



AMBROSOLI
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL



School Improvement Plan

April 2009 – March 2012

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	3
Foreword – Chair of the Board of Governors	4
Foreword – Former Head of School.....	4
Foreword – Head of School.....	5
Abbreviations.....	6
1. Background	7
1.1 What is a School Improvement Plan?	8
1.2 Components of a School Improvement Plan	8
1.3 Working assumptions	9
2. Developing the School Improvement Plan.....	10
3. Vision, mission, philosophy and aims	11
4. SWOT analysis	13
5. School Improvement Plan: 2009 – 2012	14
6. Way forward: Using the School Improvement Plan....	23

Acknowledgements

We are very grateful to the children, parents and staff who kindly provided input into this document's consultation process, and look forward to your future contributions to ensure the school's continued development.

1 July 2009

Members of the School Improvement Plan Board Committee

Mr Richard A. Powell – Member of the Board of Governors

Ms Briony Ewing – Head of School

Dr Richard Brough – Parent

Dr Faith Mwangi-Powell – Parent

Ms Nicci Martin – Business Manager

Mr Steffen Ferwerda – Teacher

Mr Frido Herinckx – Vice Chairman of the Board of Governors

Foreword – Chair of the Board of Governors



It is my pleasure to welcome you to the latest School Improvement Plan (SIP) for Ambrosoli International School.

The SIP outlines the school's development agenda for the period April 2009 – March 2012, an agenda that is realistically ambitious, and which has at its heart the notion of *quality*, with quality improvement planning evident across a diverse range of school work areas.

I am confident that this SIP will provide Ambrosoli International School's planned development with the unambiguous direction necessary to ensure that the school remains one of the most desirable educational institutions to which families living in Uganda send their young children, safe in the knowledge that they will develop both educationally and as rounded human beings.

Robert Kabushenga
Chairman of the Board of Governors

Foreword – Former Head of School



Ambrosoli International School is a very special institution that prides itself on constant improvement for the betterment of its children. The SIP is a critical document that not only sets out our long-term goals, but also provides a framework that guides the day-to-day actions of our teachers and pupils, and lastly enables us to be more effective and efficient, partly by directing our finances to their best use. In this respect, the SIP is a very important tool which will be updated annually to ensure that the school continues to move in the right direction.

The school's governors, staff, pupils and parents all provided input into the development of the SIP; I thank all for their contributions. I urge all stakeholders to continue their involvement in the strategic planning process over the coming years so that the schooling provided for the Ambrosoli children (in terms of the quality of teaching offered and the physical environment within which that takes place) is the best for them all.

Briony Ewing
Former Head of School

Foreword – Head of School



Like the Board of Governors (BoG), I am delighted to work at a school that already has a comprehensive SIP in place, and am very grateful to the members of the BoG committee responsible for its development.

The fact that the SIP exists means that, in my role as Head of School, I can concentrate on its effective delivery, and ensuring that updates on its implementation are communicated to the school's key stakeholders.

I look forward to undertaking that work and maintaining an open dialogue with the staff, parents and children at Ambrosoli International School regarding the SIP as we progress over the coming years.

Rachel Rice
Head of School

Abbreviations

BM	Business Manager
BoD	Board of Directors
BoG	Board of Governors
HoS	Head of School
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ILN	Individual Learning Needs
MT	Management Team
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure

1. Background

‘Man is small, and, therefore, small is beautiful.’

- Ernst Friedrich Schumacher¹

From its origins as an exclusively Italian school named after the expatriate physician Dr Giuseppe Ambrosoli (1923-87), and since its inception as a truly diverse international school, Ambrosoli has grown rapidly. Over the last five years the number of pupils attending the school has increased from approximately 40 to nearly 240, the maximum the school can accommodate in its attempts to ensure small teaching classes with a low student : teacher ratio.

Despite this growth, we remain one of the smallest international schools in Kampala, and this is one of our greatest comparative strengths. The maxim that ‘small is beautiful’ is one that the school openly and proudly embraces, confident in the knowledge that the scale of the educational institution affects the nature of the educational experience. A smaller school can foster an intimacy of contact that affects not only our children, but also our parents and staff, creating a *true community* in which individuals are known and valued rather than lost within the collective.

However, such a rapid increase in pupil numbers invariably has implications for the effective management of a school. Increases in organisational scale mean that processes and procedures must be instituted to ensure that the school functions effectively.

Consequently, the BoG, in consultation with key staff at the school, established a number of committees to ensure that issues, such as communication, affecting everyday school life could be managed and the future direction of the school – underpinned by our vision and mission statements, which embodies a commitment to quality across the school – could be realised. These BoG committees are: Governance; Finance; Communication; Curriculum Development; Health and Safety; Personnel; and the School Improvement Plan (SIP).

The following three-year SIP for the school is a result of that committee’s work.

¹ E.F. Schumacher (1973) *Small is beautiful: A study of economics as if people mattered*. Blond and Briggs.

1.1 What is a School Improvement Plan?

Whilst ‘perfection is the enemy of the merely good’, with excess planning being as unproductive as under-planning, without some degree of robust strategic² planning for its future, any organisation is likely to at best function ineffectively and at worst fail. This scenario applies equally to educational institutions as it does to health service providers or commercial businesses. The increasingly complex nature of management (addressing dynamic environments in a way that is accountable and transparent), requires a proactive rather than reactive approach to decision-making that can guide the development of an organisation. This is especially applicable to international schools, which routinely operate in an environment that is subject to the vagaries of the economy, and changes in the corporate and diplomatic worlds.

Moreover, there is an increasing importance attached to strategic planning by accreditation agencies, which look for evidence of long-range educational planning (as embodied in a SIP) that will enable a school to accomplish its developmental goals.

1.2 Components of a School Improvement Plan

A SIP is generally comprised of the following elements:

- What do we want to be?: *the vision* – which normally refers to what the school would like to look like in 3-5 years time.
- What do we do to achieve that in general?: *the mission*.
- What ethical body informs our efforts?: *the values / philosophy*.
- How do we achieve our vision more specifically?: *the objectives & activities*.
- When do we achieve it?: *the timeframe*.
- With what do we achieve it?: *the resources needed*.
- How are we doing?: *periodic reviews*.

This document, which outlines these component parts of the SIP for Ambrosoli International School for the period April 2009 – March 2012, is based upon a number of working assumptions.

² The term ‘strategic’ is often used interchangeably with ‘development’, ‘long-term’, or ‘long-range’ planning.

1.3 Working assumptions

The following working assumptions (see Table 1) are consensus statements that are held to be valid for the time period covered by this document and, importantly, underpin and frame the parameters of the SIP.

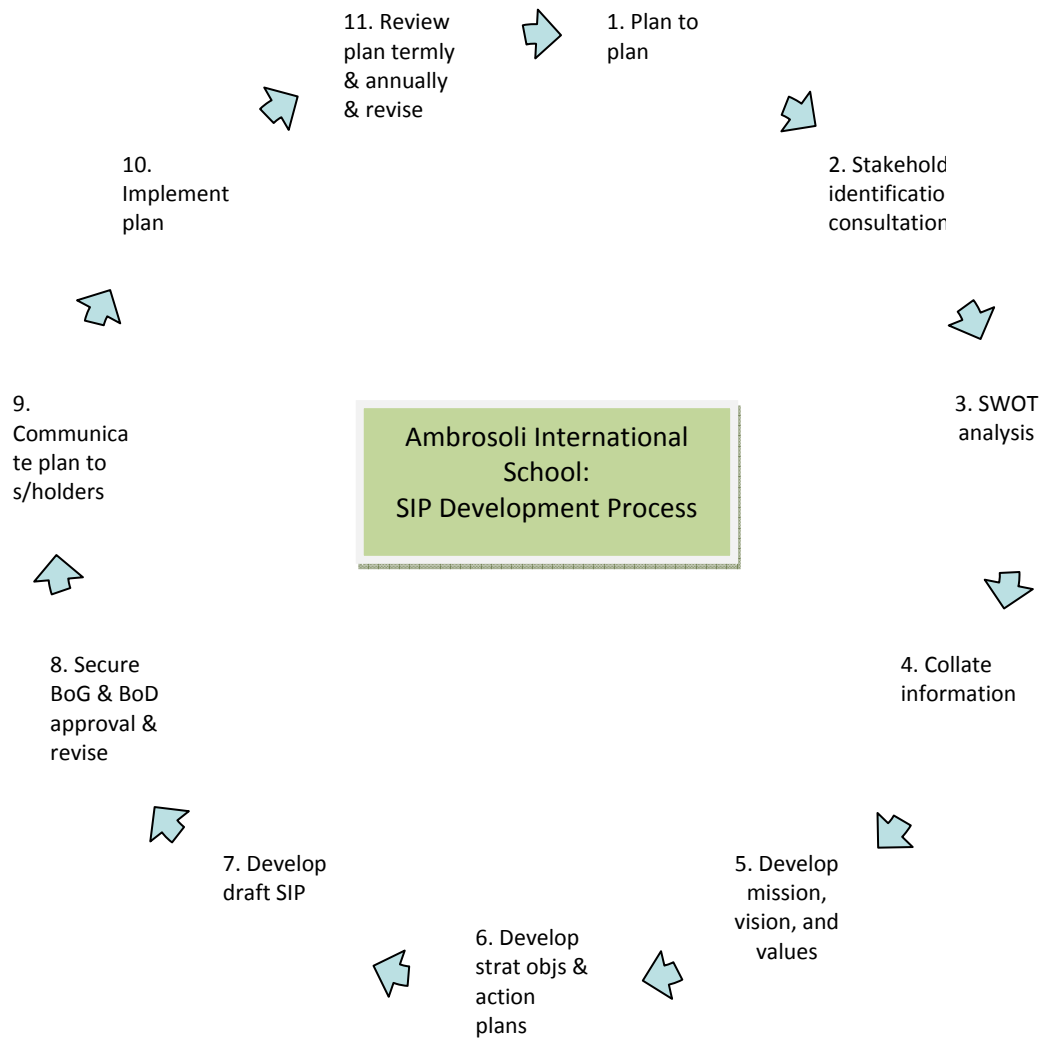
Table 1: Working Assumptions for the SIP

Assumption #	Key Working Assumptions
1	100% of class teachers have internationally-recognised qualifications or at least one teacher in each class has internationally-recognised qualifications.
2	The total number of students in the school will not exceed 240 and no class will exceed 20 students.
3	Siblings of children already enrolled will be given priority for admission.
4	Students would never be asked to leave because of the limit to the number of students in a class.
5	Ambrosoli will retain the British curriculum in the three years covered by the SIP.
6	Tuition fees will be reviewed annually and take into consideration the SIP.
7	There are no special non-regulatory constraints on construction or use of the land currently owned by the School.
8	Ambrosoli will undertake preparatory work to achieve international accreditation as an educational institution.
9	Ambrosoli will not develop classes beyond class 6.

2. Developing the School Improvement Plan

The following 11-step flow-chart (see Figure 1) depicts the planning process by which the school SIP was developed.

Figure 1: The SIP Development Process



In the spirit of inclusivity that permeates Ambrosoli International School, and to ensure that the SIP development process was an inclusive and collaborative manner, Step 2 entailed a number of consultative opportunities for the school's key stakeholder groups (i.e. children, parents, and staff).

3. Vision, mission, philosophy and aims

The vision, mission, philosophy and aims of Ambrosoli International School are:

Vision To consolidate and enhance our reputation as a leading international primary school in Uganda and East Africa.

Mission To strive for excellence in education in an environment that treasures and challenges each individual.

Philosophy We believe in empowering individuals with knowledge, skills, values and self belief so that they can succeed now and in the future. The best education is achieved in a caring, supportive family environment, in which children participate in a community which values diversity and prepares them for responsible behaviour in a global society.

Aims The school aims to:

1. Be a small, happy, family-orientated school.
2. Have a friendly, exciting and safe environment that values and nurtures each individual, enabling them to reach their full potential.
3. Provide a broad and balanced education based on the National Curriculum for England enhanced to reflect and optimise the international nature of our school and out location in Uganda.
4. Value and promote a high level of participation with parents and carers in order to best meet the needs of each child.
5. Recognise, respect and celebrate the international diversity within our school community.
6. Enable each individual to meet creative, intellectual and physical challenges with confidence and belief in themselves.
7. Encourage children to develop skills to enable them to solve problems and find solutions.
8. Have a high quality of teaching and learning to inspire creative, active, independent life-long learners.
9. Value and foster personal qualities of honesty, integrity and respect.

In the tabulated version of the SIP outlined in Section 5, where applicable, strategic goals are linked numerically in a dedicated column to the relevant school aim/s.

4. SWOT analysis

A SWOT (i.e. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis is a method used to determine the internal and external factors that are favourable and unfavourable to achieving specific objectives or identifying developmental areas. Table 2 presents, in no order of priority, the most pertinent of these factors that characterise and confront Ambrosoli International School.

Table 2: SWOT analysis of Ambrosoli International School

	FAVOURABLE	UNFAVOURABLE	
INTERNAL	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family-orientated environment Educational reputation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual Learning Needs (ILN) Data collection systems (e.g. for measuring baseline performance and educational improvement) 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small size school and teaching ratios 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation and ownership of standard operating procedures (SOPs) 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behaviour of children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership succession planning 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective parental support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication systems and materials 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loyal local staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information and communication technology (ICT) resources 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competitive fee pricing advantage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff planning 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexibility of comparative fee structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development and retention of quality staff 	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BoG development committees
	EXTERNAL	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Becoming a training establishment linked to an overseas university 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adverse economic environment 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growing staff costs to address competitor international school advantage 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased primary educational reputation of competitor international schools 	

5. School Improvement Plan: 2009 – 2012

Strategic Intent	School Aim/s #	Activities	Indicators	Team Leader	Committee	Priority (1/2/3) ³
<i>Strategic Goal 1 – To Provide an Educational Experience that Enables Every Student to Reach their Academic and Physical Potential</i>						
<i>Strategic Objective 1.1 – To Enable the Achievement of Academic Potential</i>						
1.1 – To achieve each student’s academic potential	2,6,7	1. Collect diagnostic assessment data for each new student within first month as baseline data.	Assessment data held in individual student file and electronic database.	Business Manager (BM)	N/A	1
		2. Continue to develop a structured assessment system over time for comparative data.	Assessment system is in place.	BM & HoS	N/A	1,2,3
		3. Continue to analyse and report on student’s comparative assessment data.	Timetable for student assessment reports are reported to stakeholders and reports disseminated to parents.	BM & HoS	N/A	1
		4. Develop parental understanding of the assessment system.	Information exchange system (e.g. parent-teacher meetings, PTA educational sessions, school documentation) regarding assessment	HoS	N/A	1

³ These priority codes relate to the time period covered by this SIP: i.e. 1 = Year 1; 2 = Year 2; and 3 = Year 3. Some strategic work areas may extend over more than one priority time period.

Strategic Intent	School Aim/s #	Activities	Indicators	Team Leader	Committee	Priority (1/2/3) ³
			and achievement is in place and operational.			
		5. Develop and implement an Individual Learning Needs (ILN) programme with appropriate tiering and networking to available additional ILN resources.	A comprehensive ILN programme in place.	ILN LEAD	N/A	1
		6. Review effectiveness of the ILN programme.	Review undertaken of the ILN programme with all relevant stakeholders.	HoS	N/A	2

Strategic Objective 1.2 – To Enable the Achievement of All-Round Potential

1.2A – To improve the scope and content of the extra-curricular activities	2,6	1. Enhance programmatic activities and monitor for quality and balance.	Increased number of activities and structured positive feedback from students and parents.	HoS	CURRICULUM	1,2
		2. Develop a structured programme of field trips and activities linked to the curriculum.	A structured field trip programme in place.	HoS	CURRICULUM	1,2
1.2B – Improve the physical abilities of students	6	1. Review and introduce an inclusive but team-based approach for school representation as appropriate.	a. A clear team-based approach is in place and technical programmes developed. b. Improvement in school team performances.	PE LEAD	CURRICULUM	1,2

Strategic Intent	School Aim/s #	Activities	Indicators	Team Leader	Committee	Priority (1/2/3) ³
		2. Introduce other sporting activities into curriculum (e.g. long-jump).	Unused available land developed to accommodate curriculum enhancements.	PE LEAD	CURRICULUM	1,2
		3. Enhance existing sporting resources.	New sporting resources purchased and used.	PE LEAD	CURRICULUM	1,2
1.2C – To meet the social and emotional needs of each student	2,7	1. Develop and implement a social and emotional care programme tailored to students' needs.	A structured social and emotional care programme in place.	HoS	CURRICULUM	1,2
		2. Review the effectiveness and suitability of the pastoral care programme.	Feedback gathered from students, parents and staff.	HoS	CURRICULUM	3

Strategic Goal 2 – To Recruit, Develop and Retain Excellent Staff

Strategic Objective 2.1 – To Recruit Excellent Staff

2.1 – To recruit experienced and nationally diverse staff to implement the curriculum	8	1. Develop a comprehensive staff profile and identify deficits.	Human resource plan in place.	BM & HoS	PERSONNEL	1
		2. Review existing budget for expatriate and local staff.		BM & HoS	FINANCE	1
		3. Develop advertising strategy (and tools) to target		BM & HoS	COMMUNICATION	1

Strategic Intent	School Aim/s #	Activities	Indicators	Team Leader	Committee	Priority (1/2/3) ³
		appropriate staff.				
		4. Redesign website to promote the school to potential staff members.		ICT LEAD & BM	COMMUNICATION	1

Strategic Objective 2.2 – To Develop Excellent Staff

2.2 – To develop experienced and diverse staff to implement the curriculum	8	1. Review existing staff professional development programme.		HoS	PERSONNEL	1
		2. Revise and enhance INSET staff professional development programme so that it is transparent and equitable within financial constraints.	Comprehensive staff professional development programme in place.	HoS & BM	PERSONNEL	2
		3. Develop quality internship-linked programme with an overseas university.	a. Agreement with overseas university in place. b. System reviewed by all relevant stakeholders and appropriate modifications implemented.	HoS	PERSONNEL	1,2,3
		4. Address staff human resource issues more effectively.	Staff in place with responsibility for HR issues.	HR	PERSONNEL	2

Strategic Intent	School Aim/s #	Activities	Indicators	Team Leader	Committee	Priority (1/2/3) ³
		5. Develop a clear career pathway for teaching assistant staff.	A structured career pathway in place.	HoS & BM	PERSONNEL	1,2

Strategic Objective 2.3 – To Retain Excellent Staff

2.3 – To retain experienced and diverse staff to implement the curriculum	8	1. Develop & implement a rigorous system of appraisal, supervision and mentoring.	Rigorous system in place.	HoS	PERSONNEL	1,2
		2. Develop a comprehensive database system to profile staff over time.	Database developed and operational, collecting data on variables such as age, qualifications, length of teaching experience, length of time in school etc.	BM & HoS	PERSONNEL	1
		3. Develop a thorough exit survey & system for all departing staff and document data.	Exit survey and documentation systems in place and operational.	HoS	PERSONNEL	1

Strategic Goal 3 – To Provide a High Quality Educational Curriculum that is Internationally Orientated

Strategic Objective 3.1 – To Provide a High Quality Educational Curriculum

3.1 – To provide a high quality educational curriculum	3,7,8	1. Implement the new mathematics policy among staff.	New mathematics policy understood and accepted.	ALL	CURRICULUM	1
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Strategic Intent	School Aim/s #	Activities	Indicators	Team Leader	Committee	Priority (1/2/3) ³
		2. Review the mathematics resources for the policy and update accordingly.	Review of mathematics resources undertaken and updated.	HoS	CURRICULUM	2
		3. Finalise the music curriculum.	Finalization of music curriculum undertaken and operational.	MUSIC LEAD	CURRICULUM	1
		4. Review the music curriculum and revise accordingly.	Review of music curriculum undertaken and revised curriculum operational.	HoS	CURRICULUM	2

Strategic Objective 3.2 – To Provide an Internationally Orientated Educational Curriculum

3.2 – To provide an internationally orientated educational curriculum	3,5,8	1. Review the suitability of the existing curriculum for an international context and revise accordingly.	Review of curriculum undertaken and revised curriculum operational.	HoS	PERSONNEL	2
		2. Undertake preparatory work to apply for international accreditation as an educational institution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Application documentation available and processes understood. b. Committees formed to advance the preparatory work. c. Work schedule for preparatory period developed. 	HoS	PERSONNEL	1,2,3

Strategic Goal 4 – To Provide Transparent, Quality Strategic and Operational Leadership and Governance

4.1A – To develop mechanisms to ensure continuity and quality in the Board of Governors	N/A	1. Develop a clear succession planning model for BoG membership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. SOP in place. b. Majority of the BoG members serve a minimum of 2 years. 	BoG CHAIR	GOVERNANCE	1
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Strategic Intent	School Aim/s #	Activities	Indicators	Team Leader	Committee	Priority (1/2/3) ³
		2. Collect profiling data on BoG members.	Database developed and operational, collecting data on variables such as age, qualifications, length of time on BoG, skills etc.	BM	GOVERNANCE	1
		3. Conduct annual BoG training workshop regarding development, governance and related school issues.	BoG members increasingly knowledgeable and effective.	BoG CHAIR	GOVERNANCE	1,2,3
		4. Conduct an annual appraisal of the BoG members' performance.	System for appraisal in place and appraisal results available.	BoT	GOVERNANCE	1,2,3
4.1B – To develop transparent mechanisms for reporting on the composition and activities of the Board of Governors	N/A	1. Develop dedicated pages on the website for BoG member profiles, BoG committees and related terms of reference.	Web pages developed, operational and updated regularly.	ICT LEAD & BM	COMMUNICATION	1
		2. Develop regular update channels for feedback to stakeholders.	Newsletter contributions and a Board of Governors annual report developed and distributed.	HoS	COMMUNICATION	1
4.1C – To develop a mechanism to ensure the performance quality of the Head of School (HoS)	8	1. Develop a timetabled performance monitoring and performance system to track achievements against agreed goals.	A performance monitoring and reporting system in place.	BOG CHAIR	PERSONNEL ⁴	1

⁴ This could entail the development of a three-member sub-committee.

Strategic Intent	School Aim/s #	Activities	Indicators	Team Leader	Committee	Priority (1/2/3) ³
4.1D – To establish a succession plan for the HoS	N/A	1. Identify the characteristics and experience needed for the next HoS.	Human Resources HoS succession plan in place.	BoG CHAIR / HoS	PERSONNEL	2
		2. Identify the resources and strategy needed to recruit the next HoS.				2
4.1E – To develop mechanisms to ensure quality in the Management Team (MT)	8	1. Develop a system of professional development tailored towards individual members of the MT.	System of professional development in place.	HoS	PERSONNEL	1
		2. Conduct a termly appraisal of the MT's performance.	System for appraisal in place and results available.	HoS	PERSONNEL	1,2,3
		3. Develop and implement a system to ensure that school SOPs are followed.	System for monitoring SOP adherence in place.	HoS	PERSONNEL	1,2,3
<i>Strategic Goal 5 – To Promote the Development of Quality Educational Resources</i>						
5.1 – To review existing school infrastructure	2,6	1. Conduct a maintenance review of the existing infrastructure.	Maintenance review conducted.	BM	FINANCE	1
		2. Develop a maintenance programme and schedule.	Maintenance programme and schedule in place.	BM	FINANCE	1
		3. Conduct a critical comparative analysis regarding the potential development of	Review undertaken and recommendations for development work (e.g. swimming pool versus other options, such as additional classes)	BM	FINANCE	1

Strategic Intent	School Aim/s #	Activities	Indicators	Team Leader	Committee	Priority (1/2/3) ³
		undeveloped land.	proposed.			
5.2 – To develop existing educational resources	8	1. Enhance existing ICT resources.	Increased number of computers in each classroom.	HoS & BM	CURRICULUM / FINANCE	2
		2. Explore and improve internet service options.	Improved internet connectivity.	BM	CURRICULUM	2
		3. Enhance technical skills of ICT staff (including web design and maintenance).	Enhanced ICT teaching options available and improved website.	HoS	PERSONNEL	2
		4. Review cost-effectiveness and sustainability of interactive teaching boards.	Review undertaken and recommendations proposed.	BM	CURRICULUM / FINANCE	1
5.3 – To develop funding for non-routine resource development	N/A	Develop an income-generation plan for significant developmental work (i.e. a non-contingency funding base).	Income-generation plan in place.	HoS / BM	FINANCE	2,3

6. Way forward: Using the School Improvement Plan

Clarifying the future direction of Ambrosoli International School is a demanding process, forcing one to recognise existing challenges in order to initiate remedial actions to ensure successful future development. The question then becomes: 'What next?'

In order to ensure that the SIP is a 'live' document that informs daily work practises, it is important that there is a clear and tangible connection between the SIP, the school's workplans (especially those of the HoS, the BM, MT, and the BoG committees), and the budget necessary to support those plans. In short, the broad brush strategic planning agenda outlined in this document has to be operationalised to ensure the SIP is made a reality.

Importantly, however, it is critical that the work initiated to realise the measurable goals outlined in this SIP are rigorously monitored and evaluated throughout the next three years on a regular basis, with the results of that exercise disseminated to the school's various stakeholders. It is envisaged that the component parts of this review will entail:

- A fortnightly review undertaken by the HoS and the MT, in consultation with the BoG committees;
- A termly review with the BoG, led by the HoS, with input from the BoG committees.
- An annual review meeting, conducted at the penultimate BoG meeting of the year, which will be fed back to the school's stakeholders in the form of an annual report.

These review meetings will be a combination of reflective learning events and information dissemination opportunities that will:

- Critically assess progress against key deliverables and inform forthcoming work to ensure that the SIP continues to be delivered;
- Inform any necessary revisions that need to be made to the SIP in the light of practical experience, and;
- Provide the data necessary to ensure that the parental community is aware of the school's developments via the Chair of the BoG and the HoS as part of regular communications in the school newsletter and the end-of-year annual report.

Lastly, in the second year of the SIP, plans will be put in place to conduct a similar SIP development process for the period April 2012 – March 2015.

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