

Comprehensive Review Report

Creative Secondary School

School Address : 3 Pung Loi Road, Tseung Kwan O, Sai Kung

Review Period : 14 to 18 and 22 May 2012

Quality Assurance and School-based Support Division

Education Bureau

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1. Introduction

1.1 Basic Information about the School (Text provided by the school)

- The idea of establishing Creative Secondary School (CSS) first came about in the late 1990s, when the Creative Education Foundation responded to the request of parents for a high quality secondary school that will implement the same progressive educational philosophy as Creative Primary School & Kindergarten.
- The Foundation wished to establish a school that would integrate the best of Chinese and international educational ideals, in support of education reform in Hong Kong. It would be an exceptionally caring school, balancing academic advancement with emphasis on personal growth and the fostering of positive attitudes. Whilst striving to develop students' international-mindedness, it would encourage them to appreciate their own cultural heritage, values and aspirations.
- CSS's curriculum model is unique. The school would deliver the Hong Kong junior secondary curriculum through the framework of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (IBMYP); senior secondary students would then be offered a choice of either the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) or the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma. By running the IB programmes alongside the Hong Kong curriculum, CSS would create beneficial sharing of common resources and teaching approaches across both programmes, enabling it to achieve a high quality implementation of the Hong Kong curriculum.
- The Foundation applied to the then Education and Manpower Bureau, HKSAR in 2000 to open a Direct Subsidy Scheme school, so as to enable students from a wider social spectrum to access quality education usually associated with overseas or international schools. The application was successful, and CSS started in September 2006.
- The school campus was built by the government to an individual design. Many features, such as the library and visual art studio, were designed to enhance the quality of learning. Since 2006, a drama studio, extra science laboratories, visual art studios, and design technology suites have been added. The campus has wireless internet access.
- CSS has grown to 700 students and over 70 teaching staff in May 2012.

Form	Form 1	Form 2	Form 3	Form 4	Form 5	Form 6	Total
Students	130	129	135	102	112	90	698
Classes	5	5	5	5	5	4	29 (30 next year)

- The following courses of study are offered at CSS :

KLA	Chinese Language Education	English Language Education	Mathematics Education	Personal, Social & Humanities Education	Science Education	Technology Education	Arts Education	Physical Education
Subjects offered in S1-3	Chinese Language	English Language	Mathematics	Integrated Humanities Personal Growth	Integrated Science	Design Technology Food Technology Information & Communication Technology	Drama Visual Arts Music	Physical Education
Subjects offered in S4-6	Chinese Language	English Language	Mathematics	Economics History Geography	Biology Chemistry Physics	Business, Accounting & Financial Studies Design & Applied Technology Technology for Living (Food) Information & Communication Technology	Drama Visual Arts Music	Physical Education

- CSS operates on collegial principles of collaboration and an evidence-based approach to school improvement. The leadership framework has evolved to meet the developing needs of the school. The teaching team is culturally diverse. 47% are first language English speakers; 28% are Chinese first language speakers; 25% speak with first language fluency in more than one language. 75% have worked or studied overseas. The team is an effective blend of enthusiasm and expertise.
- In February 2009, CSS became the first DSS school to achieve IB World School status, when its IBMYP was authorised. Then in April 2010, it was authorised to offer the IB Diploma Programme. By offering the HKDSE, CSS also became the first IB school in the world to offer the Hong Kong curriculum.
- The core values of the CSS community are optimism, respect, trust, care and intentionality. CSS seeks to foster the all-round development of students, in order to realise their individual potential. Students, parents and staff enjoy a strong sense of affiliation to the school, with positive relationships supporting enjoyable and effective learning. The PTA and the Student Council effectively represent parents' and students' views. In October 2010, the school received the Inviting School Award from the International Alliance for Invitational Education.
- School life is vibrant and purposeful. The House system enables everyone to enjoy a sense of belonging. Student leadership is developed through house officers, prefects, student council and sports teams. All students are involved in a Creative Week of learning beyond the classrooms, with camps, excursions, overseas trips, work experience, projects and workshops. Students participate enthusiastically in after-school activities. The badminton team rose from Division III to Division I in three years. CSS has won LEAD Creative Showcase Awards for five years and became Hong Kong OM champions in 2009. In F5 and F6, over

30% of students study Design Technology, Music, Visual Arts, or Theatre Arts. It has regularly staged musical productions, concerts and exhibitions of Design Technology and Visual Arts.

- CSS has reached a major milestone with the graduation of its first cohort. University entrance prospects look promising, with all applicants to UK universities receiving offers and many students with offers from HKU.

1.2 Comprehensive Review Methodology

- The comprehensive review (CR) was conducted on 14 to 18 and 22 May 2012 to evaluate the school performance in four domains of work: Management and Organisation, Learning and Teaching, Student Support and School Ethos as well as Student Performance. The CR team comprised 10 inspectors and a lay member.
- A preparatory visit to the school was made on 7 May to explain the objectives and operation of CR to the teaching staff and answer their queries about the review. A meeting was held with the School Management Committee (SMC) to learn about their views on the development of the school. The Principal also took the opportunity to brief the CR team on the strengths and development priorities of the school.
- Two meetings with parents were held on 7 May 2012 to elicit their views on the school. Over 80 parents attended the meetings.
- 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 54 lessons taught by 54 teachers covering Liberal Studies as a core subject in the New Senior Secondary (NSS) curriculum and the following subjects under the eight Key Learning Areas (KLA):

KLA	Chinese Language Education	English Language Education	Mathematics Education	Personal, Social & Humanities Education	Science Education	Technology Education	Arts Education	Physical Education
Subjects inspected	Chinese Language	English Language	Mathematics	History and Humanities	Chemistry and Integrated Science	Computer Literacy and Information & Communication Technology	Music	Physical Education

- Observation of various school activities, including Dodgeball Inter-house Competition, two drama performances, Reading Time, a range of co-curricular activities held outside lesson time, including Chinese Debate, Girl Guides, Martial Arts, Board Games, Wind Band, Strings Group, Vocal Ensemble and training in archery, football, table tennis and tennis;

- Meetings and interviews with members of the SMC, Principal, Vice Principal, panel chairpersons, heads of functional committees, teachers, school social worker, school counsellor, parents and students; and
 - Scrutiny of samples of students' work.
- 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.

2. School Performance

2.1 Continuous Development of the School

- CSS was founded in September 2006, with a vision of “building a school with an exceptionally caring ethos and a unique learning approach that draws the best from Chinese and Western educational ideals”. Following its motto and mission statement “Through this place we thrive, we serve and find our place in the world”, the school focuses on preparing students for the challenges of the modern, globalised world and aims to cultivate in students a passion for life, a confident sense of their own cultural identity, and a commitment to making the world a better place. Whilst encouraging students to appreciate the essential qualities of their own traditional values, intellectual and cultural aspirations, the school also aims to develop international-mindedness.
- The management puts emphasis on developing and implementing its school-based curriculum, which aims to provide an all-round education with balanced emphasis on personal growth and fostering of positive attitudes. The school has secured a distinctive position in Hong Kong through offering both the IB and the Hong Kong secondary school curriculum. Whilst implementing the Hong Kong curriculum under the IBMYP framework from S1 to S4, the school offers both the HKDSE and the IBDP programmes at S5 and S6.
- In pursuit of its goal, the school has drawn up School Development Plans (SDP) in line with its vision and the direction of education reform in Hong Kong, that of nurturing students to become life-long learners. To enhance transparency and accountability in school management, the SDP have been discussed at various levels and in meetings with members of the SMC, members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), heads of faculty, teachers and parents. When formulating development priorities, the school has taken into account its mission and vision, students’ needs and self-evaluation, and the views of different stakeholders have been carefully considered.
- The important practice of school self-evaluation (SSE) has been embedded in a systemic manner at different organisational levels in the school. In the formulation of the SDP 2011-2014, the school’s development with respect to the SDP 2007-2011 has been reviewed. The four main areas of development identified in the current SDP build on the achievement in the first SDP, so as to further develop in the coming cycle. The four main areas are, (i) securing the school’s distinctive position in Hong Kong, (ii) further strengthening the school’s curriculum and pedagogy, (iii) facilitating students’ achievement and progression into Higher Education, and (iv) developing the school campus to achieve their ambitions. Furthermore, the Annual School Plans (ASP) have been prepared well, in accordance with the focuses and major concerns of the SDP. To echo the main area of development, that is, to further strengthen the school’s curriculum and pedagogy, the school is planning to focus on developing the quality of learning and teaching in the Lower School in the coming years. The intention of the school management has been made clear; to improve the

quality of learning and teaching through professional development, experience-sharing and capacity-building. The school has aptly established its development priorities according to its growth and development. It has positively and proactively formulated clear and concrete implementation strategies.

- A very distinctive organisational structure is in place to suit the different programmes which the school offers. Underpinning the school's organisational structure, including the House system and base room system, is a common belief that every student is unique and should be given the opportunity to develop his/her personal potential to the full. Students at each year-level are organised into six Houses for the purposes of registration and attendance, social organisation, personal growth and development. Students in S1 to S3 are organised into five or six classes for the subjects English, Mathematics, Chinese, Science, Humanities and Physical Education (PE), and into six classes (seven classes for S3) for the subjects Visual Art, Music, Drama, Food Technology, Design Technology, and Information and Communication Technology (ICT). The latter six teaching groups for S1 and S2 are identical to the social groupings for the six Houses, enabling provision of stronger support for student learning. This organisation has taken into consideration the popularity of different subjects among students, and the needs of the school and serves well the purpose of maximising the provision of subject choices for students. In addition, the school has introduced a School system; S1 and S2 constitute the Lower School, S3 and S4 the Middle School and S5 and S6 the Upper School. Led by a Head of School and a Deputy Head of School, these Schools constitute a structure which properly facilitates communication and collaboration among staff in the provision of effective student support and guidance.
- The school management, including members of the SMC, SLT and heads of faculty, is able to effectively co-ordinate and closely monitor the implementation of its priority tasks and enhances communication and collaboration among teachers for the realisation of the school plans. The daily morning briefing by the Principal also helps to effectively disseminate important messages to, and collect feedback from, teachers. There is a good mixture of experienced teachers who are willing to share their experience. New teachers are committed, receptive and promising. Very often, experienced teachers serve well as mentors to new teachers. A good team spirit and high morale among the teaching staff are evident.
- The school has a positive attitude towards using its evaluation findings to feed forward into planning. Not only does the school encourage students to be reflective thinkers, but the school itself is also fostering a culture of constant self-evaluation and reflection. The school conducts continuing reviews through different meetings with stakeholders, SMC, SLT, teachers, students and parents, at different organisational levels. However, as the school is very distinctive in terms of its School system, class structure, pedagogy, assessment and curriculum offered, stronger communication with parents is needed to enhance mutual understanding. Plans and strategies could be more clearly explained to parents to enlist their support and cooperation. When conducting reviews and evaluation, the views of

parents could be taken heed of and, where appropriate, followed up more closely.

- The SMC comprises people of prominence in the territory, including educators, other professionals and members of the business sector. Whilst showing dedicated commitment and providing unstinting support in the setting up and development of the school, the SMC has also, rightly, given the Principal the autonomy and authority to direct and manage the school. Included in the significant contribution of the SMC is the valuable advice given in relation to developing the school campus to achieve the committee's ambitions, notably the provision of an additional drama studio, science laboratories, visual art studios, and design technology laboratory suites since 2006.
- The Principal has been in post since the start of the school. He is a dedicated and richly experienced leader who has established a trustful relationship with the SMC and the teaching staff. His expertise and experience in the education field, in particular, his overseas experience and his experience in local international schools, help him grasp the school's current state of play and devise concrete plans and measures. He displays leadership in both instructional and affective aspects. He assigns duties to members commensurate with their experience, commitment, abilities and expertise. His open-mindedness leaves his staff and students much room for creativity and risk-taking. As the school is relatively new and is still developing, there are high demands in terms of implementation of tasks to promote student learning, strengthen student support and enhance the effectiveness of school management. With support from the SMC, the Principal has secured and deployed resources to initiate changes to address urgent issues and bring substantial improvements to the school campus. For example, the facilities and library resources have been enriched and the computer system for the retrieval of information has been enhanced. Plans have also been duly made to set up a better room-booking system and an electronic system for morning registration. Supervising the administration work, including tendering, funding, public relations and daily operation of the general office, the Principal's management workload is very heavy. Therefore, the school's plan to recruit additional staff in the general office to assist with overseeing the routine administration duties in order to improve the effectiveness of the general office in support of learning and teaching is appropriate.
- At the upper tier of the school management is the SLT, which consists of the Principal, the VP, the Curriculum Director, the three Heads of School, and the three Curriculum Coordinators of the IBMYP, International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) and HKDSE. As the think tank at the upper tier, the SLT keeps abreast of the latest happenings in the school and the trends in educational development. With their expertise, commitment and enthusiasm, the SLT members render quality support to the Principal in providing strong leadership in the categories of guidance and achievement of students, curriculum and pedagogy, and administration of the school. The VP is committed, responsible and well experienced. In particular, she serves well as a leader in Guidance and Achievement and the provision of support to students. The Curriculum Director is an efficient and

effective leader who is well experienced in curriculum development and has a wide perspective on international education. The harmonious working relationship among the school management, middle managers and teachers, who are committed to driving the school's sustained improvement, should also be commended.

- The school strives to promote a learning culture among teachers through supporting and conducting a variety of professional development programmes, including sponsoring teachers to attend training courses for new teachers and arranging study tours to the mainland or overseas. The school has also organised various theme-based in-house sharing sessions. In the early years of the school's development, the school had sent teachers to overseas workshops on curriculum planning, inquiry-based learning and criterion-based assessment. However, due to the relatively small CSS staff team in the early years, there had not been sufficient opportunities for teachers to attend local professional development programmes. As the full teaching team is becoming established, the school could consider sending more teachers to participate in various local professional development programmes.

2.2 Learning and Teaching

- The school aims to develop a curriculum that promotes the all-round development of young learners and prepares them for the challenges of sustainable human advancement in an increasingly complex and globalised world. The school curriculum lays equal emphasis on academic advancement, personal growth and the fostering of positive attitudes. Values and attitudes permeate the curricula of the subjects offered in the school. To promote the all-round development of students, there is a wide range of activities under five different categories, namely Language and Communication, Creativity and Arts, Sports and Action, Problem-solving and Inquiry, and Leadership and Service. To extend students' learning beyond the classroom, life-wide learning activities that suit the students' needs at different year-levels are also organised.
- The school curriculum is, generally, broad and balanced. The school has made meticulous effort in developing the school-based curriculum. In S1 to S4, the school adopts a distinctive approach in implementing the Hong Kong secondary school curriculum under the framework of the IBMYP. The curriculum in S1 to S4 covers the 8 KLA in the Hong Kong secondary curriculum, which corresponds to the 8 subject groups of the IBMYP. S5 to S6 students are then offered the option of continuing their study of the HK senior secondary school curriculum leading to the HKDSE or taking the IBDP. The school provides students with flexible choices of study programmes and elective subjects. In particular, to meet the needs of students with different needs and backgrounds, two options of Language A and Language B for both Chinese Language and English Language are offered. Moreover, the school curriculum is supplemented with Other Learning Experiences (OLE) that cover the five areas of moral and civic education, community service, aesthetic development, physical development and career-related experiences.

- The school curriculum has various distinctive features, such as creativity, internationalism, inter-disciplinary learning and inquiry-based learning. The school attaches particular importance to developing students' creativity. To this end, S1 and S2 students are studying three Arts (Drama, Music, Visual Arts) and three Technology (Food Technology, Information & Communication Technology and Design Technology) subjects, while S3 and S4 students can choose to study one Arts subject and one Technology subject. Due attention has been paid to fostering students' creativity in many subjects. They are given many learning opportunities for developing their creativity. A significant proportion of S5 and S6 students are studying an Arts or a Technology subject. Moreover, students are often exposed to different global issues in their studies, contributing to the development of their international-mindedness. The team of teachers, with a wide range of cultural backgrounds, provides extra advantage for doing so. Furthermore, to enhance students' awareness and ability to apply their learning in new contexts, cross-curricular links with different subjects are often identified. This helps to promote inter-disciplinary learning that may involve common knowledge or skills across different subject disciplines. Last but not least, to develop students' independent learning capability, an inquiry-based learning approach is widely adopted in all subjects. One particular example is the personal project conducted in S4, which aims to develop students' ability to manage and direct their own inquiry.
- With good resource support, small group teaching is extensively implemented. Tailor-made curricula, appropriate ability groupings and differentiation strategies are in place to meet the diverse learning needs of students. The dedicated and professional team of curriculum leaders, with multinational education experiences, helps to effectively monitor and support the curriculum implementation at various levels. At school level, the Curriculum Director steers and oversees the development of learning and teaching. He is assisted by three Curriculum Coordinators, namely the IB Diploma Coordinator, the Hong Kong Diploma Coordinator and the IBMYP Coordinator, as well as eight faculty heads, in monitoring and supporting the curriculum implementation of different subjects. In close collaboration with the faculty heads, the Curriculum Director, together with the three Curriculum Coordinators, is able to lead and support teachers in aligning the school curriculum in accordance with the standards and requirements of different programmes. In addition to external programmes, there are many school-based professional development opportunities, such as collaborative curriculum planning, standardisation sessions and peer lesson observation. On the whole, a strong atmosphere of professional sharing and support is apparent. The school recognises the importance of enhancing students' reading interest and habit and the reading atmosphere is, generally, good. Other than activities, such as Reading Buddies and Battle of the Books, a 20-minute reading time is timetabled every day except Wednesdays. Teachers serve as role models and most students read attentively. Looking forward, to promote students' use of the library as a learning resource centre, it is desirable to enrich the library stock and encourage more collaboration between the librarian and subject panels in exploring and promoting students' reading interest.

- The school upholds the belief that teaching, learning and assessment are fundamentally interdependent. Students are assessed formatively to gauge their learning progress and summatively to determine their levels of attainment. Assessment for learning is widely practised. There are clear and specific assessment criteria in each subject. Standardisation and moderation mechanisms are in place to ensure consistency and fairness in marking. The assessment tasks scrutinised can, in general, develop students' independent learning capabilities. Students can apply learning strategies, such as reading and information searching, in completing their assessment tasks. Teachers can often give specific comments on students' strengths and areas for further improvement. There are various modes of reporting of student performances, namely Parent-Student-Teacher 3-Way Conferences, interim summary report and progress report. In particular, in the progress report, an assessment of the student's learning, according to the assessment criteria in each subject, is given in detail, and teachers' constructive recommendations for improvement are listed clearly. With these assessment data, students' progress can be monitored closely. The teachers can then provide timely individual feedback and support in lessons to those students who need it.
- The school is well aware of the need to continuously review and refine the curriculum to best address the particular needs, interests and circumstances of students and the school community. The school is reflective in the sense that the teachers constantly learn from their experiences and make necessary refinements. In response to the major concern "Further strengthening the school's curriculum and pedagogy", the school has devised a workable plan for the curriculum review process in the coming school years. Clear time-frames and review focuses, including the study programmes in different year-levels, are delineated. In general, constant curriculum evaluation and planning are conducted at faculty and school levels. To better prepare students for the senior secondary curriculum, many subject panels review their curriculum in depth to ensure there is a solid foundation in various year-levels to suit students' diverse learning needs. For further development, such good practice could be extended to all subjects.
- Students are positive and on-task, with sustained motivation in learning. Most of them are attentive and able to follow teachers' instructions. They are, generally, able to grasp the lesson content and connect prior knowledge and skills to complete learning tasks. Some students take the initiative to express their views and raise questions for clarification of doubts and deeper understanding of the lesson content, showing good independent and critical thinking. Independent learning strategies, such as pre-lesson preparation and note-taking, are observed among some students, especially in senior forms. In learning activities where group work is involved, students demonstrate good collaborative and interpersonal skills in the process of sharing their own ideas. Students' standard of English is good. They, on the whole, speak English clearly with a good vocabulary and show confidence in responding to teachers' questions and delivering oral presentations in class. Most senior students have the ability to communicate with teachers and their peers in fluent English. In lessons using Putonghua as the medium of instruction (MOI), students are good at expressing themselves in the target language.

- Teachers show enthusiasm in their work. They are friendly, approachable and responsible, and able to build a good rapport with students. Classroom management is, on the whole, good. The majority of lessons are well prepared and structured, with clear objectives. In line with the principles of Invitational Education (IE) advocated in the school, teachers often use positive reinforcement and students are encouraged to support one another. To promote inquiry-based learning, teachers often organise appropriate class activities and ask questions to encourage students to inquire deeper into lesson content and justify their thoughts or points of view.
- Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge in lessons. Information technology and teaching resources, such as PowerPoint presentations, online video clips, smart-boards, pictures, listening materials, quality reading materials and teacher-prepared worksheets are suitably employed to arouse students' interest and familiarise them with the lesson content, concepts and issues to be learnt. Teachers' presentation, explanation and demonstration are very clear, systematic and accurate. In lessons where English is the MOI, teachers use fluent, natural English to communicate with students.
- Commendable effort is put by teachers into catering for learner diversity in the classroom. Most teachers take advantage of the small class size to provide more individual support to students. They follow students' performance closely and provide timely and useful support. Grouping strategies are appropriately adopted to enhance students' participation and mutual support in class. Teachers, on the whole, make good efforts to stimulate students' interactive learning by organising a range of activities, such as pair work, group discussions and presentations. Classroom learning activities are well monitored. The participation of, and contribution by, every student in the groups are ensured. Teachers provide timely feedback to individual groups. Peer and self-assessment are arranged in some lessons to help students make improvements through the process of classroom formative assessment. To nurture students to become more reflective in their learning, this practice could be further encouraged. Teaching pace is generally appropriate to match students' learning needs. However, in some lessons, sufficient time should be allocated by teachers to facilitate more in-depth discussion of lesson content and initiate further responses to promote deeper learning. In a few lessons, more strategies to cater for learner diversity, such as graded tasks, could be adopted to support the learning of students, especially the less able.
- Teachers' questioning strategies, on the whole, are effective. A variety of questions is used to help students clarify lesson content, and initiate thinking and discussion. In a majority of the lessons, teachers are skilful in prompting and probing for more thoughts and responses from students, helping them inquire, develop their creativity and stimulate their higher-order thinking skills, such as those of critical thinking and problem-solving. In the most effective lessons, questioning is well used as feedback to guide students to think deeper, further elaborate and organise their ideas in a systematic way. Assessment for learning is embedded in many lessons. Students are appropriately assessed through teachers' questioning and class activities. Whilst timely and specific feedback is given by teachers to help

students grasp the lesson content and improve learning, students can, generally, make good use of teachers' feedback to enhance their learning.

2.3 Student Support and School Ethos

- The school attaches much importance to students' holistic development. It also emphasises encouraging students to make good use of opportunities to maximise their potential. Students' needs are well identified with reference to teachers' observation and parents' views. In the last school development cycle, the school had progressively developed a framework for Student Guidance and Achievement, with a wide range of activities organised and values education implemented through various channels. In this school development cycle, in addressing students' needs, such as helping the newly transferred students and students with different cultural backgrounds to adapt to campus life, the school emphasises strengthening the role of House Tutors to provide support for students. To cater for students' growth needs, it also emphasises developing their leadership skills, and enriching the school's careers and higher education preparation programmes. On the whole, student development programmes are well coordinated and regular refinements are made through constant reviews, bringing about a positive impact on students' all-round development. In supporting students' growth, suitable preventive, developmental and remedial programmes, such as talks, group counselling and home visits, are organised to cater for the varied needs of students.
- The pastoral care of students in CSS is well supported through the vertical House system. On joining the school, each new student is assigned to one of the six Houses, under the guidance of a House Tutor. The House Tutor takes the role of a guardian and provides pastoral care and academic support for the students in their House. There are many opportunities, such as registration time in the morning and the House Time per cycle, for the House Tutor to have a comprehensive understanding of the students so as to provide good quality and timely support. Tutors are well supported by the Heads of Lower, Middle and Upper School who help to strengthen the coordination of support measures for students. Students' needs are identified and well catered for through the close links among the Vice Principal (VP), the Curriculum Director, who is also the in-charge of support for students with special educational needs (SEN), Heads of School, House Tutors, the student counsellor, the social worker and the Careers and College Guidance Coordinator. Through house activities, students' sense of belonging towards the House and the school are cultivated. The House system also provides a platform for fostering students' social skills. Every year, there are a number of new students at every year-level. The House system is able to facilitate the smooth adaptation of these new students to campus life. For new students who need additional assistance, the student counsellor and the social worker render further support. The school has provided appropriate follow up measures, such as home visits, for a few students who are frequently absent from school. However, to help students deal with the difficulties they are facing, such as peer relationships and studying, the school could further enhance and mobilise peer support.

- The school has a well-established mechanism for identifying students with SEN. Teachers' awareness of the need to support these students is heightened in the Professional Development Day. In response to teachers' needs, the Curriculum Director provides them with professional help, such as model teaching, to enhance their knowledge and skills in using appropriate supporting strategies to cater for students' needs in lessons. Short-term intervention is offered to provide timely learning support to students. Besides academic support, suitable support in social development for these students is also provided. There are ample opportunities for students to develop their interests and realise their potential.
- The school pays much attention to providing college guidance to students. With a full time non-teaching career and college guidance coordinator employed, ample support is provided to help senior form students in career mapping. Visits and work-related experiences are provided for S4 students; individual support is given to S5 and S6 students in preparing their curriculum vitae, making higher education plans and submitting applications to universities in different countries. Adequate information and support are given to help senior form students plan their future studies and career. Collaboration between the careers and higher education coordinator and the guidance counsellor could be strengthened to enhance the personal growth programme in junior secondary level, to heighten students' self-understanding and to guide them to explore and learn more about their own interests, aptitudes and aspirations.
- The school sees it as its mission to develop and stretch students' potential, including leadership potential. In this school development cycle, active steps have been taken in providing opportunities for students to become student leaders, such as committee members of the Student Council, Student Counsellors, Prefects and House Captains. Student leaders exhibit leadership with confidence and passion in organising student-led activities. This year, the newly organised Peer Mentoring Programme allows senior form students to provide useful learning support to junior form students. An effective 12-week training programme is conducted beforehand. As the school is offering more leadership opportunities, different committees could consider arranging a joint-leadership training programme so as to maximise the use of resources.
- The school has provided a wide range of activities for students to achieve the aim of whole-person development and enables them to develop life-long learning capabilities. The programmes in the activity weeks are able to cater for students' growing needs at different stages. For example, a 4-day overnight camp is arranged for S1 students to strengthen their team spirit, a 4-day environmental day camp is arranged for S2 students, overseas study trips and services are arranged for S3 students and a 4-day work placement programme is arranged for S4 students. A good range of activities, clubs and societies that meet students' varied needs and interests, are grouped into five categories; Language and Communication, Problem-solving and Inquiry, Creativity and Arts, Sports and Action and Leadership and Service. However, given the low attendance rate in some activities, the school could consider adopting different methods, such as making use of the well-

received House Point system, to encourage more students to participate in school activities.

- Values education is implemented in assemblies, House Times and Personal Growth Periods. Topics, such as handling of peer relationship and money, match students' needs, as do the sex education and anti-drug programmes which are arranged. Moral and civic education is implemented through the school curriculum and community service. A range of community service experiences is arranged for S1 and S2 students to foster positive values. For S3 students, visits to enable community service outside Hong Kong are arranged. For senior form students, the community service learning is strengthened through OLE and Creativity, Action, Service (CAS) programmes. The school has made a commendable effort in fostering students' international-mindedness. In the promotion of environmental education, trips are organised for S2 students. However, the school could consider strengthening students' environmental awareness and helping them develop an environmentally friendly attitude through school activities.
- The school strives to foster an inviting campus environment through embedding the core values of IE, such as trust and optimism. It emphasises positive reinforcement. To promote excellence in various fields, such as Creativity and Arts, Sports and Action, the school has established a scholarship scheme in recognition of students' outstanding performance. The Principal's Award and Creative Cup are useful means to encourage students to take an active part in learning and house activities. To instill self-discipline in students, the school has cancelled most of the lesson bells. A pleasing result has been achieved as students, in general, strive to be punctual for class. The school adopts a positive discipline approach without giving students demerits. Appropriate measures in handling behaviour problems are adopted. However, the school could consider making better use of the detention class to encourage students to reflect on their behaviour and to set improvement strategies for themselves. On the whole, the inviting campus environment is able to strengthen students' sense of belonging to the school.
- Much effort has been made to strengthen communication with parents. S1 to S5 Parents' Evenings are organised to enhance parents' understanding of the school's curriculum. 3-Way Conferences are arranged to provide formative feedback on students' learning progress and e-mail is regularly used to keep parents informed of the school's policy and activities. However, some parents' understanding of the school's goals and rationales for its policies could still be improved. The school could review the existing communication channels and explore effective ways to mobilise parents' participation in school activities so as to enhance mutual understanding. The school receives great support from the Parents and Teachers Association (PTA), which includes an enthusiastic team of parent members. It organises a variety of talks to help improve parent-child relationships and enhance parents' understanding of the school curriculum. To support staff and student development, due effort has been made to seek professional support from other external bodies and organisations in the community. With the support of the established network, a good range of learning experiences is provided to strengthen students' all-round personal growth.

The school values the continual support from graduates to strengthen the school's development. The formation of a CSS alumni association is taking place.

- CSS is characterised by ample opportunities to realise students' potential, develop their creativity and cultivate them to become reflective thinkers. Importance is attached to celebrating students' potential and talents. Autonomy, open-mindedness, trust and a strong house spirit prevail in the school campus. Students learn to respect and embrace cultural differences, and uphold harmony. Teachers, with diverse cultural backgrounds themselves, are generally committed to catering for students' various growth needs. Experienced teachers give strong support to new colleagues. Staff relationships are harmonious and mutual support is displayed. The school has a democratic ethos with sufficient channels for students and parents to express their opinions. However, to enhance understanding, communication could sometimes be improved and, where appropriate, timely follow-up action could be taken in response to their expressed views. The school is aware of the challenges impacting on its development and is, thus, striving to develop itself through continuing reflection.

2.4 Student Performance

- Students are neat and tidy. They are, in general, well-behaved, displaying a high level of self-discipline. They enjoy their school life, especially the free learning environment. Students of different backgrounds respect the cultural identity of their schoolmates. Student leaders, including Student Council committee members, School Prefects, Student Ambassadors and House Captains, demonstrate good leadership skills in running activities for their schoolmates. Many students make good use of the opportunities provided for them to organise activities of their own choice. A sense of belonging to the school is being gradually built up, owing, partly, to the house system which bonds students together across the form.
- A positive attitude towards learning is seen among most students. Some have shown themselves to be good thinkers and communicators, with a readiness to participate in class activities and discussions. Whilst most are independent and concentrated learners in class, some have grown as self-motivated reflective inquirers outside class.
- As this is only the first year that students take part in public assessments through the IBDP and HKDSE, no results in public assessments are yet available. The internal assessment results have shown that students have developed a high level of creativity, critical thinking and communication skills. Their results in Visual Arts and English are the most outstanding. It is also gratifying to see that a number of students have already received advance offers for admission to local and overseas universities.
- Students show a diverse interest in participating in school activities, choosing from the over 60 clubs and teams. Covering the areas of Language and Communication, Problem-solving and Inquiry, Creativity and Arts, Sports and Action, and Leadership and Service, these activities have helped to foster an all-round development in students. Students' creativity and

artistic talent is well displayed in activities such as art exhibitions, drama performances and musical productions. They have also attained territory-wide recognition by winning the acclaimed Odyssey of the Mind contest and the LEAD Creative Showcase annual awards. Prominent results have been achieved by the Wushu Team by winning trophies in inter-school competitions and the Hong Kong Public Fresh Talent Wushu Championship Tournament. Students have also done well in badminton, winning trophies in both the boys' and the girls' inter-school badminton competitions.

3. Concluding Remarks

Creative Secondary School is a young institution committed to achieving its education goals and striving for excellence for its students. Strong support is given by the SMC. The school is making steady progress towards realising its mission of integrating the best of Chinese and international educational ideals in supporting the education reform in Hong Kong and has succeeded in nurturing a positive and caring school ethos and delivering an education experience and student achievement commensurate with its vision and mission. CSS is characterised by ample opportunities for students to develop creativity and by its cultivating of students to become reflective thinkers.

CSS values and commits itself to students' all-round development. A wide range of activities is organised to achieve the aims of enabling whole-person development and to help students to develop life-long learning capabilities. Meticulous effort has been made in developing a school-based curriculum which lays equal emphasis on academic advancement, personal growth and fostering positive attitudes. Small group teaching is extensively implemented, with appropriate curriculum adaptation, ability grouping and differentiation strategies in place to cater for the diverse learning needs of students. Assessment for learning is widely and effectively practised. Due attention has been paid to fostering students' creativity and international-mindedness. Students' interests and potential are developed and realised through inter-disciplinary and inquiry-based learning.

CSS sees the importance of school self-evaluation and demonstrates strong readiness to move from good to best. In order to build further on its strengths, CSS could consider directing more attention and effort to the following:

- **Strengthening capacity and professional development**

CSS has experienced steady growth year by year for the past five years, in terms of increasing numbers of students and teachers. To maintain the pleasing progress in various aspects, including the implementation of the distinctive school-based curricula, the strength and professional commitment of the existing staff team needs to be sustained for the coming years. As the full team of teaching staff is almost in place, it is time for the school to consider providing more opportunities for professional development, in addition to the initial training provided to new teachers and internal sharing of experience and ideas. With the continuing curriculum evaluation and planning conducted at faculty and school levels, the school could review the professional development needs of all teachers accordingly. Areas for capacity-building of teachers could be identified. For example, focuses could be put on enhancing teachers' knowledge and skills in delivering a broad and balanced curriculum, with specific attention paid to the implementation of the local secondary curricula under the IBMYP framework and the articulation between junior secondary and senior secondary.

- **Maximising the potential of parents as working partners**

CSS has a democratic ethos with sufficient channels for students and parents to express their opinions. Due to the distinctiveness of the school in terms of its organisation, House system, curriculum and assessment and its reporting of student performance and progress, the school should continue to deepen some parents' understanding of the school's goal, rationales and practices. In this regard, the school could, based on the existing communication channels, explore diversified and effective ways to mobilise parents' participation in school activities in order to enhance their understanding of the school. The potential of parents as working partners could be further explored and enhanced.