers, for the most part, administer their departments well and the most effective of them give a strong and clear lead on curriculum & pedagogy. The inclusion of representatives of stakeholders in the SMC and CC, with the latter including student representatives, is a good step towards maximizing transparency in decision-making, a component of the major concerns for both divisions.
- The SMT members in the PD work very closely together and have high expectations of each other and of their colleagues. They enjoy the respect and recognition of the teaching team and are seen to be highly approachable and supportive. Together with the other members of the Senior Teacher Team, they share a fortnightly free lesson so that they can meet together. A bold and positive leadership strategy by senior staff members is that of having their lessons video-recorded for use on staff development days. Another strong feature, underpinning effective communication, is the weekly briefing by the HT of all teachers on current matters. The meeting itself is preceded by the issuing, via the school's intranet, of detailed and informative memoranda relevant to the agenda. Parents may also access the intranet and it is well used for multi-directional communication across the school community. Senior managers are highly visible and the HT attends every meeting of all departments to keep abreast of developments and to offer advice and support. Teachers in the PD express very strong appreciation of their leaders.
- PD teachers have very positive attitudes towards professional development and the quality of the appraisal process. The Staff Development Committee comprises the core subject department panel chairs, who are establishing a framework whereby

teachers have individual five-year professional development plans. Currently each teacher has a personal development plan, which has to align with the major concerns, and which is the subject of an annual discussion with the HT. There is specific job-related training for senior and middle managers. Good use is made of staff development days to discuss pedagogy and curriculum and there is a supportive and informative induction programme for newly appointed teachers. Peer lesson observation and linked collaborative lesson planning are systematic and well structured, taking place for all teachers at least twice-yearly. The HT observes the lessons of newly appointed teachers and offers supportive feedback. The three senior managers appraise the department heads and middle managers appraise, and are appraised by, their peers.

- The SD senior management team enjoys the respect and professional trust of the teachers and the DHM, in particular, are described as being very approachable and supportive. The HM is also seen as being open minded and willing to listen seriously to teachers' concerns. Although he adopts an open-door policy, the physical location of his office renders him less visible than otherwise might be the case. Apart from the daily running of the school, the HM is also heavily involved in fund-raising activities. Notwithstanding, the time given to individual teacher interviews is valued and appreciated. Newly appointed teachers find his feedback after lesson observation to be positive and helpful and his high level of trust in his teachers is manifest.
- Teachers are encouraged to participate in continuing professional development (CPD) and the Dean of Studies endeavours to alert individual teachers to training opportunities appropriate to their needs and responsibilities. As well as using its staff development days wisely, and in line with major concerns, the school invites external agencies to provide CPD for teachers. One such example is the participation in the 'Development of Language across the Curriculum for English-Medium Education' (DOLACEE) programme organised by EDB. Two teachers were trained as tutors to help colleagues to improve the effectiveness of using English in lessons. They, in turn, conducted a series of workshops for fellow teachers. The HM uses staff meetings to encourage teachers to involve themselves in workshops in preparation for the NSS curriculum (NSSC) and for the IBD. Most teachers have favourable attitudes towards both staff development and appraisal, finding them useful to their work. Appraisal operates annually on a line management basis, with the SMT members appraising heads of departments (HoD). Relationships between senior managers are professional and collegial.
- The HM also uses SD staff meetings to promote the pedagogical change that the school is aiming to accomplish. It aligns with the major concerns and the current thrust of Hong Kong's education reform. To illustrate and enhance understanding of good practice, he also draws on his lesson observations and describes successful teaching and classroom management. Less experienced teachers are encouraged to observe lessons taught by more established colleagues. It would also be helpful if some of the less experienced, but highly effective, teachers were observed by those who, although longer serving, might benefit from some pedagogical refreshment. In general, there is room across the SD, and between departments, for greater use of peer lesson observation and discussion. This would help to achieve a consistent and shared approach to advances in teaching and learning in line with the major concerns.

To support this, a more proactive approach to curriculum and pedagogical development could be expected from some SD middle managers.

- The school has taken significant steps towards the ultimate goal of achieving a seamless transition from primary to secondary for its students, and there is commitment in both divisions to this aim. The regular twice-yearly meetings between curriculum leaders will most likely lead towards greater continuity in curriculum and pedagogy. The annual joint staff development days are particularly valuable in this regard, as are regular discussions between senior managers. The opening contribution by the HM at primary division staff meetings helps to promote understanding and sends strong signals of intent. Feedback on student progress at the end of the G7 year to the primary division is also valuable, both for future planning and in recognising the essential role which the primary division performs. Joint school events, including Speech Day, School Fete, Swimming Gala and Sports Day, are all occasions to promote and celebrate unity. The use by older primary students of secondary specialist facilities helps, in a very practical way, to ease the transition to the 'big school'
- Given the very different contexts of the two divisions, they face dissimilar but complementary challenges. The pace of change in a large school with 140 years of history and tradition may, for example, be more modest than that which might reasonably be expected of a newly built and staffed school, opening in the middle of an era of major educational reform. On the other hand, the challenge of being accepted as an equal player in a relationship with a partner who is 135 years older, and has an established reputation, is not insignificant. However, despite these differences, there is strong evidence of a shared respect and understanding between the two divisions and a commitment to work towards a through-train reality built on the current beginnings.

3. Learning and Teaching

- The school aims to offer a curriculum that provides a comprehensive learning experience for all students, and the vision is to develop the potential of every student to his full. The school curriculum in all key learning areas (KLA) is, therefore, complemented by a broad range of learning activities or programmes, during and outside school hours, for students to stretch their potential and to have wider exposure. Due recognition is given to the different domains of education, namely the acquisition of knowledge, cultivation of learning and generic skills, and development of positive values and attitudes. In addition to the disciplinary studies, other elements such as MCE, values education and reading to learn are suitably reflected in some subject teaching and other school activities, including school assemblies. Some students, in particular the athletically most able, are permitted on some occasions to suspend their studies for a short period of time in order to take part in overseas training and competitions. A range of remedial and make-up programmes are offered to bridge such gaps and to provide additional support where necessary. In both the PD and the SD, guest speakers are often invited to give talks to widen students' exposure.
- The school recognises the importance of continuous curriculum development to meet emerging needs. In the SDP for 2006-2009, the SD emphasises the further development of the school curriculum to accommodate the diversified needs of students. There is fine-tuning of the existing curriculum to meet changes in the overall education sector. Preparation for the NSSC is finalised and the school is also paving the way for the introduction of the IBD programme, to provide an alternative pathway for students who plan to study overseas. In the PD, better coordination and collaboration among subject departments is stressed in the current SDP, and the short-term targets are to improve the effectiveness of learning and teaching, through improved pedagogical skills and assessment strategies and measures to cater for learner diversity. Both the PD and the SD are active in initiating curricular change, and the PD has successfully brought about changes at classroom level and in mobilising teachers for concerted effort.
- Annual programme planning and evaluation have been conducted by all departments as the way to chart and sustain development. There is a close alignment of the annual objectives of some subject departments with the major concerns of the school. Various measures have been adopted to support curriculum implementation, such as uploading teaching and learning materials onto the school's website or intranet for easy access and the appointment of level coordinators. There is also frequent communication with parents through circulars and letters to solicit their support. Appropriate timetabling gives sufficient time for outdoor activities, and the employment of a number of teaching assistants provides support. There is continuous upgrading of school facilities, such as the provision of a General Science laboratory in the SD, with ample up-to-date IT equipment to promote independent and diversified learning.
- The primary and secondary divisions have, in recent years, liaised closely and

collaborated in fostering an improved interface between the two phases. Subject panel chairpersons of the PD hold meetings with their counterparts in the SD to understand each other's curriculum. Students in the SD are also invited to organise activities on various subjects for the Grade 6 students in order to strengthen their interest and prepare them for secondary level learning.

- In providing a broad and balanced curriculum to stretch the potential of students, many subjects in the PD have enriched their subject content with extension components to set more challenging tasks for students. There are also the 'Lift-off', 'Supersize Me' programmes, and the Electives to meet the different needs of students. As demonstrated by the outstanding achievements made in competitions, the Supersize-Me programmes on Robotics and IT are effective in raising the more able students' interest in science and extending their potential. The Electives, during Friday afternoons, include an array of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities providing opportunities for personal, cultural and intellectual growth. 'Brain-based' learning has also been promoted recently. Teachers are provided with training so that they can adopt, more skilfully, various questioning techniques and students are accustomed to using higher order thinking skills in learning. The PD has also made commendable effort in helping students to develop healthy habits and a care and concern for the environment.
- In the PD, a survey of the learning styles of students from G3 to G6 has been conducted and teachers are encouraged to make reference to the survey results in order to employ the appropriate teaching strategies to improve student learning. Learning support is provided through the 'Lift-off' programme for students with learning difficulties in English, Chinese and/or Mathematics. Split-class teaching is arranged for G5 & G6 in English, enabling more teacher-student interaction inside the classroom. At the other end of the ability spectrum, a number of school-based activities under the 'Supersize Me' programme are organised for the more able students in G3 to G6 to stretch their potential. This covers a variety of KLA, including Chinese, English, Mathematics and Science. Students show outstanding performance in some related competitions outside school.
- In fine-tuning and developing its curriculum to accommodate the diversified learning needs of students, the SD is continually improving its implementation of the Young Scholar Project (YSP) in G7 to G9, as well as making changes at the senior secondary level. The YSP has been in operation for some years, and a large collection of resources has been built up for the implementation of the project. The YSP places a strong emphasis on integrated and independent learning, as well as on the use and development of generic skills. It is particularly valuable for the opportunities it provides for students to apply knowledge and skills in authentic contexts.
- The SD has made good use of the available time slots in the timetable, the special rooms and available human resources to offer the make-up programmes for students. Optional after-school tutorials are also offered for students who wish to have additional support. To fully realise the potential of students in the SD, the academically more able are allowed to take a 10th subject in the HKCE Examination. This is on condition that they make best use of their talents by working hard throughout their S4 and S5 years. Recently, an enhancement 'Grade 7X' class has been formed for the core subjects to more fully develop the potential of the more

able students. Students are also encouraged to further develop themselves by participating in inter-school competitions in sports, arts, mathematics, science and other areas where they have particular talent.

- The school includes elements of the 'Resources & Economic Activities' and 'Social Systems & Citizenship' strands in the Personal, Social and Humanities Education (PSHE) KLA through the Geography and History curricula at the junior secondary level. Going forward, the school could consider further enrichment of these aspects of PSHE.
- With much experience in running the YSP, the SD may look into the possibility of charting the profile for the development of project skills from G7 to G9, as some students still have difficulty in defining or limiting the scope of their study in G9. In catering for learner diversity at the system level, the SD may strengthen its support for the gifted by building up the system for early identification, delineating clearly the steps for securing expert support, keeping clear records or profiles for student learning, and encouraging teachers to undertake more professional development in this area.
- In managing curriculum and curriculum development, the DHT and the CDAAC are playing a strong leading role in the PD. The DHT works closely with the HoD, providing both coordinated support and autonomy in curriculum implementation. The CDAAC comprises both experienced teachers and representatives of the basic rank, giving a balanced mix to provide the necessary expertise and momentum to drive curriculum change. Curriculum management is well conducted at KLA level through the clear delineation of duties, documentation and procedures. Comprehensive subject memoranda, with clear guidelines, are in place to facilitate good coordination. Within each KLA/subject, teachers of the same level hold regular collaborative meetings to discuss teaching schedules and conduct co-planning to enhance the quality of learning and teaching. In the PD, there are fixed time slots in the timetable for relevant teachers to meet together to initiate, try out and work on innovative strategies.
- For the SD, the Dean of Studies is playing the key coordination role. The Academic Committee, which is chaired by the Headmaster himself and comprising all subject heads and committee coordinators, is the core body for giving advice on the development, implementation and review of all academic policies. Sub-committees and working groups, such as that for the NSS, are set up from time to time to give advice on major curriculum issues affecting the school. Monitoring of curriculum implementation, on the whole, is delegated to the subject heads at departmental level.
- While a variety of programmes and activities is implemented, there is a need to strengthen the monitoring mechanism and the evaluation of the programmes in the SD. This will help to ensure that the expected outcomes are achieved and ways to improve are identified. There could also be more professional sharing among teachers through collaborative lesson planning, peer lesson observation on specific teaching and learning strategies to improve pedagogical skills and enhance collaboration. The SD should adopt a greater range of strategies to address learning needs and to cater for learner diversity at classroom level.

- In preparing for NSS, there is a need to speed up teacher preparation through early enrolment in the relevant teacher development programmes. The SD may further refine the details of its NSSC, particularly taking students' views into consideration. The school is strongly encouraged to make reference to this aspect of student voice, given that one of its major concerns is to develop a curriculum which caters for the diversified needs of students. The school has provided a wide variety of learning experiences for students and is ready to make available a significant number of Other Learning Experiences (OLE) through the NSS, including a community services component. There is a need to encourage some students to better balance their involvement across the broad range of opportunities offered.
- To provide feedback for improvement in student learning, continuous assessment is practised in all subjects in both divisions. Self or peer assessment occurs in some subjects in the SD and in project learning in the PD. There is use of a variety of assessment modes to evaluate the performance of students in different areas, and generic skills are taken into account in some cases, giving a positive backwash effect to foster the further development of such skills. Assessment rubrics have been developed in some curriculum initiatives, such as project work.
- Students' assignments are checked annually, and the examination results are analysed to provide information on the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Various other means, such as a questionnaire survey for teachers and students, interviews and lesson observation have been used to evaluate the effectiveness of new strategies and initiatives.
- The PD has made good use of parents' views in curriculum evaluation. In formulating its assessment policy, the PD has seriously considered the effect of keen competition among students. A reform of assessment policy, with regard to grading, has been recently introduced with the intention of minimising any undesirable outcome. Assessment rubrics, however, are yet to be developed to improve continuous assessment in some skill-based areas and for the affective domain. Teachers of a few subjects might consider trying out a wider variety of assessment modes to avoid the over-reliance on paper-and-pencil tests, and some subject departments need to provide a consistent and fair scoring system for teachers to follow.
- Examination papers in the PD are properly set in terms of their coverage and level of difficulty. Teachers follow closely the guidelines for setting assessment. In some subjects, test items of different levels of difficulty are appropriately designed to challenge the students. Assignments are conscientiously marked and many teachers give quality feedback to recognise student's achievement and to inform them as to what they need to do to improve.
- In conducting their 'Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats' (SWOT) analysis, the DHT and the CDAAC make good use of evaluation data and information, such as feedback from the school management, annual reports from departments, the stakeholder survey and APASO data, as well as daily observation. The targets and priorities set in the annual plans are, on the whole, appropriate.
- In a number of subjects in the SD, students are responsible for keeping track of their own development, sometimes through electronic means. This helps to build up the

learning profiles of the students and encourages continuous self-learning. With the early inception of the electronic means of recording student performance, the school is looking into the migration of the present system to a Student Learning Profile (SLP) and is more ready to put in place the necessary mechanism for the NSS. Teachers, however, need a consistent approach in encouraging students to develop their learning and generic skills through managing their own profiles.

- The assignment and assessment policy of the SD could be further streamlined to balance the requirements of the different subjects and provide clearer guidance for teachers on the level of difficulty to be set. The school needs more high quality assignments that help, both to differentiate between students, and to encourage accomplishment. The streamlining should also address practical issues such as late submission of completed assignments and provision of clearer information for parents.
- For programme planning and programme evaluation, the success criteria and the methods of evaluation in some plans in both the PD and the SD need further deliberation to improve their quality. Analysis of evaluation results should focus on identifying ways to improve student learning, and the formulation of action plans for follow-up. There could be better use of the evaluation data to inform curriculum planning and pedagogy.
- On the whole, teachers are friendly and approachable. Their subject knowledge and pedagogical skills are generally good. There is good use of IT, and on-line resources have been developed in some subjects for students to improve their independent learning. Students across all levels have a good command of English, and some are very proficient English speakers and writers. With a positive attitude towards learning, they are highly attentive and confident. When given the opportunity, they also exhibit good creativity, as well as thinking and analytical skills.
- Lessons are mostly organised with a clear focus. Students' prior knowledge is appropriately elicited and the relevance of subject matter to daily life is suitably highlighted. In most lessons, commendable efforts are made to provide students with a range of learning tasks or activities to engage them in learning. Most students follow instructions closely, participate actively in learning activities and provide peer support to one another. Subject resources are well used to stimulate students' interest and facilitate their understanding. When appropriately motivated, students usually respond well to teachers' questions and challenges. In most cases, they show a good grasp of the lesson content and are generally capable of connecting new to existing knowledge, as well as applying the new learning when completing tasks.
- In the PD, teachers mostly have good rapport with students, and the learning atmosphere is usually inviting and pleasurable. In general, students enjoy the lessons and are usually fully engaged in the learning activities. Some are keen to raise questions to clarify and confirm that they understand correctly. Teachers have an appropriate expectation of student performance and, in some lessons, they ask a range of thought-provoking questions to stimulate higher order thinking. Given the opportunity, students are able to express personal opinions and give evaluative comments to their peers.

- In the SD, most teachers demonstrate good communication and presentation skills. Lesson delivery is mostly clear, concise and systematic. In some lessons, students exhibit good use of learning strategies to organise ideas and summarise information. This is probably due to the training provided, through the YSP, on learning strategies such as note-taking and mind mapping. On some occasions, students are rather passive and lack the initiative to apply the learning skills they have acquired. Pre-lesson preparation could be suitably strengthened so that students share the responsibility in learning. In some instances, students only give superficial answers to questions instead of applying their higher order thinking skills. Teachers could ask more probing and prompting questions to encourage students to think more thoroughly and deeply.
- Across all levels, the student-centred approach to learning and teaching is still being explored. There is a need to adopt a broader range of strategies and assessment tasks to optimise learning for the different ability groups. While challenging tasks could be offered more frequently to stretch the more able students, exercises or worksheets could be appropriately tailored to support those who experience more difficulty. During group discussion, teachers mostly render support by giving advice directly to individual groups. To further enhance students' thinking, more opportunities could be provided for them to discuss and explore concepts among themselves and to justify answers or provide alternative views. When assessing group performance, more specific feedback could be given to help students reflect on their own learning progress and to highlight areas for advancement.

4. Student Support and School Ethos

- Taking heed of the school's mission "to provide a liberal education based on Christian principles" and making reference to the different developmental stages of the students, the senior management takes the lead in determining the focuses for student development in both divisions and has adopted "Strengthen School Culture" as its major concern for the current three-year development cycle. In so doing, it has taken account of school-based data such as the Stakeholder Survey and the APASO. A wide range of religious and educational programmes and activities, well-aligned with the school's concern, are organised by the different student support teams/committees to foster a positive school culture. Increasing co-ordination among the various student support teams/committees is evident under the guidance of the HT in the PD and the co-ordination of the Dean of Culture in the SD, although planning overall in the SD could be strengthened. Some good joint efforts are also made in terms of support service provision and delivery but, to inform subsequent holistic planning, more collaborative effort is required in the evaluation of the overall effectiveness of student support rather than just of individual programmes/measures.
- In line with the school's mission, both divisions offer excellent opportunities for the holistic development of students. Significant resources and funding are injected to support the multi-faceted growth of students. A wide range of Electives, ECA and co-curricular activities, are provided to develop students' interest and maximize their potential in various arenas - intellectual, sports, musical, aesthetic and scientific inquiries. More than fifty Electives are offered by the PD and over a hundred co-curricular activities/ECA are offered by the SD. Learning outside the classroom is actively promoted and many student exchanges are arranged to widen their exposure and cultivate in them a sense of self-confidence. These include sports and music competitions and overseas and mainland visits, such as an Eco-educational tour to New Zealand and visits to Beijing and Ningbo schools. On the whole, students have good exposure to the outside world and an understanding of different cultures.
- The school places great emphasis on strengthening school culture, stressing both instillation of Christian and moral values and the maintenance of its unique cultural heritage. Good attitudes towards, for example, equal opportunities and respect for others, are fostered among students at an early age. Talks, exhibitions and visits are organised by the PD to increase students' awareness of equal opportunities and the importance of accepting, respecting and appreciating individual differences. To nurture students as responsible and contributing citizens, support teams/committees in the SD, to some extent, work and complement each other to help in the development of students' autonomy, self-discipline and a sense of responsibility. Clear school rules are set and prefects in the SD are empowered to oversee the discipline of their junior counterparts. There is, however, some inconsistency in their enforcement. Some are too strict and allow no explanations from their junior counterparts for their perceived misdeeds, whereas others are too lenient. Values education is systematically implemented through MCE, Religious Education, Ethics and Life Education lessons. Various positive discipline

reinforcement programmes, such as 'Best School Bus Lining Up Competition' and the 'Best Passenger Award', are in place in the PD to foster good behaviour and self-discipline. Environmental awareness is fostered by various campaigns and projects, such as the 'Whole-school Cleaning Day' in the PD and the YSP in the SD. Good attempts are made by the PD to develop a healthy lifestyle. There is also a well-designed 'Moral Education Student Journal' in the PD to raise students' awareness of the importance of, and strategies for, maintaining good mental and social health, such as positive thinking and helping each other. This could, however, be extended to the SD to further enhance the life skills and strategies of the students. Appropriate service opportunities, both within and outside school, are also provided to foster students' commitment to themselves and society. Students as young as those in G5 take part in community service and offer tutorials to junior students in a Tin Shui Wai school. Capitalising on the experience gained, the SD may also consider introducing service learning systematically as a continuation and to pave the way for the NSS. The students, on the whole, are willing to take up social responsibility. However, the sense of individual responsibility among SD students, for example, in taking care of their own belonging and the cleanliness of the school premises, needs further strengthening.

- The school is proud of its tradition and cultural heritage. "Unity in Diversity" is often used to sum up the school culture. When working with people with different opinions, the focus is on common ground, trusting that common ground leads to maximum common good. The school recognises that students do come in 'different shapes and sizes' and that they have different needs, likes and interests. It does not try to force students into moulds, but gives them freedom and opportunities to explore their potential in their own way and develop at their own pace. Students are encouraged to be independent, to manage themselves and their activities. With the aim of enhancing their independence and social skills, the school also expects that, at some time during students' secondary school years, they will experience life in a boarding environment. Such an arrangement has the potential to enhance, not only students' independence and social skills, but also their bonding to the school. Appropriate training is provided for student leaders, prefects and S6 students to enhance their leadership skills, such as team building. Clear guidelines on the planning, organising and evaluation of clubs/societies, Prefect Board and Student Council activities are provided to further sharpen these leadership skills. Secondary students are given great autonomy and ample opportunities to organise activities and student exchanges both within and outside school. Students' views and proposals on facility improvement and, for example, starting new clubs and societies are taken into consideration by the school. A good attempt is also made to involve students in making proposals for resource acquisition, within a set budget, to improve the learning and teaching facilities in both PD and SD. Student leaders are, on the whole, effective in planning activities and discharging their duties, although some of them need better time management so as to maintain a good balance between academic studies and ECA.
- The school offers appropriate support to students in their transition from primary to secondary schooling. Meetings are held regularly between members of the student support teams in both divisions and information on students requiring special educational attention is exchanged. The experience sharing session between the G7 and G6 students also helps the latter gain a better understanding of secondary school life. Joint-division events, such as the School Fete, help to promote

bonding and a sense of belonging to the school. The pairing of Big Brothers with Grade 7 students, who welcome it, is found to be valuable in helping the newly promoted more readily adjust to academic work and social life.

- A clear referral system and an early identification mechanism are in place and work well in identifying students at risk, with appropriate intervention arranged. A survey of students' learning styles is also conducted for G3 to G6 students, in addition to those for identification of students with special educational needs at G1. The findings of the surveys serve well to inform the teaching strategies to be adopted and support services to be provided. To address the developmental and special educational needs of the students, a wide range of suitable preventive and remedial support programmes are drawn up. These include, for example, the 'Grade1 Adaptation Programme', the use of video counseling to address the affective needs of gifted students in the PD, and the 'Youth Alpha' in the SD. These are complemented by activities co-organised with external organisations and succeed in nurturing students' growth and catering for their needs at different stages. There are thoughtfully designed workshops and programmes to extend the learning of the gifted students. These include the 'Supersize-Me' programme and the 'Talent Enhancement Workshop' in the PD and the 'Think Beyond the Box' programme in the SD. Appropriate individual counseling services and career guidance are given to students by teachers, Big Brothers, social workers and the alumni. There are also parent education programmes, such as 'Training Children's Self-discipline', to enhance parenting skills in nurturing students' growth. Traditionally, the SD focuses on remediation work, but a positive move is being made by the SD in the current year to involve less active students in the 'Personal Growth Programme' to enhance their sense of self-efficacy. Further efforts to include developmental programmes on, for example, time management and conflict resolution would further enhance the scope of support in the SD.
- The alumni treasure the school's heritage, show strong affiliation to the school and are enthusiastic in supporting its development and students' growth. They participate in a range of activities, such as the School Fete, and are ready to make various contributions such as serving as career mentors, sponsoring scholarships and providing job-shadowing placements to widen students' exposure. The 'old leaders' - comprising ex-Head and Second Prefects, maintain a strong bond with their alma mater and have formed the 'DBS Senior Prefects Club', a global network to provide both tangible and intangible support to the school. They give talks to students in the Morning Assemblies, share their experience with their junior counterparts and bring a real world perspective to students so that they can prepare themselves in a manner necessary for long term success.
- The school values home-school co-operation. Communication and co-operation with parents has been enhanced, not only through the PTA and the regular circulars and meetings, but by inviting parents to be involved in administrative issues through channels such as the SMC. Parents are supportive of the school. They are willing to serve as volunteers in school functions, sponsoring scholarships and raising funds to improve school facilities. Their views and suggestions on school improvement are collected regularly on both formal and informal occasions. There are, for example, meetings organised by the PTA every year, inviting parents to share their views with the HT in the PD. Suggestions made by parents are seriously considered by the school.

- 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 utilized to support school curricula and activities, such as leadership training, religious and social services. There are good cultural exchanges locally, overseas and with Mainland China, to broaden students' horizons. However, pedagogical exchanges among teachers and with other schools and institutions could be stepped up to improve teaching effectiveness.
- Overall, the school has a free and open learning atmosphere and students have a strong sense of pride in, and commitment to, the school. Teachers enjoy a good rapport with students and there is also strong bonding among the students themselves, particularly between those in the same school teams. Students clearly enjoy their school life and are ready to articulate their opinions and initiate ideas. The senior form students 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 in the SD are provided with, and use, formal and informal channels, such as the Student Council's meetings with the Headmaster and the Democracy Wall, to voice their opinions. For further enhancement, it would be beneficial if students' feedback on their experience of teaching and learning could be collected systematically to inform teachers' work on pedagogy.
- The school staff members respect each other and cooperate well. The need to accommodate SD teachers in staff rooms and special rooms on different levels of the school building does not prevent staff harmony, even though relationships may not be particularly close. Teachers, in general, are aware of the need for change for the school to progress. A culture which is fully accepting of peer observation and collaborative lesson preparation is well developed in the PD. More pedagogical debate and discussion among teachers in the SD is needed to enhance professionalism. A culture which sufficiently stresses praise for, and recognition of, students could also be further fostered.

5. Student Performance

- Students have a positive self image. They are confident and have a high sense of achievement. They are also competitive and have strong drives to strive for excellence. Students, on the whole, have a positive attitude towards learning. Primary students are self-motivated and eager to learn, demonstrating patience and perseverance in tackling challenging learning tasks.
- Students are pleasant and helpful. They enjoy school life and are proud of being a member of the school. Student leaders, such as prefects and club chairpersons, are responsible and presentable. They have a strong sense of commitment and those in the SD demonstrate good leadership skills in organizing various ECA. For the most part, students demonstrate good social and interpersonal skills and enjoy harmonious relationships with teachers and peers. However, the self-discipline and self-management of some students needs to be enhanced so that they have, and demonstrate, greater respect for others and become more cooperative.
- Primary students' assessment results in Chinese, English and Mathematics are excellent, with the performance of KS 2 students being relatively better. Among the three subjects, students perform best in English.
- 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 (HKCEE) were higher than the territory averages. In comparison with schools with similar S1 intake, the school performed barely satisfactorily in the HKCEE for the past three years and the performance was slightly below the expected level. In the Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination, the percentages of students in the school awarded the minimum entrance requirements for local degree courses were well above the territory averages over the past three years.
- Students are enthusiastic in taking part in various ECA organised by the school. They are also keen to participate in a wide range of inter-school activities, including academic, sports, music, drama and verse speaking, achieving impressive results. For example, primary students show particular interest in science and gain excellent results in many science competitions. Students' performance in sports and music is particularly outstanding. They consistently achieve very good results in inter-school sports competitions. For example, last year the school won the Gold Medal in the Kowloon East Region Primary Schools Sports Award and the championship in the Bauhinia Bowl Award for boys schools in Hong Kong. Some athletically talented students are selected to represent Hong Kong in international sports events. Students participate actively in the Hong Kong Schools Music Festival and are awarded numerous prizes in many events. In particular, the SD won the Most Outstanding School Award and the Best Choir in 2006-07. The DBS school choir has entered international music competitions and sustained excellent results for many years.

6. Concluding Remarks

DBS is a very successful school with a strong and positive culture, rooted in a long and distinguished history. There is a shared vision underpinned by clearly stated core values and a pervading sense of tradition. The leadership is forward-looking and innovative, maintaining a balance between inherited practices and positioning for the future. Collaboration between the primary and secondary divisions at management and teacher levels is very good, characterized by mutual respect and professional understanding. The teachers are knowledgeable and hard-working, enjoying good relationships with their students and with each other. Students have good attitudes towards school-life, participating enthusiastically in the many extra-curricular opportunities which the school offers. They are confident and demonstrate good interpersonal skills, working and playing well together. Student leaders demonstrate fine leadership qualities. A significant number of students achieve excellence, particularly in sports and music, engaging in competitions and performances up to international level. Support for students is good and they respond by demonstrating a high level of commitment, taking pride in their school. Parents value the school highly and offer excellent support, as does the very active alumni association. The school is delivering the quality of educational experience and student achievement commensurate with its initial proposal to secure the Direct Subsidy Scheme status.

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

6.1 Management and Organisation

- The link between evaluation and planning could be improved with the formulation of more explicit targets, specific success criteria and a sharper focus on outcomes, particularly described in terms of student learning. Data derived from assessment could be used to inform reflection on teaching strategies and styles which should then feed forward into the planning process.
- The monitoring role of senior management in respect to planning and implementation in the Secondary Division needs to be more rigorous to ensure support and accountability at department leadership level. This latter should be a high priority for the school leadership, with the planned increase in size of the school's senior management team being a potentially enabling factor. The role of middle managers, both as curriculum leaders and as agents for cross department coherence, needs strengthening in order to boost development on a whole-school basis.

6.2 Learning and Teaching

- In order to further promote the pedagogy associated with the major concerns, there needs to be a systematic whole-school programme of peer lesson observation, perhaps based on the current pattern in the Primary Division. With agreed focuses and post observation discussion, this would help to achieve a

consistent and shared approach to teaching which encourages, for example, greater student independence and self-responsibility in learning.

- Given its commitment to addressing the diverse needs of students, the school should review its provision for learner differences. Organisational measures, including remedial classes and the new extension class at G7 in the Secondary Division and analysis of learning styles in the Primary division, should be complemented by classroom strategies, such as the use of more graded questions and differentiated tasks, to better match students' abilities. There is a need, in the Secondary Division, for more attention to be given to provision for the academically more able students, leading to higher expectations and a greater degree of challenge to fully develop their potential.

6.3 Student Support and School Ethos

- In order to achieve its goal of helping students to better manage the freedom which the school affords them, there needs to be an evaluation of the overall effectiveness of student support to consider together the results of the separate programmes and measures. To augment the very good work done to promote leadership, there needs to be greater awareness and more concerted action by all teachers with respect to cultivating a higher level of personal and social responsibility among students. Whilst the school has correctly identified a need for better time-management and punctuality, for example, there needs to be more daily positive reinforcement by teachers of these and other good habits. Whilst the school's many achievements testify to the positive outcomes for students of a competitive spirit, there needs to be a conscious effort to balance this by stressing the need for empathy and the exercise of personal restraint for the common good.