External School Review Report

St. Rose of Lima's College

Address of School: 29 Ngan Shing Street, Shatin, New Territories

External Review Period: on 8-10, 16 and 21 December 2010

Quality Assurance Division
Education Bureau

August 2011
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**Education Bureau**  
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (2011)

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1. Introduction

1.1 External review methodology

- The previous external school review (ESR) was conducted on 20 and 26-31 January 2005.
- The ESR team conducted the review on 8-10, 16 and 21 December 2010 to evaluate the school performance in school self-evaluation (SSE) and other areas of school work.
- The ESR team employed the following methods to understand the situation of the school:
  - Scrutiny of documents and data provided by the school before and during the school visit;
  - Observation of 48 lessons taught by 48 teachers;
  - Observation of various school activities, including morning assemblies, Drop Everything And Read (DEAR) programme, Home Room Periods, moral and civic education (MCE) lessons, Singing Contest, lunchtime and after-school activities;
  - Meetings and interviews with the School Supervisor and members of the School Management Committee (SMC), Principal, Vice Principal, heads of departments and functional teams, teachers, school social worker, parents and students; and
  - Shadowing of a sample of three students for a half-day period to observe their school life.
- The review findings presented in this report were derived from the corporate judgement of the ESR team based on the information collected through the above methods.

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

- St. Rose of Lima’s College was founded on the 23rd February, 1948 by the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary (F.M.M.). In the spirit of a loving family, devoted to serving one another, and in order to fulfill the school motto ‘Through Charity to Truth’, the school aims to provide quality education by proclaiming the Gospel and teaching moral values. To fulfill its vision, the school strives to meet the needs of each student by guiding her intellectual, moral, emotional, physical, social and spiritual formation; to emphasise the professional qualifications of teachers and encourage them in life-long learning; to foster co-operation among the three schools, the kindergarten, primary and secondary schools, under the F.M.M. so that they will learn and benefit from one another; and to establish close relationship with parents and elicit their co-operation.
• The school development goals are to uphold its traditions, provide quality learning environment (loving and caring with English as the medium of communication) and various learning experiences for students, and equip them for entering the tertiary institutions.

• The class structure and number of students of the 2010/11 school year are as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>S1</th>
<th>S2</th>
<th>S3</th>
<th>S4</th>
<th>S5</th>
<th>S6</th>
<th>S7</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of Classes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of students</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>957</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• To search for continuous self-improvement, the school has set up an SSE mechanism to review the progress of implementation of school plans. All departments and functional teams produce annual programme plans according to the evaluation findings of the previous school year and aligning with the school’s major concerns. Evaluation, with qualitative and/or quantitative analyses, is conducted by all departments and functional teams after some activities and at the end of the school year. Innovations and new activities, discussed during the departmental meetings, heads’ meetings and staff meetings, are incorporated according to students’ needs.

• The following measures have been taken by the school to follow up on the suggestions made in the previous ESR report:
  - A School Executive Committee, comprising different stakeholders, was set up (i) to advise the SMC on all matters relating to the school goals, activities and budget; and (ii) to promote communication between the SMC and the school, within the school, and between the school and its stakeholders.
  - A formal staff appraisal system was established for enhancing professional accountability.
  - Meetings for all heads of departments and functional teams are held regularly in formulating school policies and enhancing collaboration among the middle managers for effective implementation.
  - Subject-based questionnaires, markers’ reports for the half-yearly and final examinations and external reports, e.g. the Territory-wide System Assessment reports, are adopted for evaluation and future planning on learning and teaching.
  - Lesson observations are extensively carried out for enhancing the effectiveness of learning and teaching.
  - More school sports teams were established in promoting physical development among students on top of the formal curriculum.
2. School Performance

2.1 Continuous Development of the School

- The school’s vision and mission are clear, with a strong emphasis on providing students with an all-round education that is infused with Christian values. They are in line with the aims of curriculum reform and social expectations of cultivating students’ capacity for life-long and life-wide learning. In the current and previous school development planning cycles, the major challenges facing the school range from the preparation for the implementation of the new senior secondary (NSS) curriculum, through the change of school leadership, to the perceived need of catering for learner diversity.

- The school leadership team, including the SMC Chairperson/School Supervisor, the Principal, the Vice Principals (VP) and some middle managers, has undergone substantial change in membership in recent years. It began with a long-serving VP assuming principalship in 2007 and a Reverend Sister on the teaching staff taking up the role as School Supervisor in early 2010. Upon the departure of an acting VP, the VP, a long-serving teacher, took up the responsibilities of overseeing both academic and student affairs in this school year. The direction of school development has been steered by the Principal and the VP, who have been working in close partnership in the school for many years. With the dedicated efforts of the school management and the conscientious teaching staff, the school has been coping well with the challenges and striving to uphold its traditions in fostering the whole-person development of students through a loving and caring family environment for enhancing learning and teaching.

- Active steps have been taken to follow up on the key recommendations of the previous ESR report. Sustained efforts and noticeable improvements have been made in the use of the SSE mechanism in the planning-implementation-evaluation (P-I-E) cycle for continuous school improvement. The school is developing a self-reflective culture across different levels, ranging from the school management, departments and functional teams, to individual teachers and students. Teachers are, generally, positive and reflective about sharing their views on school development. Teachers actively engage in reflecting on their practice through peer lesson observation and professional sharing. Much has been done to promote students’ reflection and good progress has been made.

- Under the new leadership team, the school has made strenuous efforts to enhance communication between the management and the teaching staff, and to promote staff collaboration. Through weekly meetings of about 20 heads of departments and functional teams, a team approach to school management has been adopted, with an emphasis on shared leadership and collective responsibility. Good progress has been made in strengthening curriculum leadership and enhancing the information technology facilities for interactive learning and teaching. To foster communication and enhance effectiveness in decision making, the school administration framework has been restructured to meet the school development needs over the years. For example, the School Executive Committee (SEC), comprising the Supervisor, the Principal, the VP, two elected teacher
representatives, and representatives of the Past Students’ Association and the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), was set up to advise the SMC on school level policies, budgeting and tendering of school services for the benefit of student development. Initial approval of the budgets of departments/functional teams is given by the Principal. Annual school budgets and financial reports are presented at the SEC meeting and then endorsed by the SMC. To raise the transparency of financial management, a financial committee could be set up to widen teachers’ participation in approving, monitoring and reviewing the budget plans prepared by departments and functional teams. To further enhance communication and transparency of school policies among different stakeholders, the school development plans (SDP), annual school plans (ASP) and school reports (SR), incorporating the school financial reports, could be uploaded in a timely manner onto the school’s website.

- The school management is reflective in school planning in pursuit of excellence and is keeping pace with the curriculum and pedagogical change promoted in the territory-wide curriculum reform. In the previous school development planning cycle (2006/07–2008/09), priority was given to improving the learning and teaching strategies, strengthening students’ self-discipline and sense of responsibility, and preparing for the NSS curriculum. Clear goals were set and, generally, well-addressed at school and subject department/functional team levels. To build on the initial success and to foster continuous curriculum and pedagogical change, ‘Enhancing the English Learning Environment, Promoting a Healthy Mind and Implementing the NSS curriculum’ have been identified as the three major concerns in the current SDP (2009/10–2011/12).

- The two SDP are well-linked and strategies that were partially achieved in the previous SDP, such as developing higher order thinking, questioning techniques and catering for learner diversity, are incorporated as continued foci for the first and third major concerns of the current SDP. Moreover, there is growing awareness of the need to sustain the efforts made to develop students’ positive attitudes and values, such as coping with stress and anxiety, and equipping them well for the challenges facing them now and in the future. More cross-departmental and functional team collaboration has been achieved in the implementation, such as the Moral Education and Religious Education Departments and the Student Support Team working collaboratively on promoting a healthy mind. School development planning and evaluation processes are generally well-informed and evidence-based. The NSS curriculum has been implemented smoothly, including the preparation for the infrastructure, manpower and subject combination. Teachers’ readiness, which is critical for curriculum development and implementation, has been given due consideration and their professional development (PD) needs have been addressed by a series of programmes, with good support from the Education Bureau (EDB), external bodies and professionals.

- Under the lead of the School Development Committee (SDC) in coordinating SSE work and with the use of the Framework of Performance Indicators for Hong Kong Schools developed by EDB, the whole school conducted a holistic review in the first term of the current school year. The school is able to identify what needs to change and use evaluation data, including assessment data and perspectives of various stakeholders, collected via the EDB and school-based evaluation tools, to inform future planning. However, the holistic review should synchronise with the school development planning cycle to better inform planning.

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• The Principal and the VP regularly attend the meetings of departments/functional teams, offering advice and seeking teachers’ views in the process of school development planning and implementation. Planning draws on evaluation data and findings that are derived from year-end focused review meetings and evaluation reports by departments and functional teams. The Principal and the VP have been working collaboratively to formulate the draft school major concerns, the SDP, ASP and to consolidate the SR for discussion at the ‘all heads’ meetings and staff meetings. A more participatory approach to involving more teaching staff in formulating and decision making of school policies in the early stages could contribute to consensus building and greater ownership and trust. At present, various communication channels are in place for teachers to express their views to the school management, and teachers could be encouraged to make full use of them to contribute their input on school policy making.

• The SR comprises evaluation of the school’s major concerns, summarising achievements and reflections. Slight modifications have been made in the next ASP on the focus of work and strategies adopted. Subject departments and functional teams, where appropriate, also formulate concrete work plans in line with the concerns. Review is generally conducted by subject panels and teams with rigour, but for some, it has been conducted on an event or programme basis. Qualitative criteria are mostly used but some are not concrete enough. In this connection, a balance needs to be struck between the use of qualitative and quantitative targets to guide evaluation at school and department/functional team levels and to help generate a clearer picture of what and how improvement has taken place. This calls for the setting of more specific progressive targets in terms of expected improvement in students’ learning and development. There is also room for streamlining documentation and evaluation work at department/functional team level. To enhance the impact of SSE on school development, the role of the SDC could be strengthened in strategic school planning and monitoring of SSE work, for example, by overseeing and coordinating the P-I-E of school’s major concerns. More attention could be given to target-setting and target-oriented evaluation of the overall effectiveness of the school development priorities and coordinating the design of questionnaire survey to sharpen the evaluation focus on the effectiveness of school-level strategies in meeting their targets. In this respect, more deliberation among staff could be encouraged so that there can be better shared expectations to guide planning and evaluation.

• Additional resources, including grants for specific purposes, are effectively deployed in supporting the implementation of school plans and student learning and development. Through the recruitment of additional teachers and teaching assistants, space is duly created for teachers to engage in curriculum development in preparation for the NSS curriculum, professional collaboration and PD programmes. The staff development plan is aligned with the school’s major concerns, for example, for promoting a healthy mind, and the issue of stress management was well-addressed in a staff development day. Building on the school’s existing strengths, the Staff Development and Mentoring Committee has further enhanced its role in implementing the two-year mentoring programme, conducted by experienced teachers for all new members of staff. A close relationship between mentors and mentees has been established to facilitate the exchange of experience for students’ benefit. The school has adopted a comprehensive staff performance appraisal system covering teaching and non-teaching duties. At present, the Principal has taken up the responsibility of
consolidating all the appraisal data and conducting personal interviews. As the appraisal system has been in place for two years, there could be an overall review to refine it by seeking teachers’ feedback and incorporating a formal appraisal for the Principal. The appraisal data could be more systematically consolidated to better inform the school management of teachers’ PD needs. With the joint-school provision of training for middle managers on lesson critique in the pipeline, they could be better equipped to take up a more prominent supervisory role in monitoring curriculum implementation and conducting appraisal interviews.

• School development is strongly supported by the SMC, which comprises dedicated Sisters of the School Sponsoring Body, the Principal and the VP, who are all knowledgeable professionals in education, sharing the same values and educational goals. The Supervisor provides strong spiritual support to the students and keeps close contact with them and their teachers. In her role as Supervisor, she has attended meetings of the Religious Education Department and the recently set up Moral Education (ME) Core Group to provide guidance for the development of new initiatives. Besides conducting lesson observations together with the Principal, she regularly attends the meetings for all heads of departments and functional teams, as an observer, to understand the process of school development planning and implementation. Through conducting the year-end interviews with individual teachers, she proactively seeks to understand teachers’ needs and their views on the school’s development and management.

• Being the first layman as head of the girls’ school, the Principal embraces the challenges of upholding the school’s traditional values and building on its strengths, while setting the direction for its long-term development. A range of improvement measures has been carried out, including reviewing and refining the administration mechanism and promoting teachers’ PD. He is committed and shouldering the overall responsibility in steering and supervision. He tries hard to provide the needed support, encompassing trust, autonomy and space, for colleagues to plan, do and improve their work. However, there could be more delegation and empowerment of staff for succession planning for school leadership. To further facilitate pedagogical change in response to the curriculum reform, in addition to observing new and senior teachers, the Principal could arrange for more targeted lesson observation to help teachers develop and use classroom strategies for catering for learner diversity and for promoting assessment for learning.

• The VP is capable and renders very good assistance to the Principal. She is devoted, conscientious and has a strong sense of belonging to the school. She has good professional knowledge of the domains under her charge and is playing a leading role in the smooth implementation and further planning for the NSS curriculum. The senior and middle managers are committed to the school’s mission and clearly stated educational goals. The middle managers are, generally, competent and committed to the development of subject departments and functional teams in their purview. They keep themselves updated through continuing PD, and are knowledgeable and dedicated professionals who work hard in the interest of their students. They perform their coordinating and advisory roles competently but could work to enhance their monitoring roles.
2.2 Learning and Teaching

- The school has formulated clear curriculum goals in line with the aims of the curriculum reform and its mission to promote students' all-round development. A broad and balanced curriculum is offered, through a good variety of academic subjects and co-curricular activities, to enrich students' learning experiences. Sustained efforts have been made in nurturing students' character formation and spiritual growth. In the current SDP, 'Promoting a Healthy Mind' has been set as a major concern, with specific themes being set to highlight the yearly focuses. Subject department plans are, generally, aligned with those for the school as a whole, incorporating the relevant themes into their teaching plans. Values education is well integrated in the school curriculum. MCE and Religious Education lessons are suitably used to enhance students' awareness of social and national issues, as well as to foster their positive values and attitudes. In addition, programmes and activities arranged during Monday Talk and Home Room Periods have also benefited students' moral and spiritual development.

- In line with one of the major concerns, due emphasis has been placed on enhancing the school's English-learning environment and a whole-school approach has been adopted to maximise students' use of English on campus. The English Key Learning Area (KLA) curriculum has been enriched by effectively incorporating elements of language arts into the junior-form English curriculum to strengthen the interface between the junior and secondary curricula. The English and English Literature Department has collaborated well with the Liberal Studies (LS) Department in enhancing students' writing and analytical skills by teaching the techniques of identifying authors' views when reading articles. Besides using English as the medium of instruction (MOI), the school has encouraged the use of English as the medium of communication between teachers and students. Most students demonstrate confidence in using English to communicate in the classroom and during after-school activities. Students who are more enthusiastic in learning English are recruited as 'English Buddies' to help organise English learning activities and participate in various external competitions to widen their horizons. The school has successfully cultivated a favourable English-learning environment.

- The school has, on the whole, made good preparations for the smooth implementation of the NSS curriculum, which is another major concern in the current SDP. Good efforts have been made in providing a wide choice of elective subjects to suit students' learning needs and abilities. Steady progress has been made in implementing the School-based Assessment (SBA). An implementation plan has been properly formulated with clear guidelines and schedules to coordinate the completion of various stages of assessment by different subject departments. Relevant information about the SBA policy and arrangements has also been conveyed to parents and students concerned. Some subject departments have revised their junior-form curricula, with appropriate restructuring of topics, to improve articulation of the necessary knowledge and skills between the junior and senior secondary curricula. The Cross-curricular Project (CCP) is well-planned to enable junior-form students to develop their self-directed learning skills. A variety of project-learning skills is explicitly taught across the junior secondary levels and students can apply their knowledge and skills in context. Conducting an issue-based investigation in the CCP
provides students with useful training for the Independent Enquiry Studies (IES) in NSS LS.

- In relation to Other Learning Experiences (OLE), an array of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities (ECA) has been provided to enrich students' learning and exposure. Structured lessons for physical and aesthetic development, together with OLE Days, the 'Academic Fortnight', and service learning activities, have provided good opportunities for the all-round development of students. To further promote a sense of ownership in their learning, the school could solicit students' views on the choice of OLE activities provided. Ample opportunities are provided for students to reflect on their learning in individual activities, yet they would benefit even more if they could be given more specific guidance on how to make use of the Student Learning Profile to develop the skills of reflective learning.

- The school has deployed additional resources to arrange smaller groups for the teaching of core subjects in the junior forms, to help students of different abilities attain a stronger foundation. After-school enhancement classes for the more able students and 'betterment classes' for those who need improvement are also arranged for the core subjects. However, there could be more emphasis on catering for the diverse learning needs of students in class teaching.

- A clear monitoring mechanism is in place where lesson observations and inspection of assignments and assessment papers are conducted by the Principal, the VP and the heads of departments to ensure the quality of curriculum implementation. Programme plans of most subject departments include strategies to address the school's major concerns and some departments have made good use of evaluation results to inform future planning. Some departments have engaged in collaborative efforts on curriculum development, most notably through the implementation of MCE, CCP and LS. The development of a school-based curriculum is well-supported by a group of dedicated teachers who participate actively in training courses and engage themselves in a professional discourse about curriculum issues during department sharing and staff development days. To build on the existing foundation, the school could further promote cross-departmental and cross-year level sharing so that good practice may be widely disseminated and collaboration between departments strengthened.

- The school has established a clear framework to guide assessment practices and each subject department has the autonomy to devise their own assessment policies to address the school's major concerns and their specific requirements. The subject departments conduct continuous assessment and students are encouraged to engage in reflective thinking through the use of an assessment rubric, students' self-assessment, peer assessment and parents' feedback. The assessment contents facilitate the mastery of the subject knowledge and cultivate the development of students' generic skills, especially those of critical thinking and creativity. As part of the panel review, evaluation of student performance in internal and external assessments is well supported by statistical analysis of assessment data. Follow-up measures, including making appropriate adjustments to curriculum and teaching plans and enhancement and 'betterment' classes, are devised to improve student learning. Some subject departments have made good use of assessment data to conduct in-depth analysis of students' performance and their own student questionnaire survey data on learning and teaching, and are able to make specific suggestions to improve curriculum plans.
and teaching strategies that address students’ learning difficulties. Such good practice could be shared and promoted across different KLA, and the findings of review could be further used to inform pedagogy. The school systematically and comprehensively maintains records of students’ academic performance and non-academic performance and experiences, thus providing a basis for continuous reflection.

- A good rapport has been established between teachers and students in lessons, and a positive and supportive learning atmosphere has been created. Learning objectives are, mostly, shared with students. Teachers are committed, friendly and approachable while maintaining an orderly classroom with well-established routines. In general, teachers have good subject knowledge and prepare their lessons well, with a variety of learning tasks. Teaching resources, such as newspaper articles, PowerPoint slides and video clips, are often used to facilitate students’ acquisition of subject knowledge and development of generic skills. Students are self-disciplined and highly motivated to learn. They are attentive, follow instructions closely and are motivated to answer teachers’ questions. They are able to improve their learning with the feedback from teachers and peers as well as by their own reflection.

- In line with one of the major concerns, due emphasis has been placed on enhancing the school’s English-learning environment. In lessons where English is adopted as the MOI, communication between teachers and students and among students is effective. Teachers have good presentation skills and students, in general, can confidently communicate with teachers and peers in fluent English. They can also present their ideas with a variety of language patterns in group discussions and class presentations, demonstrating mastery of a wide range of vocabulary, complex sentence structures and ability to give elaborated responses.

- Implementing the NSS curriculum by equipping students with generic skills is also one of the school’s major concerns. Teachers often arrange group activities to enhance students’ peer interaction and collaborative learning. Students can apply their prior knowledge and draw on their daily-life experiences to complete learning tasks, both individually and in groups. They display good collaboration skills and are, mostly, engaged in fruitful peer interaction.

- In lessons where learning and teaching is more effective, students have undertaken pre-lesson preparation, thus enhancing teacher-student and student-student interaction and the depth of group discussion. A range of questions is adopted to stimulate critical thinking or to nurture students’ creativity. Students are keen to share their views, conduct self- and peer-assessments and receive feedback from their peers. Teachers serve well as facilitators and scaffold student learning by providing the necessary support and language input. Some teachers have adopted strategies for putting assessment for learning into practice. They pay close attention to student progress, observe closely students’ performance and give appropriate support. Through effective questioning, these teachers provide timely and good quality feedback to facilitate learning and help students make improvement. Students can apply self-directed learning strategies to organise and consolidate their learning. Both extended and consolidated learning tasks are assigned to students as part of the learning process.
• Some lessons, however, tend to be teacher-directed, and the choice of teaching content, the coverage and questions posed are not commensurate with the students’ ability. Teachers’ expectation could be raised, with more interactive learning tasks provided to stimulate students’ interest and participation. In some group activities teacher expectation could be higher, clearer pre-task guidance could be given to students, and peer feedback could be encouraged to increase peer learning opportunities and provoke more in-depth discussion. While teachers are, generally, able to monitor learning progress and provide timely individual support to students in class, there is a need to cater for diverse learning needs and abilities by employing a wider range of teaching strategies and the use of assessment for learning. To further stretch the ability of students, teachers could provide more opportunities to encourage enquiry in their learning process. To encourage independent learning, students could be taught and encouraged to apply learning strategies, such as note-taking and the use of graphic organisers, to consolidate and extend their learning.

2.3 Student Support and School Ethos

• The school is committed to its mission to provide students with an all-round education, based on Christian values. A whole-school approach is adopted in the support of student development and a range of support services is organised by various functional teams and committees to cater for students’ different growth needs. Such practice is reflected in the successful cultivation of a school environment which is marked by close and harmonious peer and teacher-student relationships and their caring for others. Relevant programmes, which align well with the school’s major concerns and yearly theme, are well implemented by various functional teams and committees. These programmes are duly evaluated, including with views collected from teachers and students through questionnaires and interviews, and findings are used to inform the development plan for the following year. The school has also made good use of the Assessment Program for Affective and Social Outcomes data to inform planning. For instance, with reference to the data collected and in order to encourage students to stay positive in the face of adversity, different programmes for relieving students’ stress from examinations are implemented. Teachers are committed, enthusiastic and always ready to help students in need. Their team spirit and the informal communication network contribute positively to collaboration among various teams. At present, the VP oversees the planning, implementation and evaluation of student support services and, in general, student support services are smoothly run. Nevertheless, the school could consider establishing a way to forge stronger partnership among different teams to facilitate overall planning and evaluation of their programmes. To sharpen the focus of evaluation, more emphasis could be put on reviewing their implementation strategies, related to the targets of the school major concerns, rather than reviewing routine programme work.

• In line with the school’s motto ‘Through Charity to Truth’, a warm school culture, grounded in Christianity, has been cultivated for supporting the development of positive values and attitudes among students through values education. The ME Core Group has been recently set up to help students uphold the virtues of Rosians and conscious effort has been made to implement
a variety of programmes in the junior forms to address the themes of these two school years – 'to promote good manner, sense of responsibility and perseverance' and 'the spirit of love and care of students'. In addition to Religious Education, a well-structured school-based MCE curriculum is implemented across all year levels. The Home Room Periods have been restructured this year to complement the ME lessons to strengthen the effectiveness of MCE. Complementing morning assemblies, the MCE curriculum is, on the whole, comprehensive and covers different areas of whole person development. Daily life topics and current social issues are used in a timely manner to guide students in reflection. The school also provides opportunities for students at all year levels to organise, participate in and learn through voluntary service. These activities are effective in cultivating among students the positive attitudes of empathy and caring for the community.

- The school attaches much importance to enforcing students’ self-discipline and the Discipline Board works in close partnership with the Guidance Board. The work of discipline and guidance coordinators of each form, as well as regular meetings between the Discipline and Guidance Boards, serve well to ensure that appropriate and timely support is rendered to students who need it. A 'dual class teacher' system is implemented at all year levels to provide more thorough care for students. The school has recently strengthened the role of class teachers by giving them the responsibility of delivering the MCE curriculum through the Home Room Periods. There is a clear case referral system with suitable arrangements for students with special educational needs (SEN). In anticipation of the increased enrolment of SEN students, the school is taking positive steps in equipping teachers with the knowledge and skills to provide stronger support for these students.

- Career education is well planned at all levels and is appropriately infused through the MCE lessons and Home Room Periods to enhance students' awareness of their career aspirations. Apart from providing students with a good variety of information, diversified career guidance programmes, including talks, workshops and exhibitions, have been organised to support students in planning their future and to enable them to make informed choices. Job shadowing and career visits to workplaces are also organised to widen students’ exposure.

- To foster students’ spirit to serve others, the school provides many opportunities for them to participate and learn through service, within and outside school. School-based leadership training programmes are provided for student leaders. The Big Sisters Scheme has been well implemented to train a group of S3 to S7 students to assist those at S1 in adapting to secondary school life, thus fostering peer relationship among the junior and senior students. A supportive environment with the spirit of sisterhood has been successfully created. Leadership training is also provided for S6 students and student leaders are given the opportunity to organise some activities independently. The Student Union is elected and serves as an effective communication channel between the school and the students. Moreover, the Principal meets the students, through the 'Interflow with Principal' arrangement, to understand their concerns and to discuss school matters. Students’ views are valued and duly responded to by the school management. To further develop students’ independence and leadership skills, they could be given more opportunities to plan, organise and evaluate activities independently. Building on the strength of the Chinese
Broadcast House, which serves as a means for promoting a culture of learning P.tonghua among students, the school may consider the establishment of Campus TV to allow students to take part in video production and broadcasting, helping them to further develop their presentation, creativity, organisational and leadership skills.

- A good variety of ECA and life-wide learning opportunities is suitably provided to extend students’ learning experiences beyond the classroom. In response to the recommendations made in the previous ESR report, the range of sports activities has been widened to enable students to develop their skills and enrich their experiences. A mechanism is in place to help students strike a balance between their academic pursuits and their engagement in ECA. In general, students enjoy participation in activities, in particular, inter-house competitions which helps foster stronger links among schoolmates. The school cheering team is an exemplar of the students’ team spirit and close relationship among members of different houses, which enhances students’ sense of belonging to the school.

- The school maintains good partnership with parents and receives strong support and trust from them. The PTA takes the initiative to enhance communication between parents and the school and has collaborated well with the school in enhancing students’ learning experiences. For example, parents serve well as volunteers to monitor students’ self-directed learning in the school library and the Self-Access Learning Centre. The school has been highly successful in cultivating a close and enduring bond between alumnae and students. Through the professional network of the Past Students’ Association and their fund-raising efforts, alumnae provide strong support for enhancing students’ learning and broadening their horizons. Some enhancement and support programmes for the academically gifted and low achievers have been conducted by the alumnae. Moreover, their contributions cover career talks, scholarships and sponsorship for school activities. Close ties are maintained with various non-government organisations for organising a range of social services and programmes that cater well for student development. Good efforts have been made to tap professional expertise from external sources, especially from tertiary institutions, EDB and sister schools under the same School Sponsoring Body, to support staff development programmes that are aimed at promoting pedagogical change and strengthening pastoral care, which are foci of school development.

- In line with its mission, the school has cultivated a very caring, supportive and a strong family-like atmosphere. Students are willing to serve their fellow schoolmates and the needy in the community, fostering the core values embodied in the school motto, ‘Through Charity to Truth’. Students are responsible and strong peer relationships have been established. They enjoy their school life and have developed a strong sense of belonging to the school. The alumnae are proud of the school and they maintain a strong bonding with their alma mater and make continuous contributions to school and student development. Teachers, generally, share the school goals of providing students with an all-round education with Christian values. Teachers are committed and have a good rapport with their students. Good efforts have been made in creating a positive learning atmosphere and a favourable English-learning environment. The school, as a whole, is striving towards becoming a learning organisation. To further enhance communication among staff for consensus
building on the school’s concerns, teachers could be given more opportunities to participate in the decision-making process of the school.

2.4 Student Performance

- Students are conscientious, courteous, modest and affable. They are self-disciplined, receptive to others’ views and respect their teachers. They show a good awareness of civic responsibility and are eager to participate in community service. There is good peer support among students. Student leaders are responsible and dedicated to rendering service to their schoolmates and the community, thus acting as good role models. With students demonstrating strong interest and motivation in learning, they could be more systematically equipped with the skills and strategies for self-directed learning, and be given more opportunities to widen their exposure to global perspectives and issues.

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

- Students participate actively in a wide range of academic, physical and aesthetic activities and competitions, within and outside the school. They have performed well in a variety of inter-school sports competitions while their achievements in speech, music and drama competitions, and International First Aid Competition are more outstanding.
3. Concluding Remarks

St. Rose of Lima’s College provides good quality education and has improved its use of the SSE mechanisism in the planning-implementation-evaluation cycle for continuous school improvement, and cultivated a self-reflective culture among teachers. In its pursuit of excellence, the school management has initiated curriculum and pedagogical change in line with the curriculum reform. A broad and balanced curriculum is offered through a good variety of academic subjects and co-curricular and extended learning experiences, which contribute strongly to students’ all-round development. The school leadership team is dedicated, and the teachers are committed, generally share the school goals and have a good rapport with students. Students enjoy school life and have a strong sense of belonging to the school. Student leaders are responsible and a strong peer relationship has been established. A whole-school approach, well implemented by various committees, has been adopted in the provision of support for student development, which helps to develop a close, caring and harmonious relationship among students and between teachers and students. With its emphasis on values education, the school has developed a warm culture grounded in Christianity, and laid a firm foundation for developing students’ positive values and attitudes. The school has developed and benefited from a close partnership with parents, alumnae, external agencies and sister schools under the same School Sponsoring Body. A range of external resources has been well utilised to benefit students in both their learning and whole-person development.

Building on its current strengths, the school could direct more attention and efforts to the following areas:

3.1 Strengthening staff capacity building for continuous school development
- Currently, the Principal and the Vice Principal who oversees academic and student affairs shoulder most of the responsibility in steering school development. To strengthen staff capacity for continuous development, the school needs to review and adjust its organisation structure and allocation of duties so that promising and capable teachers are better groomed for taking up leadership and monitoring roles. Succession planning and leadership at different school levels could be enhanced.

3.2 Enhancing the impact of SSE through setting specific improvement targets to guide implementation and evaluation
- To enhance the impact of SSE on school development, planning and policy making could be conducted with a more open and participatory approach, involving more teaching staff from the early stages onward. There is also a need to guide staff in setting improvement targets and strategies that are realistic and able to provide the necessary challenge for achieving growth and matching the school’s needs and stage of development. Besides contributing to consensus building and a greater sense of ownership, a shared understanding of the agreed strategies and targets is more conducive to effective implementation and evaluation.
3.3 Sustaining pedagogical change to make continuous improvements in learning and teaching

- To strengthen staff capacity for continuous curriculum development and pedagogical change, the school could conduct cross-KLA and cross-year level peer lesson observation to step up sharing of good practice. With the implementation of the NSS curriculum, teachers’ professional sharing and development programmes could focus more on strategies for catering for learner diversity and promotion of classroom formative assessment as a strategy for identifying students’ learning needs.

- At present, the pedagogy which supports and develops active and independent learning is seen in some lessons. Students, on the whole, could be given more challenge to realise their full potential. To help promote independent learning, purposeful pre-lesson preparation tasks could be assigned more widely across the curriculum and could be further utilised as a more integral part of the learning tasks. To further promote interactive learning, teachers need to adopt a wider repertoire of classroom strategies for addressing students’ diverse learning needs and styles. There could be more use of classroom assessment strategies, in the form of effective questioning coupled with specific, formative feedback, and monitoring of student performance in learning tasks, so as to inform necessary adaptation to the teaching strategies, pace and content of lessons.
School Response

The school response on the draft ESR report received on 12th August 2011 is attached below:

ST. ROSE OF LIMA'S COLLEGE
External School Review Report
School Response

The school is pleased to receive the External School Review (ESR) Report, which has given recognition to the efforts we have made and our follow up action of the previous ESR report in 2005. The ESR Report reaffirmed our success in cultivating a very caring, supportive and strong family-like atmosphere which is in line with our school mission. The compliments on our work in different domains, especially the English learning environment, the NSS curriculum, the SBA arrangement, moral education, the whole-school approach for student support and the teacher-student relationship as well as the school’s partnership with our parents, alumni and other external organisations are really encouraging.

The ESR Report is discussed among the teaching staff as well as the members of the School Management Committee. In general, we agree with most of the comments and recommendations made by the ESR Team about the school. The report is fair and comprehensive. We are glad that the ESR Report has commended our achievements. Moreover, the areas for improvement suggested in the ESR Report are positive and constructive. In fact, we also have similar findings (strengths and weaknesses) in our self-evaluation. The ESR Report will be a very useful reference for our school development and improvement in the coming years.

In response to the feedback and suggestions that the ESR Team has made, the school would take the following actions:
- The middle managers and other staff will be more involved in the formulation of the school policies and strategies.
- The strategies for Learning and Teaching will be further enhanced to stretch students’ potential and cater for different needs.

We would like to express our gratitude to the ESR Team for their professional and constructive advice as well as their effort in supporting our sustainable development. The experience with the Team is rewarding. In fact, the objective and holistic review assists us in the formulation of school policies and the implementation of strategies. We will continue to further enhance ourselves in providing a quality environment for our young ladies to develop their potentials and talents.