

United Christian College (Kowloon East)

Feedback to the Comprehensive Review Report

**Compiled by the Comprehensive Review Team of Hong Kong University
(May 18 to May 22, 2009)**

As a whole, the school is pleased with the Comprehensive Review (CR) Report and would like to express heartfelt appreciation to the CR Team headed by Dr Pang Ming Fai. Being a new school, we are eager to improve the quality of education we provide. It is with this purpose that professors from The University of Hong Kong were invited to carry out the aforementioned review for us, so as to satisfy the requirements of the Education Bureau as well as in making professional suggestions for the betterment of the school.

The strengths in our school as observed by the CR Team are encouraging to our teachers and the school community. As a new school, we strongly believe that a supportive, cohesive and dedicated team of teachers is critical in laying a solid foundation towards the school's development. A harmonious school atmosphere and congenial parental support are also paramount for a new school towards orchestrating a good reputation in the education circle and community. With these beliefs and the concerted effort of the school leaders and teachers, the school has meticulously endeavored to achieve the goals set in the first five years of school development. The CR team affirms that we are successful in "accomplishing the high aspirations set out" and also commented that we have a "positive school ethos with family spirit, caring attitude and spiritual emphasis", and a "good reputation for offering quality Christian education in the community". Details are described in the Concluding Remarks of the Report.

Although we are a new school, we have been able to attract a number of very experienced teachers. Thus, only less than half of the teachers are of fewer than 5 years of teaching experience. The average years of teaching experience is about 9 years. Also, the zeal and spirit of teaching among the teachers are praise-worthy. According to the Teaching Performance in the Classroom Report, 54% of the teachers were ranked as good or above in teaching performance (with 16% being excellent), and only 6% were considered unsatisfactory. This is very encouraging to the school authority and to the teachers. I do trust that our teachers will continue to strive for

excellence in their teaching performance in the days ahead. The school expresses pride in its teaching team of dedicated, passionate and inspired teachers.

Besides what has been mentioned above, the school and our teachers are aware that the school will place greater emphasis and professional development in the aspects of learning and teaching. Thus, we welcome the suggestions made by experts from the different KLAs. Teachers found that the feedbacks of the professors after the lesson observations to be valuable and enlightening. They also benefited greatly from the interactions with the CR Team members. The school authority and the teachers would definitively make efforts to integrate the suggestions made into the learning and teaching aspects of the school under the umbrella of the school vision and mission.

As a DSS school, we have overtly created a certain kind of uniqueness in our school program, such as the Habits of Mind across the curricular program, Life and Study Skills subject, and a Third Language program. Similarly, we have intentionally modified the music curriculum by focusing on string orchestra in the junior form and vocal lessons in the senior form. Students “are not advised to play a string instrument on entering the school” (p.39, The CR Report). Students are required to learn to play a string instrument as it is in the curriculum and taught in lesson time. Nevertheless, the generic skills and the eight common core skills are integrated in the teaching process. This school-based music curriculum greatly deviates from the normal music curriculum in a regular secondary school. This is also why using a normal rubric to evaluate our music program may create great dissonance.

Lastly, the suggestions made in the area of management and organization to revisit management structure and operation of the school and staff development are well taken. In fact, as a new school, we have always been alert to improve the structure and operation of the school so that the school is ready and our staff are well-equipped to meet the needs of the students, parents and rapid changes of the environment.