



Hong Kong Scotland School Improvement Partnership (HKSSIP)
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Reflections by Students and Teachers on the Visit to Hong Kong (22nd Sep to 29th Sep, 2017)

1. Describe, for you, ONE ‘professional’ highlight of the visit.

Written by Hong Kong Participants	Written by Scottish Participants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let students experience my lesson / English is the Scottish students’ first language / How do I make use of the native speakers to inspire my local students • Having PE lesson with the students • I hope I can join the English lesson with Scottish students because I want to improve my English and I want to know what their study way is. • My buddy followed me to attend the double lessons with me and this is an unforgettable experience for me. During the lessons, we talked a lot of things about personal or our life style. We had English, Mathematics and Liberal Studies lessons and my buddy told me about what subject they had and taught me toilet in French • I can share my school life to them. • I get to improve my speaking skills. • We have lessons together, and Rachel’s really good at Liberal Studies, we wrote essay together • For us, we went to Mongkok, because I think Mongkok is one of the most local place in Hong Kong, and I love to eat a lot, so I think Mongkok is the most ‘professional’ highlight in the visit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The opportunity to have professional dialogue with the senior leadership team and teaching staff. (Sharing good practice and ideas) • One highlight was how efficient the school was. I didn’t feel rushed at any point while I was at school due to how the bells were organized. • I enjoyed observing the methods of teaching in Law Ting Pong and comparing them to how subjects are taught in Edinburgh • It was great visiting the secondary school and seeing it from the pupil’s perspective and learning a different approach to teaching. • Being able to get a chance to write in Chinese characters • I found the different learning and exam styles in the school very interesting to learn about. These seemed to be a pressure to do lots of homework and to be punctual but the class lessons seemed surprisingly similar to ones in Scotland, if not slightly easier. • Learning about the education system and the differences between Scotland and HK • How the students always went back to their own classroom, allowing them move time to get close with each other throughout their school life. • Seeing how different the HK students reacted to us. The class really took an interest and were so friendly! The social culture in school is very different • It is reassuring, after all the curricular change in Scotland, to see that the level of material the students are having is pretty similar. I wondered if our students might find the material very challenging but they coped well, which suggests to me that we are managing to maintain a good standard. • I enjoyed feeling part of Law Ting Pong and making friends with people of all ages in the school. • Ocean Park

1. Describe, for you, ONE 'professional' highlight of the visit (continue)

Written by Hong Kong Participants	Written by Scottish Participants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I learned about the Scotland beaches or the cultures about Scotland and their school life. • To introduce the Chinese cuisine • I learned some Scottish English. And I also learned from the host student about the learning and school in Scotland school. • I learnt more English • I learned that in HK, the lessons are very boring for students from Scotland • I thought some activity for lesson can also invite the students from Scotland • Cultural exchange • Communicating in English / New ideas (creative) • The educational system is different. Diversity • Friendship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was great to experience both the familiar and alien aspects of school in Hong Kong and to gain a greater understanding of different teaching and learning styles across the world. • Experiencing how the high schools in HK compared to Scotland • The length of breaks is longer but so is the school day • The classes are more casual but the important rules (like speaking only English in English class) are followed without fault, unlike JGHS • 5 minute warning bell • The pupils were very welcoming and friendly / The Spanish lessons were really fun and entertaining • How much the students were involved in the running of the school: I loved the 'SA' and entire school assemblies, as I found that it gave pupils the chance to actively make changes for the better • Sharing examples of good practice with other professionals; celebrating the strengths of our two schools and being open and transparent about our deficiencies and areas for improvement • Having our own timetable instead of the same as our buddies • The inclusion within classes and the very warm welcome. Observing the teaching method • The partnership link and the opportunity to share practice has been the main area personally. We can learn from each other and being able to see my own subject area • The ICT lesson was very good. The robots allowed you to see the problem in your code making it easy for beginners • All lessons were organized, high quality and fun • Seeing how engaged the pupils were in maths in particular. Watching extremely engaging maths lesson in one primary class in particular (pupils working in group, to 'prove' a mathematical rule using different methods including technology and practical work). Also, seeing the very effective use of technology across the curriculum • The high level of the use of ICT resources. Computers, iPads, cameras etc. all of high quality. Resources were ready for teachers to use because of the excellent support staff.

2. Describe, for you, ONE ‘cultural’ highlight of the visit.

Written by Hong Kong Participants

- Living with the host family, it’s the real immersion! / too short, at least 10 days or 2 weeks
- How they live and the way they cook
 - Scottish people • Hong Kong people
 - Run fast • Not faster than them
 - Sport: golf • Sport: cycling
- Between Scotland and Hong Kong, our food culture (HK: rice-use chopstick, Scotland: spaghetti, breakfast-bread+jam)
- Language: Scotland: English, Putonghua ; HK: Cantonese, English
- They learn different languages and some are similar.
- Their learning is different from us, like we have P.E. lessons, though they have P.E. lessons, but we learn different topics.
- Hong Kong most family always eat out
- Most Hong Kong family eat out but Scottish people will cook themselves
- We ate dim sum together
- Buildings, castle (old historic) / Freedom
- Education system / It is easy to go to University in Scotland / Building 90s
- We went to Railway Museum, it shows the old railway in Hong Kong
- Me, my dad and Robert had visited the Tai Po Market (a real market), showed Robert what a Chinese medicine shop look like.

Written by Scottish Participants

- Bauhinia Square – great to actually see the place that we have only seen on TV or read about
- Visiting the Golden Bauhinia Square was an extremely interesting experience – feeling like being present in a part of history and very resonant to see its importance to Chinese visitors. Visiting the Peak + walking on the Governor’s Walk was also a highlight
- The prayers were organized well and everyone knew the words in Chinese
- The Peak is a wonderful place
- The market places and food were a good highlight as it was very different
- Generosity and kindness of everybody during our school visit. The staff, pupils, host families were all very kind and welcoming during a visit
- The market places and the amazing food!
- The different ways that the schools and kindergartens run
- The oppourtunity to discover ‘real’ Hong Kong and see beyond the tourist areas of TST and Central. Loved getting to know Sham Shui Po and Tai Po areas
- Trying all the local food. Eating at restaurants, corner shops and street vendors gave an amazing assortment of different foreign tastes and textures
- Delicious food
- The MTR and bus system
- The food was amazing, as was the weather. Mostly fine
- I was delighted to be able to immerse myself in the welcoming and vibrant atmosphere across Hong Kong in all the fantastic restaurants, tourist sites and shops we visited
- Seeing the differences in the education
- The Peak / Governors Walk
- I really enjoyed visiting the market
- The warmth and generosity of everyone involved – teachers, hosts, shadowing partners. We have been made to feel so welcome
- Getting to play the ruanqin and seeing how similar it was to Scottish instruments / Also: steamed bun!

2. Describe, for you, ONE ‘cultural’ highlight of the visit (continue)

Written by Hong Kong Participants	Written by Scottish Participants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We went to the Victoria harbour • We went to Tai Po Market to eat some Hong Kong snacks like fishball. • We went to eat Japanese food in Kowloon and also we went to eat some Hong Kong food, like rice noodles and also fishballs • They usually bath after dinner • I learned that Scotland is not hot and they don’t really have any restaurant of other places like they don’t really have Chinese restaurant • We went to one of the significant tourist spot – Mongkok. We took lots of pictures and it’s really ‘local’. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One cultural highlight of the trip was learning the manners that are supposed to be presented at restaurants. Also learning about the many Chinese celebrations in class at school • We were given presentations on different celebrations in Hong Kong such as the mid-autumn festival. We also got to try mooncakes. The presentations were entertaining and fun to observe • The Ping Shan heritage trail in Tin Shui Wai showed us the local area and the history at the people • Being able to eat Chinese food both with the host family at their home and in restaurants was insightful and interesting to see the different expectations and ways of eating food (such as the much sociable eating habits) e.g. Hotpot • Visiting Man Mo temple and doing the cultural things outside • It was interesting to just walk down the street and seeing all the different shops was really exciting • I loved visiting the Tai Po market and seeing the contrast between old and new Hong Kong • How the teachers and students interact – it is almost as though they are friends. I was told that teachers frequently buy students things to enhance their learning or reward their hard work • Staying in Sham Shui Po and being able to experience what most consider to be the ‘real’ Hong Kong. (e.g. eating in authentic Chinese restaurants)

3. Is there any ONE aspect which you would consider importing to Scotland from Hong Kong?

Written by Hong Kong Participants	Written by Scottish Participants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chinese food culture or cuisines • Chinese dance / food culture (can try to use chopstick) • Chinese dance: besides English, music is the kind of international language. We can share our Chinese dancing to Scottish and Scottish can share their local dance to us. • Our computer lesson, about S.T.E.M. education • Their Maths • Since Hong Kong is the 'heaven of food', so obviously it's food! • I think there is one, which is lantern and mooncake. It is because it is almost mid-autumn festival. So, I hope the culture can be brought back to Scotland. • I would consider a clean beach to Scotland from Hong Kong, because Scotland don't have a very clean beach and it would be sad if they don't have a beach. • I think the weather is important to them, because Hong Kong is very humid, not like other countries that comfortable, sometime at school the floor and the wall was full of water droplet • The food of Hong Kong and the food of Scotland are different • Lantern, rice cake and dim sum • Lantern, dim sum, hot pot and rice cake • I would bring a Chinese medicine store because unlike western medicine, the Chinese tried their best before saying you have to cut your body part away. • It is different kinds of food from other country in Hong Kong 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I was impressed with each subject area's handbooks and the wealth of information they contained. I am now considering putting together a similar brochure / handbook for the Faculty of Language at James Gillespie's High School. • Oh octopus card! These made travelling so easy, especially when going to and from school. It meant we could hop on and off various modes of transport so easily. • Their hospitality and knowledge about the city. My hosts family were lovely and were fantastic guides around Hong Kong. • The passes so the school can check pupils and also the P.E. kit • The weather (not the humidity!) Pocari sweat! • I think it is important for Scottish schools to teach Chinese language from a much younger age. Although we can now study it in S1, available in primary schools would be fantastic. Also the PE in Hong Kong made me feel very good. It was tiring but I think including core PE in Scotland would be good (in senior years) • An option to learn Cantonese as it is a very important language for Southern China and many people speak it • After school activities, it would make a school day in Scotland seems more fun and interesting and this will definitely make Scottish student develop more of their interests after school • I would bring back After-school activities, I like the idea of getting together and doing something you enjoy. Better technology, markets • Readily available after-school activities, comfortable uniforms, classroom microphones • Making time in class for reading in other languages – starting a modern languages library is the first thing in my to-do list. Pupils heve clearly value education I love how proud everyone is of their city and how welcoming everyone is • The way they teach maths • The maths level • The enthusiasm of some of the more senior pupils was worth learning from as they welcomed us with open arms and were happy to help us in any way they could, an attitude we could do with in Scotland

3. Is there any ONE aspect which you would consider importing to Scotland from Hong Kong? (continue)

Written by Hong Kong Participants	Written by Scottish Participants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cantonese / Chinese culture / Snacks • Eating habit is different. The culture of hotpot, Chinese music, BBQ park... • Octopus card and MTR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The card attendance system / Weather / the food / the student association • Swipe in-Swipe out register system or the MTR • Using languages more in school, swipe in swipe out with cards at school entrance / Bells before and after every lesson • The ‘warning bells’ – bells that ring five minutes before the end of class/break, allowing the students time to travel between classes • The way in which young people value/cherish education in Hong Kong and do not take it for granted • The experience of the host family / traditions • The weather / Pocky • The importance of languages in school, of course learning English is a big push in YYI but not so much on the use of language and importance in Scotland i.e. English Café etc. and reading time in HK in a foreign language. • The MTR as the octopus cards can be used everything is so helpful and the MTR is so cheap • The way they teach maths • iPad learning, snack and teachers moving classes • Above all – the immense passion for maths which was shown throughout!! • The use of support staff to support lesson delivery, rather than pupils. It was noticeable in both schools I visited that when teachers used iPads or other tech, these were presented, well maintained + ready to use, directly to the teacher. Similarly, resources on general were extremely well organized • The high level of organization

4. Is there any ONE aspect which you would consider exporting to Hong Kong from Scotland?

Written by Hong Kong Participants	Written by Scottish Participants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How Scottish schools strike the balance between academic subjects and other subjects like P.E. or Art or Music • seafood • How to play golf • Scottish languages, learn more languages • Our Computer lessons • Weather: Scotland is too cold, Hong Kong is too hot. • Scotland school was too big, Hong Kong school was too small • Scotland culture • Education system, freedom, diversity, active • Have learned more English and played some new game • I would bring one of the famous food in Scotland, Haggis, because I love food and I'd love to share it with my friends and family. • Snows and lower temperature • The temperature is higher in Hong Kong and Scotland is very cool. They walk fast because of cool. • Stay there for more days • Maybe I will bring the cold weather back • Going to school at 8:40 • The culture and food. Especially the history! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our emphasis on active learning, group work, co-operative learning • There did not appear to be much formative assessment, at least within the class itself. At various times, it worked like some pupils were struggling to complete written work, or showing misunderstandings, which might have been aided by more teacher intervention. Teachers tended to stay at the front of class and not observe pupils progress. • Less or no homework in younger primary ages • The way we do PE • Less stairs • Interactivity of classes to include cooperative and collaborative learning as well as active learning • Reading in Scotland we have 1 block/period a week just for reading • Our more holistic approach to assessment and opportunities to pass levels/qualifications over several years • Possibly a later class time – I found that it was hard to get up early enough so as not to be late, especially after a long evening of homework Many students also have a long commute to and from school • A later start in the school day • A greater focus on creative thinking, encouraging problem-solving and self-learning, rather than drilling • The more movement / teamwork in the class • I thought their music department could be improved • Interactive teaching/collaborative learning • Free subject choice and exam system • Better exam system that allows students to have more options • To have a more options for students when it comes to exam system • More flexibility in subject choices as there are many compulsory subjects (none after Form 4 in Scotland)

4. Is there any ONE aspect which you would consider exporting to Hong Kong from Scotland? (continue)

Written by Hong Kong Participants

Written by Scottish Participants

- I preferred the exam styles in Scotland, as taking different exams at different levels gives pupils more chance of success and practice in my opinion, choosing more subjects in the school in Hong Kong would be good too
- Encourage more music opportunities and activity to all subjects to show that pupils understand both academic and non-academic mind sets. No school uniform
- I think the schools should offer more sporting opportunities for pupils and add more PE lessons
- Perhaps a less strict dresscode, this was the thing I found most surprising as the dresscode at my own school is quite relax in comparison
- I don't feel it would be appropriate for me to suggest to another school areas that I consider need improving, however I would like to invite our partner school to observe lessons in our school which involve active and cooperative learning

5. Sum up in a paragraph the ‘essence’ of the exchange visit to you – sums it up for you and the impact.

Written by Hong Kong Participants	Written by Scottish Participants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living with the host family should be one of the highlights. If we do well in matching suitable family and student, both of them can benefit a lot! • Their traditional food • Their traditional food, how their education and the way they speak • It’s memorable and unforgettable experience for us. I met Rachel once last time in Edinburgh and she’s my host sister last time. I believe it’s fate! • Fantastic. • The most essence day is that My family and I brought Natalie to Cheung Chau to have a visit and ate a lot of snacks • We can know more about different countries’ culture and their daily life. • In this trip I can learn from the host student. What they will do in their daily life. And also they learned the Hong Kong culture. Like we learned each other. • This visit had made me learn lots more about Tai Po Market (or though I lived there before) and able to see new places like the Peak (I never went there before) • They can meet from our school can be two weeks • I learned about Scottish education system. I like it. It is because Scottish students don’t have major subjects and they can choose any subjects they like. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our trip to Hong Kong has given the opportunity to evaluate on our teaching practice and reflect on the effectiveness of our school. It confirmed for us which aspects of our school work effectively and it also highlighted areas where improvement is needed. I am returning to Scotland with lots of ideas and enthusiasm and can’t wait to share what I have learned with my colleagues back in Scotland. • I found the exchange really fascinating, despite both our cultures being so similar there are so many differences. The layout of the city is so beautiful, and it was so fantastic to meet such incredibly kind people • I enjoy putting myself in new situation and in this trip, I learned about Chinese culture and people, adding to my life experience • I loved every moment of it and would do it again. It was an experience that was really unique and enjoyable and the school was really welcoming. It was great life experience. • It was really good to see the changes from my school and the one in Hong Kong. I also loved meeting all the kids and teachers • Being able to visit the school and meet new friends was definitely a highlight. They took us out to try local foods and their excellent English allowed us to discuss the professional and cultural differences. Being with people my own age and adults in the form teachers and host families gave an excellent and invaluable insight into Hong Kong life away from a tourist’s perspective • An experience of the everyday youth culture in Hong Kong and to escape the commercial, tourist side at the city. We were able to see the lives at normal people and understand the differences between schools across the world • This exchange has been a great experience in terms of learning about how other educational systems work and the cultural differences between both schools. • I think that is was very hot and there were a lot of cultural differences but really enjoyed it • This exchange has been amazing for learning different culture and experiencing a different kind of living and education system. It left me thinking about the differences between the two countries. I loved being able to meet new people.

5. Sum up in a paragraph the ‘essence’ of the exchange visit to you – sums it up for you and the impact. (continue)

Written by Hong Kong Participants	Written by Scottish Participants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn about different culture, broaden my horizons, reflect myself, improve my deficiency, become more friendly. Assure the value of Chinese culture and help spread it. Think more creatively. Explore the world. • I can improve my English level a lot because I only speak English at school or talking with the worker who don't know how to speak Chinese. Now I can speak English to my parents, friends, classmates and teachers. • I make friends from another culture. I also speak more English and improve my English speaking skills. They learn some Cantonese from us. And go shopping with them in Mongkok. • Speak more English / Make new friends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A pure brilliant time, learned a fair bit about the English language and got better at people skills • I really hope this visit has been an eye-opener for both the Scottish students and the Hong Kong students. The cultural similarities will show them the strong global links that can be developed and the differences will show them how much we might learn from each other • I think the trip has helped me become more confident • It's very different in temperature, teaching, people, markets and greenery. I found it very exciting and interesting and very fun • I think the trip was very interesting. The trip made me notice that different parts of the world can be very different • The trip was a fantastic opportunity not only to bridge the gap between our home cultures, but also to reinforce their links that already exist, learning from each other, and all leaving with a greater understanding of the world • The exchange was thoroughly enjoyable. By staying with a host family I got to properly experience the life and culture of HK as well as seeing the touristy side. I got to attend the HK schools and compare the positives and negatives in comparison to Scotland • Very tiring and a shock to the system but overall enjoyable and worthwhile • The trip was very tiring but overall a very fun and enjoyable trip • Trying new things and seeing new places. Meeting new people and learning at new schools, experiencing new foods and travelling in new way. It was amazing to see the difference between large shopping malls and small street vendors, and to travel some students' long commute to school and their average day. I will never complain about early mornings or the heat ever again • It has reminded me of all of the possibilities and opportunities for collaboration and how we (schools) cannot work in isolation • I feel that this whole experience was incredible. It has encouraged me to join programmes like this if the chance comes, I felt welcome. The essence was all happy and enjoyable

5. Sum up in a paragraph the 'essence' of the exchange visit to you – sums it up for you and the impact. (continue)

Written by Hong Kong Participants

Written by Scottish Participants

- Friendship and partnership. I feel that from visits to both schools there is a lot we can learn from each other to improve our learning and teaching in both schools. Strong relationships have been formed and will continue to grow
- I really enjoyed it. My host family were very warm and welcoming. The fact that they spoke English and we went out places every day was great
- I've learned different maths sums and Music and PE
- Better learning opportunities
- The realization for our children that this was not just a holiday to a hot country, but a learning experience within a completely different culture, both within and out with school; and the energy + excitement which resulted.
- This exchange visit has shown aspects of Hong Kong life that could never be experienced on a holiday. Being allowed a glimpse inside and primary schools was amazing. As well as lots of difference the similarities are surprising. It emphasized that teachers no matter where they teach work hard for the good of their pupils

- End -