

## Old boy to become SJI's new principal

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ST JOSEPH'S Institution (**SJI**) will get a new principal in an old boy, Dr Koh Thiam Seng, from January.

Only the second lay principal in the school's 156-year history, he takes over from Mr Benjamin Lui Seng Cheong, who will stay on in the school in a position yet to be decided.

Dr Koh, 48, a Roman Catholic and a product of the St Michael's-St Joseph's brand of education, is now the National Institute of Education's deputy director. He has been in education throughout his career, including stints as a teacher and at the Ministry of Education (MOE).

At **SJI**, he will look into "enhancing the quality of education" and work towards offering the integrated programme (IP), in which students skip the O levels and go on to take the A levels or International Baccalaureate at the end of six years.

**SJI** had previously submitted a proposal to MOE for the IP, but it was turned down. Dr Koh said: "IP is part of plans I'll look into. As the quality of **SJI** education improves, I'm sure we will have a strong case to go back to MOE."

He will plan for better integration of academic and non-academic programmes like character development, leadership and communication – the hallmark of an **SJI** education. He wants to rope in more old boys to contribute to the school.

**SJI** board chairman Noel Hon said the school aims to build on its traditions and good track record and Dr Koh, "with his excellent academic credentials, strong administrative abilities and proven leadership" is "eminently suited" for the job.

Mr Lui, 54, the school's first lay principal, said that, after having led the school for 11 years and taught there before that, he felt "a strong sense of commitment" to it and would rather stay on than serve as a principal elsewhere.

Under his leadership, **SJI** won MOE's Gold Value-Added School award four times from 2005 and attained Band 1 for academic results in the school achievement tables last year.

School supervisor, Brother Michael Broughton, said Mr Lui has "given the best years of his life in the service of our mission" and expressed gratitude to him on behalf of the De La Salle Brothers and **SJI** Board.

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