

THE INVITING SCHOOL OBSERVATION REPORT 2009

School: Po Leung Kuk Camões Tan Siu Lin Primary School
Website: <http://www.plkctslps.edu.hk>
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INTRODUCTION

Po Leung Kuk Camões Tan Siu Lin Primary School (PLKCTSLPS) was first established in the 1950s by the Portuguese Community Education and Welfare Foundation Incorporated. The school was then run by Po Leung Kuk from 1996 before it became the first primary Direct Subsidy School (DSS) in Hong Kong. With the endorsement from the Education Bureau (Hong Kong) and the strong support of their sponsor, Po Leung Kuk, PLKCTSLPS has built a solid foundation of first 10 years in history.

To date with about 1000 pupil enrolment that includes 18-multinational groups, the Principal, Mr Derek Yeung, worked closely with his highly qualified teachers, parents, sponsors, community partners and alumni members to build a choice school in Hong Kong.

PLKCTSLPS started his first year journey with Invitational Education (IE). They have formed a core IE Committee comprising the Principal, Vice-Principal, Curriculum Leaders, Counselling and Guidance Leader as well as School Administrative Executive Manager to drive and infuse the philosophies of an inviting school throughout the school.

POLICIES

With a very cosmopolitan composition, PLKCTSLPS built their school strategic intent on policies which have challenging mix of school organization and development issues. The distinctiveness of the school lies in the rich language culture as key curriculum policy for all. Pupils may take up to the third language of their choice. The school has a unique combination of English as their medium of instruction, a second language of French or Chinese in Putonghua, and a third language which may include Basic Japanese, French or Putonghua. Strong emphasis on Arts Education is also another key focus for the school to develop the pupils' potential.

Anchoring on the school's vision of nurturing the whole child to his/her fullest potential with a caring, harmonious and stimulating environment, the school has adopted pupil-centric approaches in planning and implementing pupil development programmes.

The school has put in place many publications to share their vision, strategic intents and programmes with his stakeholders.

Suggestions for IE Endeavour:

After 10 years of good work, the school may wish to review the school policies for relevance by different stakeholders. The ground up feedback and suggestions collaborated will present fresh insights or interesting twists to enhance future plans and programmes. Even if most of the reviews are to remain status quo, the process of talking through the policies will deepen one's understanding and appreciation of the policy intents. Policies are man-made. If they can be worked through to ***motivate with*** the people involved, the benefits will be bountiful.

PEOPLE

As the day of my visit is a non-school day for the pupils, the interaction with people centred mainly with the Principal, vice-principal and the members of the IE Committee and a pupil guide.

The school is enriched with very strong sponsorship through the Po Leung Kuk. The parents and community partnership are evident from archives at school-wide event like the Open House and Annual Concert.

The school also incepted the formation of the alumni at an early stage of its history. The vibrancy of the alumni is evident and intentionally supported by selected staff. The support of parents at the PTA also augurs well for the school.

The school has free reign in their staff recruitment and selection as a DSS school. Whilst the teachers are highly qualified, energetic and open-minded, the school found that the composition has not translated to the desired level of camaraderie to date. Communication, collaboration and sense of belonging among teachers were cited as key areas of focus that the school will continue their reinforcement efforts.

Suggestions for IE Endeavour:

Rome is not built in a day. 10 years is certainly very young for culture to take root. Moreover, new teachers were inducted to the school over the past years as a DSS school. The strong result achievements are testimony to a very dedicated team of teaching and non-teaching staff. The school's proposed programmes and protected time for staff to enrich their competencies and overall professional development are indeed commendable. It may be of high mileage at such sessions to hand pick strong facilitators to bring out the best intended outcomes. As teachers engage their thoughts, the collective wisdom will certainly bring the team to greater heights. Besides within every teacher is rich professional knowledge that is unique to every school context. One of the tenets of IE is to approach with ***trust, respect*** and ***care*** towards one another, with ***optimism*** about one's potential. Such collaboration amongst staff will stimulate such values, especially when conducted in a safe and caring environment.

PLACE

PLKCTSLPS has intentionally provided many state of the art facilities for their pupils' learning. Amongst the regular facilities that most primary schools are endowed with, the

school has creatively structured programmes with a spacious multifunctional activity centre, a roofed all-weather swimming pool, musical theatre and many function rooms. The places are carefully thought through to complement the curricula. It is evident that the creative use of facilities extends beyond its core functions so that more pupils can be enriched with after school enrichment programmes.

Suggestions for IE Endeavour:

As many of the facilities are newly furnished, even more display of pupils and staff work will enrich, encourage and energise more to surge for greater heights against self and others to benchmark excellence.

Another consideration is to intentionally give priority to a staff area for enhancement. A choice area by the staff will be much appreciated and the results of improvement will certainly help ***motivate with*** their core needs.

PROCESSES

In the School Development Plan, it is evident that emphasis is placed on team spirit of staff and pupils as well as collaboration among teachers. The many programmes put in place for pupils and staff to achieve higher level of camaraderie put human resource as key priority to drive the outcomes of the school.

Suggestions for IE Endeavour:

Whilst there is an IE Committee incepted for their IE journey, more conversations amongst themselves and with colleagues from other IE schools may enhance clarity on the WHYs and WHATs of IE. The heightened clarity will bring interesting ideas of the HOWs the school can adapt across the 5 Ps (Policies, People, Places, Processes, Programmes) that will be uniquely theirs. The pupils are generally endowed with good home support. They and their parents may also be part of the learning and sharing processes of IE whenever the opportunity arises.

Whilst there can be much to be discussed, learnt and operationalised for the school's benefit, one key consideration is how PEOPLE can be encouraged to look within and grow that inviting self more intentionally. There are many programmes that can help staff and pupils understand their own temperaments, learning preferences better. Having a better self awareness can be a powerful step to appreciating others and that in turn can enrich any collaborative efforts to a stronger foundation. This is in line with the 4 corner-principle of IE, a key tenet which encourages ***one to take care of self whilst taking care of others, at the personal and professional fronts.***

With so many IE schools on board to date, partnerships may be established with other IE schools to share on a regular basis. It may be helpful for IE committee members to share their joy and challenges as well as adapt best practices from one another. Such sharing can be on top of those scheduled by IAIE(HK) as those may tend to be more school-wide type of sharing in nature.

One of the possible collaboration efforts with the community and partners is to have the school website address in all their publications and name cards for quick access and publicity.

PROGRAMMES

The core and co-curricula programmes in the school are extensive. They are conducted intentionally to cater for:

1. Self Management of pupils
2. Academic Excellence which focus on School-based Curriculum Development
3. IT in Education which focus on building platforms for self-learning and life-long learning
4. Team Spirit which focus on strengthening pupils' and teachers' sense of belonging, collaboration and coherence for striving for the best pupil performance

These programmes are planned in very detailed action time-line and reviewed closely for refinement. Results of the programmes are also tracked consistently to affirm the right enablers to continue the good work or reviewed for improvement, areas that are not performing to the desired mark. The school has enjoyed positive upward trends of results in the academic and non-academic pursuits. It is heartening for the stakeholders to thrive in such a positive learning environment. It is not surprising for the alumni to look forward to serving their Alma mata which they have enjoyed happy foundation school years.

Suggestions for IE Endeavour:

With the many programmes put in place, it may be helpful to look at deeper integration of learning outcomes of subjects so that it may not seem like one is doing more and more each year. The initiative of the school to integrate school events as curriculum is a high leverage to begin with. The school leader, staff, parents and pupils will certainly be able to put their collective wisdom to work at programmes that will reap much with less effort. The heightened **intentionality** to improve and make relevant, programmes for their stakeholders will prepare world-ready youths.

SUMMARY

Po Leung Kuk Camões Tan Siu Lin Primary School has achieved many academic and non-academic successes. The pupils are treated with much respect and care. Optimism, I believe, is in the core of everyone's belief and each has intentionally realized their beliefs with hard work and creativity.

I congratulate Mr Derek Yeung for his unwavering focus and strong leadership in building Po Leung Kuk Camões Tan Siu Lin Primary School towards a choice school. I am sure with continued support from all the stakeholders, PLKCTSLPS will establish itself with stronger foundation to reach out to the community the vision that Po Leung Kuk set out to achieve.