

Response of St. Paul's Co-educational College (SPCC) to the Comprehensive Review (CR) Report

Introduction

We thank the Comprehensive Review (CR) Team wholeheartedly for their careful and thorough work in conducting the CR of our school, and for giving insightful comments and suggestions.

We are very pleased to see that our hard work is being appreciated and we are commended in the many areas and goals that we have set out to attain in our journey to providing quality education to our students.

Below we have presented our response to specific observations in the Report, stating and explaining our interpretation and opinion, and presenting supporting factual evidence. While there are disagreements due to different interpretations and orientations, this is in no way intended to criticize the process and significance of the CR. On the contrary, we have considered the comments of the CR very carefully and used them as an opportunity and platform for professional dialogue with the CR Team both during the review and in responding to the CR Report.

The CR is a powerful vehicle in the process of ongoing improvement as we engage ourselves in reflection and evaluation. We are committed to providing quality education to our students and therefore will spare no effort in acting on the good advice and suggestions of the CR Team.

Specific Response

MANAGEMENT REVIEW – MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATION

(1) Staff development policy and teachers' expectation

Direct quotation from CR report:

... there seemed to be a gap between the staff development policy and the expectation of the teachers as they rated staff development the second lowest in their Stakeholder Survey. Probably after the announcement of the new policy in 2006, many teachers have not had the chance to exploit the financial support provided for their own professional development, not to mention to applying for the one year study leave. ... (page 8 bullet point 2)

SPCC response:

*We do not agree with the observation that “there seemed to be a gap between the staff development policy and the expectation of the teachers” because the data as revealed in the Staff Development section of the survey (**extracted as Attachment (1)**) show that:*

- 1. The percentages of respondents expressing “strong agreement”, “agreement” and “neutral” add up to **over 85%** in all the five areas examined; and,*
- 2. The percentages of respondents expressing “disagreement” and “strong disagreement” add up to **only 8% - 15%** in all the five areas examined.*

From the above data, the staff is positive and supportive of the School’s staff development policy.

This is further supported by the following figures of groups and individual teachers receiving professional development (on top of the school-level Staff Development Days and Retreat).

<i>Year</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>Individual</i>
<i>2005/06</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• 2 training activities involving a total of 90 teaching staff</i><i>• 2 study trips to UK involving 9 teaching staff</i>	<i>10 staff members received school subsidies on their own professional development</i>
<i>2006/07</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• 4 study trips to Singapore and Guangzhou involving 18 teaching staff</i>	<i>21 staff members received school subsidies on their own professional development</i>
<i>2007/08</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• 5 training activities for a total of 100 teaching staff</i><i>• 5 study trips to Singapore, Guangzhou and Australia involving 28 teaching staff</i>	<i>40 staff members received school subsidies on their own professional development</i>

(2) Teachers’ feeling towards staff appraisal system

Direct quotation from CR report:

...The teacher stakeholder surveys showed that teachers did not seem to be happy with the staff appraisal ... (page 8 bullet point 3)

SPCC response:

The new staff appraisal system has been in place since 2005. It covers the appraisals for different needs - probation, 3-year cycle and promotion appraisals. Before 2005, an old staff appraisal system based on a 6-year cycle was in use.

We do not agree with the inference that teachers “did not seem to be happy” about the appraisal system because the data as revealed in the Staff Appraisal section of the survey (extracted as Attachment (2)) show that:

- 1. The percentages of respondents expressing “strong agreement”, “agreement” and “neutral” add up to over 93% in all the five areas examined; and,*
- 2. The percentages of respondents expressing “disagreement” and “strong disagreement” add up to only 3% - 7% in all the five areas examined.*

MANAGEMENT REVIEW – STUDENT SUPPORT AND SCHOOL ETHOS

(1) Intention of Community Service Programme

Direct quotation from CR report:

...Since 2005, with the intention to widen the experience of students and raise civic awareness – another aim of the School, Community Service was made compulsory for the lower forms. However, this intention was not readily appreciated by the students, particularly S1 as some failed to understand its purpose when it was first introduced ... (page 12 bullet point 2)

SPCC response:

Based on the reflective statements collected from participants of the community service programme, we cannot draw the inference that the School’s intention to widen students’ experience and raise civic awareness by making community service compulsory for the lower forms “was not readily appreciated by the students, particularly S1 as some failed to understand its purpose when it was first introduced”. The following is a summary of the participants’ feedback:

- 1. Most of their feedbacks are positive. They are willing to participate in this kind of service or make contributions to the society in the future.*
- 2. More understanding about the mentally handicapped so that a positive attitude towards this kind of disadvantaged people is resulted.*
- 3. A precious experience for them to interact with special school students.*

Though some students, mostly S2 students, are not clear about the programme aim, they are the minority and students are generally positive about the programme and are willing to continue to participate in community service.

(2) Coordination and cooperation between Community Service Programme and other activities

Direct quotation from CR report:

... there is a need to better enhance coordination and cooperation with other

activities, such as Student Activities Week (SAW) (for example, there is no reason why tree planting cannot be included in S1 out-door activities in SAW). Doing so will reduce duplicated efforts, resources and most importantly time for both teachers and students ... (page 12 bullet point 2)

SPCC response:

We do not agree with the suggestion of incorporating the Community Service Programme into the SAW because of the following reasons:

1. Specific design of the compulsory Community Service Programme

- *The compulsory Community Service Programme is designed in such a way that it is a progressive experience for our S1 to S3 students. At the beginning, we have therefore chosen tree planting because it is less challenging psychologically when compared with visiting old people or children with special needs.*

2. Different aims between the S1 SAW programme and the S1 Community Service Programme

- *The “outdoor activities” are actually a series of discipline training and team building activities. The choice of doing tree planting serves as an “easier” start for the young, less mature students to engage in community service and see the importance of combined individual effort on conserving the environment.*
- *The same argument applies to our S2 and S3 Community Service Programmes too.*

3. Human resources

- *Based on the experience from the first year, it is our evaluation that we should not squeeze the Community Service Programme into the SAW so as to allow us to involve S1 form teachers and assistant form teachers.*
- *The same argument applies to our S2 and S3 Community Service Programmes too.*

4. Incompatible timing

- *One key point in doing community service is to serve those with a need or else the effort will be wasted. Tree planting usually starts from spring to summer because of the need of natural rainfall to sustain the growth of the trees but the SAW takes place in autumn for the sake of stable weather.*

5. Practical consideration of our partner, the Kadoorie Farm

- *The service provided by the Kadoorie Farm is free of charge and some of the activities provided by the organization are led by volunteers; whether the organization can provide enough manpower to serve the whole SI to do tree planting within a week is questionable.*

SPCC displays its commitment to holistic education through the distinct separation of the SAW and the Community Service Programme (SI-3). These experiences have clearly thought out objectives and related programmes and are designed in such a way that they do not cross over each other.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

(1) EMI Status

Direct quotation from CR report:

To be compatible with the EMI status, there is a need for the School to help students form the habit of using English language inside the classrooms. (page 23 bullet point 2)

SPCC response:

The School has a Language Policy (in English and Putonghua) which encourages, facilitates and helps students form the habit of using English language not just inside the classrooms but at all times, inside and outside the classrooms. Please refer to Attachment (3) – Guidelines on Language Policy 08 – 09.

Furthermore, we have been doing this with the view not so much as to be “compatible with the EMI status” but for the purpose of enriching the language environment for more effective learning in and through English (and Putonghua).

Notwithstanding this, we will continue with our best effort to implement the Language Policy.

Extract from Stakeholder Survey on Staff Development

	Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Total	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Don't Know	
Staff Development	50	20.69 %	49.43 %	21.84 %	91.96 %	6.90 %	1.15 %	8.05 %	2.25 %	
		<i>The staff professional development plan meets the needs of the school development.</i>								
	51	14.12 %	43.53 %	28.24 %	85.89 %	9.41 %	4.71 %	14.12 %	4.49 %	
		<i>The staff professional development activities, e.g. staff development day organised by the school, are helpful to my duties.</i>								
	52	25.58 %	40.70 %	20.93 %	87.21 %	9.30 %	3.49 %	12.79 %	3.37 %	
	<i>The school actively provides financial support to teachers for their continuous professional development.</i>									
	53	12.20 %	29.27 %	43.90 %	85.37 %	10.98 %	3.66 %	14.64 %	7.87 %	
	<i>The staff professional development plan meets my personal development needs.</i>									
	54	10.71 %	36.90 %	38.10 %	85.71 %	11.90 %	2.38 %	14.28 %	5.62 %	
	<i>The school actively deploys human resources to facilitate teachers to pursue continuous professional development.</i>									

Extract from Stakeholder Survey on Staff Appraisal

	Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Total	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Don't Know	
Staff Appraisal	55	12.66 %	54.43 %	29.11 %	96.20 %	3.80 %	0.00 %	3.80 %	11.24 %	
		<i>The staff appraisal report enables me to have a better understanding of my strengths and weaknesses.</i>								
	56	14.29 %	57.14 %	23.81 %	95.24 %	4.76 %	0.00 %	4.76 %	5.62 %	
		<i>The staff appraisal criteria are appropriate and serve as a fair basis in assessing teachers' performance.</i>								
	57	14.29 %	48.05 %	32.47 %	94.81 %	3.90 %	1.30 %	5.20 %	13.48 %	
	<i>With the results of staff appraisal, I understand my professional development needs.</i>									
58	20.45 %	60.23 %	14.77 %	95.45 %	4.55 %	0.00 %	4.55 %	1.12 %		
	<i>The staff appraisal system including assessment criteria and procedures is clear.</i>									
59	25.58 %	52.33 %	15.12 %	93.03 %	6.98 %	0.00 %	6.98 %	3.37 %		
	<i>I fully understand the appraisal system including assessment criteria and procedures.</i>									

Dear all,

Guidelines on Language Policy 08-09

To foster a bilingual environment at school, a language policy in which students have to communicate among themselves and with their teachers in English / Putonghua was introduced in May 2006. For this policy to become an inherent part of the students' culture, teachers' role-modelling, encouragement and promotion is most significant. It is hoped that notwithstanding our heavy workload, we can all work towards making the language policy an eventual success.

The following memorandum is for your reference:-

1. Students are to communicate with their peers and teachers in English / Putonghua on all school days. Teachers will be role-models for students by communicating with them in English / Putonghua even in the contexts of extra-curricular activities. Should special occasions arise in which Cantonese has to be used when interacting with students, it would be much appreciated if it is spoken *softly* and, if possible, in a *less public* venue.
2. Selection of '**Language Captains**'
 - 2.1 Not fewer than 5 from each class. Proficiency in English / Putonghua is not the main selection criterion; a strong sense of responsibility and pro-activeness is much more important.
 - 2.2 Class captains will automatically be 'Language Captains' for the whole academic year as their role of helping teachers to disseminate information to their class provides natural opportunities for the use of English / Putonghua. Should there be a mid-term change in class captains, the form teacher can decide whether to let the out-going class captains remain as 'Language Captains' or not.
 - 2.3 Priority may be given to well-performing language captains who express interest in participating in language-related overseas exchange programmes.
 - 2.4 There may be '*standing language captains*' (c.f. point 4, pg.2) in F.3 or above. They may/may not be counted as one of the 5 'language captains' selected at the beginning of the school year.
 - 2.5 Each form-teacher will receive 5 language captain badges. Please contact Ms Veronica Lau Chung Man should more badges be needed.
- 3 Responsible language captains will have their post recorded in the 'Duty Column' of the end-of-term report card. Those that are found to have neglected their duties will be stripped of their post and badge.

- 4 At the end of each academic year, the language captains need to return their badge to the school. Those who have served as language captains for two consecutive years will be regarded as ‘*standing language captains*’ and the badge need not be returned. They will continue to carry out the duties expected of them as language captains. However they too have to forfeit their language captain badge if found to have neglected their duties.
 - 5 Any student who has participated actively in the school’s language policy throughout the year will be commended in the special remark column of the end-of-term report card.
 - 6 At any time in the school year, teachers / language captains can recommend well-performing students to join the rank of language captains.
 - 7 To help form-teachers better appraise the performance of the language captains and the policy participation level of the other students in the class, there will be 2 assessment exercises to be completed via e-class. Each assessment will consist of three parts – peer assessment, language captains assessment and self-assessment.
- 7.1 Tentative assessment dates are as follows:

	F.1, 2, 3, 4, 6	F. 5 and 7
1 st assessment	1/12 – 5/12/2008	24/11 – 28/11/2008
2 nd assessment	11/5 – 15/5/2009	4/2 – 6/2/2009

7.2 F.1 - F.3

For the 1st assessment, students will complete the exercise under the supervision of their form-teachers in the Computer Learning Assistant Room (CLAR, SIP6/F) preferably during form-teacher periods or other pre-booked time slots with the IT staff. For the 2nd assessment, form-teachers can either let students complete it at school on their own or at home.

7.3 F.4 or above

Students can complete the assessment exercise on their own at school or at home within the given dates.

7.4 With the assistance of our IT colleagues, the findings of these appraisals will be e-mailed to all form-teachers and language teachers.

7.5 On receiving the findings, **form-teachers** will

7.5.1 ensure that those who haven’t completed the assessment exercise will do so immediately;

7.5.2 try motivating non-performing language captains and passive participants of the class with the joint effort of the language teachers. Non-performing language captains can be stripped of their post if their disappointing performance persists;

7.5.3 recommend well-performing students to join the rank of language captains after

- discussion with the language teachers;
- 7.5.4 enter the post 'Language Captain' in the '*Duty Column*' of the end-of-term report cards for the responsible language captains. For the other deserving students, they will be commended in the '*Special Remarks Column*' if their performance is good;
 - 7.5.5 not restrict the number of students who can be commended in the '*Special Remarks Column*'.
 - 7.5.6 use the commendation remark that has been uploaded onto the Special Remarks page of the intranet;
 - 7.5.7 commend students who demonstrate enthusiasm in the participation of the language policy and not on their language proficiency;
 - 7.5.8 exercise discretion on whether to commend any students in the first and second terms. But some end-of-term commendations are encouraging to students.
- 7.6 On receiving the findings, **language teachers** will
- 7.6.1 check to see if any student has not done the assessment and remind him / her to complete it as soon as possible;
 - 7.6.2 try motivating non-performing language captains and passive participants of the class with the joint effort of the form-teachers. Non-performing language captains can be stripped of their post if their disappointing performance persists;
 - 7.6.3 recommend well-performing students to join the rank of language captains after discussion with the form-teachers.
 - 7.6.4 file the information for report-card-writing reference;
 - 7.6.5 assist form-teachers in drawing up a list of well-performed language captains and non-language captains for commendation.

附錄：

**Assessment Form for Level of Participation in the School Language Policy
(For peer assessment and self-assessment)**

「語言政策」投入程度評估

(每位同學都必須予以評分，包括自評。)

語言大使

For each of the language captains listed below, please give an assessment of performance in terms of adherence to the language policy and taking responsibility in promoting the policy among their peers. Please put a tick in the appropriate box.

請按他們履行責任的表現(包括自己時刻緊記使用適切的語言，及積極推動同學講普通話 / 英語)，予以評分。

(1) Shows no commitment (5) Exemplary (See Appendix 1)

【1】敷衍塞責 ← — — — → 【5】積極盡責 (備註一)

Appendix 1

- Level 5 **Exemplary**: Strict adherence to language policy at all times within the school premises; dedicated efforts made in promoting policy among peers even when the latter shows indifference.
- Level 4 **Commendable**: Occasionally forgets his / her role but performance is as good as one receiving an Exemplary rating when remembers; good efforts made in promoting policy among peers even when the latter shows indifference.
- Level 3 **Average**: Regularly forgets his / her role but is willing to adhere to policy when remembers; half-hearted attempts made in promoting policy among peers; fails to persist when person spoken to shows indifference to policy.
- Level 2 **Unenthusiastic**: Always forgets his / her role but is willing to adhere to policy when *reminded* though not for long; poor attempts made in promoting policy among peers; gives up easily when person spoken to shows indifference to policy.
- Level 1 **Undependable**: Shows no commitment to uphold language policy; shows no understanding of the role of language captains.

備註一：

- 【5】積極盡責：在學校範圍內時刻緊記用英語或普通話與師長同學溝通，並致力推動同學積極參與；縱使與談者未肯配合仍堅持不餒。
- 【4】：偶然會忘記說適切的語言，但一旦記起，即馬上改正，並繼續盡力推動其他同學身體力行；若與談者未肯配合，仍努力堅持。
- 【3】：不時會忘記說適切的語言，但一旦記起，仍肯改正；推動同學方面未用全力；若與談者未肯配合，未盡能堅持不餒。
- 【2】：多忘記說適切的語言，一旦被提點，仍肯改正，但轉瞬又忘了；未注意推動「語

言政策」的責任；若與談者未肯配合，更不能堅持。

【1】敷衍塞責：與師長溝通，多講粵語；未明「語言大使」的責任。

For each of the students listed below, please give an assessment in terms of level of participation in the language policy. Please put a tick in the appropriate box.

一般同學，請按他們投入「語言政策」的程度，予以評分。

(1) Has never participated (5) Exemplary (See Appendix 2)

【1】未曾投入 ←——→ 【5】積極投入 (備註二)

Appendix 2

Level 5 **Exemplary**: Strict adherence to policy at all times within the school premises even when the person spoken to shows indifference to policy.

Level 4 **Commendable**: Occasionally forgets to adhere to policy but performance is as good as one receiving an Exemplary rating when remembers; tries hard to adhere to policy even when the person spoken to shows indifference to policy.

Level 3 **Average**: Regularly forgets to adhere to policy but will do so when remembers; fails to persist when person spoken to shows indifference to policy.

Level 2 **Unenthusiastic**: Always forgets to adhere to policy but will do so when *reminded* though not for long; gives up easily when person spoken to shows indifference to policy.

Level 1 **Undependable**: Shows no commitment to uphold policy; communicates freely in Cantonese be it with teachers or peers.

備註二：

【5】積極投入：在學校範圍內時刻緊記用英語或普通話與師長同學溝通，若與談者未肯配合仍堅持不餒。

【4】：偶然會忘記說適切的語言，但一旦記起，即馬上改正；若與談者未肯配合，仍努力堅持。

【3】：不時會忘記說適切的語言，但一旦記起，仍肯改正；若與談者未肯配合，未盡能堅持不餒。

【2】：多忘記說適切的語言，一旦被提點，仍肯改正，但轉瞬又忘了；若與談者未肯配合，不能堅持。

【1】敷衍塞責：與師長同學溝通，多講粵語。

Appendix 3 備註三：

Optional. To be completed in Chinese / English. 如有需要附加「額外描述」，請在此欄內填寫 (中、英文俱可)