

Speech by CE at Grand Opening of French International School Tseung Kwan O Campus (English only) (with photos/video)

Following is the speech by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at the Grand Opening of French International School Tseung Kwan O Campus this afternoon (November 30):

Minister Lemoyne (Minister of State attached to the French Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Mr Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne), Ambassador Ripert (Ambassador of France to China, Mr Jean-Maurice Ripert), Consul General Giorgini (Consul General of France in Hong Kong and Macau, Mr Alexandre Giorgini), Mr Tran (Headmaster of French International School, Mr David Tran), ladies and gentlemen, and dear students,

Good evening. It is a great pleasure to join you today for the inauguration ceremony of French International School's Tseung Kwan O campus – its fourth and largest campus in Hong Kong.

I'm particularly pleased to welcome Minister Lemoyne to Hong Kong, whose presence has underscored the importance of this outstanding new education centre and Hong Kong-France relations. I last met Mr Lemoyne in France in June, when we witnessed the delivery of three new helicopters by Airbus to our Government Flying Service. I'm pleased to note that three more helicopters are expected to arrive from France in the next few days.

My Government is committed to developing a dynamic international school sector to meet the demand from our large and growing expatriate community, including of course the French community. It's why we support the development of international schools in a variety of ways, including the offering of vacant school premises and greenfield sites at low cost through the School Allocation Exercise. As a matter of fact, the site for this campus was allocated through the School Allocation Exercise in 2014. In the same exercise, we allocated sites to the Shrewsbury International School also here in Tseung Kwan O, which I opened last month, and the Malvern International School, which I will open in March next year. But I would say this is the best site of the three sites, so congratulations! Together with more than 50 other international schools, Hong Kong is home to the largest international school sector in Asia.

The French International School has much to be proud of. The school's Tseung Kwan O students, who will number more than 1 100 next year, have much to look forward to. It is because this new campus is absolutely stunning, and in so many ways – from the open-plan learning spaces to the lavish gardens and the sustainable approach to its construction and design.

I'm pleased to note, as well, that the campus' modern sports facilities and well-equipped auditorium will benefit members of the wider community as well as students. The campus will make its facilities available for hiring to outside organisations. That's in keeping with government policy to encourage collaboration between schools and the community.

The campus provides a unique multicultural learning experience for students of 40 nationalities through its French, English and IB curricula. I have no doubt that the new campus will continue in the fine tradition of excellence French International School has achieved from its beginnings here in 1963 as one of our first international schools.

My congratulations to French International School on the opening of your new Tseung Kwan O campus. I'm grateful to the governing board, supervisor, principal and teachers for their passionate dedication to education. As for the lucky students, I know you will enjoy this extraordinary school and the rewarding learning experience it would give you.

Thank you.

