

# Certification Inspection Report

BRITISH COLUMBIA PROGRAM

*at*

BRITISH COLUMBIA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, BANGKOK

BANGKOK

THAILAND

NOVEMBER 10-11, 2020

## INTRODUCTION

On November 10-11, 2020, an online certification inspection was completed on British Columbia International School, Bangkok (BCISB) in Bangkok, Thailand, referred to as the School in this report. The purpose of this inspection was to determine whether the requirements for the British Columbia (BC) education program have been met, according to the *BC Global Education Program – Offshore Schools Certification Agreement*. The inspector, appointed by the Executive Director of Independent Schools and International Education, British Columbia Ministry of Education (MoE) in accordance with the *BC Global Education Program – Offshore Schools Certification Agreement* (the Agreement), was Hugh Gloster (the Inspector).

The School's BC program has an enrolment of 23 students, in grades 10, 11 and 12. The School also offers students and their families a pre-kindergarten to grade 9 program on the same campus. Students in these grades are enrolled in a school-based international curriculum that helps develop English language skills amongst the population. The program is designed so that students can successfully transition from it into the BC graduation program. The entire School, which houses the BC program, enrolls approximately 170 students. This represents an increase from the 145 students who were on campus last year.

During the visit to the School, the Inspector reviewed all standards required in the *BC Global Education Program – Offshore Schools Certification Agreement* and *Operating Manual* and met with the School's Owner/Operator, International Director and International Deputy Director, Offshore School Representative (OSR), BC Principal, BC vice-principals, academic advisor, BC teachers, BC program students and support staff.

The Owner/Operator, Dr. Pakdee Tharnpanya, is responsible for the entire school, including the pre-kindergarten to grade 9 program as well as the BC program. Dr. Pakdee is also involved in operating a number of other educational institutions under his Tharnpanya Group, including a



large private Thai school that is adjacent to BCISB. At the post-secondary level, he also operates a technical university as well as other colleges.

The BC program’s philosophy, objectives and special features include:

“to produce global-minded critical thinkers ready to undertake university level education in quality English speaking universities world-wide”. The School states that it “focuses on preparing the students of today for the world of tomorrow”.

The Inspector would like to thank BCISB for its cooperation and preparedness for the online inspection visit.

<b>The School has satisfactorily addressed requirements contained in the previous inspection report.</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirement Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
<p>Comment:</p> <p>The School responded to the three requirements contained within the October 2019 inspection report. This included necessary revisions to the student, teacher and administrator files to ensure compliance with the required inclusions, as well as adjustments to grade 9 report cards in the feeder school program.</p> <p>While the School did ensure that all teacher and student files contained consent forms, they were not updated using the current template. This results in requirements in sections 2.09 and 2.10 of this report to complete and file the appropriate consent forms.</p>			

### BUSINESS PLAN 1.0

<b>The Owner/Operator has submitted a business plan to the BC Ministry of Education, confirming the sustainability of the program.</b>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met
<p>Comment:</p> <p>The Owner/Operator, Dr. Pakdee Tharnpanya, has filed a business plan with the BC Ministry of Education that contains the required elements. Recognizing that the online inspection was taking place while the School was having to deal with the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, emphasis was still being placed on providing a quality education program and enhancing student learning.</p> <p>Total enrolment for grades 10-12 has shown a modest increase since last year (23 compared to 13 for 2019/20). This increase was partly attributed to Thai nationals who would normally study in BC but chose to attend BCISB instead.</p>		



In terms of sustainability, the School has steady enrollment projections for the coming five years, while also recognizing the number of international schools in the area who compete for many of the same clientele. To increase their enrollment the School has hired two full-time bilingual marketing employees and they have also adopted a number of other strategies to connect with parents and members of the Canadian expat community. Facility improvements have also been made in an attempt to make the school even more attractive to prospective clients, including a full-sized swimming pool to house the new aquatics program. Recognizing that the K-9 classes on the same campus feed into the BC program, the School is constructing new classrooms for an expanded pre-kindergarten offering.

The School has also leveraged technology to enhance both the delivery of the educational program as well as communication with parents. Having much of this infrastructure in place prior to the pandemic, made it easier to support students when they were forced to continue their studies at home.

In order to further enhance both the quality of education and the School's reputation, the decision has also been made to pursue the Accrediting Commission for Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges accreditation (commonly referred to as WASC). The School is nearing the end of a six-year process used to monitor student learning and set school improvement goals. The culmination of this self-study process will include a virtual visit to confirm the schoolwide action plan.

**Commendation:**

The Owner/Operator is commended for the ongoing commitment to facility improvements that help to enhance the school for existing students and staff and make it an attractive alternative for prospective families.

The School is commended for the efforts of all stakeholders to complete the WASC self study and accreditation process.



## INSPECTION CATALOGUE 2.0

<b>2.02 The Owner/Operator meets all requirements as set forth in the BC Global Education Program Offshore Schools Certification Agreement (the Agreement).</b>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met
<p>Comment:</p> <p>The Owner/Operator has satisfied the Province's requirements and has continued to receive authorization to operate BCISB as a certified British Columbia offshore school.</p>		

<b>2.03 The Owner/Operator has written approval from the appropriate government entity to operate the offshore school, as outlined in section 5.03 of the Agreement.</b>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met
<p>Comment:</p> <p>The Inspection confirmed that certified correct translations of the following governmental approval documents were on file at the School:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The original (2006 – non-expiring) license providing for the establishment of the school from the Secretary-General of the Private Education Commission for Bangkok;</li> <li>• The 2014 Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (ONESQA) approval to operate a BC offshore school. (Inspections typically happen every 5 years and are scheduled by ONESQA. The current approval remains valid until the reinspection is scheduled.</li> <li>• The 2011 approval from the Office of the Private Education Commission to relocate the school to its current location.</li> </ul>		

<b>2.04-2.05 The School meets local building, safety and cafeteria codes and regulations. The facilities are deemed to be suitable to support the BC program.</b>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met
<p>Comment:</p> <p>The Inspector confirmed that certified correct translations of the following building, safety and cafeteria approval documents were on file with the school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 2020 Building Occupancy and Building Safety Inspection approval documents;</li> <li>• A 2020 Fire Inspection and maintenance sheet for the Fire Alarm System confirming that all systems had passed inspection; and</li> <li>• A series of inspection, registration and certification documents pertaining to food safety systems and food processing/service were on file with the School.</li> </ul>		



Recognizing the limitations of an online inspection, an assessment of the appropriateness of the campus to house the BC program is based on anecdotal reports from the interviews with staff and students. All confirmed that the school buildings were well maintained and the facility improvements that were being made, such as the addition of the large swimming pool and additional classrooms for the primary students, were appreciated.

The School updated its 'BCISB Emergency Response Manual' for the current school year. It contains a variety of practical information, from contact lists and phone trees, to basic protocols and response plans to be followed depending on the nature and severity of the emergency. It also makes reference to plans that would be enacted in the event that an evacuation of the site was required. As the owner of the school also operates other educational institutions in the same geographic area, alternatives exist for accommodating students and teachers during a temporary or more permanent school closure.

**Commendation:**

The School is commended for the comprehensive emergency response manual that provides valuable information to support the safety of all members of the school community.

The School is further commended for their comprehensive response to the COVID-19 pandemic and to ensuring the continuity of the education program for students.

**2.06 Offshore School Representative (OSR) - The Owner/Operator must appoint an individual to act as offshore school representative. This individual must be confirmed by the province and must meet all of the requirements set out in section 14 of the Agreement.**

Requirement  
Met

Requirement  
Partially Met

Requirement  
Not Met

**Comment:**

The Owner/Operator appointed an experienced individual to act as Offshore School Representative (OSR). The OSR meets the requirements set out in section 1 of the Agreement and has been confirmed by the BC Ministry of Education as being suitable for this position.

Due to the current travel restrictions, the OSR was unable to be onsite for the inspection, however, he fully participated in the virtual conversations associated with the process.

The OSR confirmed that he is knowledgeable about all aspects of the School's operations, including the governance, business and administrative functions of the Owner/Operator's operation of the School.

The OSR is fully aware of his obligation to report critical information relating to changes in the operation of the School or ownership structure that could significantly impact the School's operation.



**2.07 The Principal meets the requirements as outlined in section 2.07 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.**

Requirement Met

Requirement Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

The Principal meets all the requirements as set out in *the Agreement*. He is originally from BC and has both bachelor's and master's degrees in education from two different BC universities.

The Principal has been a teacher and administrator in 3 different BC offshore schools, all operating within different countries and cultures. He has been at BCISB for the past 5 years, having started in the role of vice-principal. He was promoted to the position of principal 3 years ago.

A comprehensive job description exists for the role of the Principal, including being responsible for:

- Student achievement
- Student enrolment
- Parent engagement and satisfaction
- Talent and Leadership Development
- School culture
- School growth plans

The interviews that took place during the inspection confirmed that there was strong appreciation for the support and leadership provided by the principal and the other members of the administrative team. Clearly the school has benefitted from the continuity provided by having the same educational leader for multiple years.

**Commendation:**

The School is commended for having appointed two vice principals this year to provide continuity in leadership in the event of future changes in the principalship.

The Principal is commended for creating a structure of distributed leadership amongst the educators on staff to actively engage them in the work of school improvement.

The School is further commended for the highly collaborative and supportive sense of community that has been developed amongst the members of staff.



**2.08 The School meets the administrative support requirements as outlined in section 2.08 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.**

Requirement Met

Requirement Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

Along with the two vice principals, the school has a full complement of support staff who ensure the effective operation of the School. During the inspection, the bilingual support staff described their roles in areas such as:

- Clerical/Secretarial support
- Human Resources
- IT/Systems Coordination
- Registrar
- Marketing

The business side of the School is managed by the director and deputy director who are in regular contact with the Owner/Operator.

The School has migrated onto the Alma-SIS software and it was reported to be working quite well. The School also has a fibre optic internet connection.

**2.09 The School meets the Student Record requirements as outlined in section 2.09 of the Inspection Catalogue for offshore schools.**

Requirement Met

Requirement Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

During the virtual inspection select items from student files were reviewed on either a confidential shared drive or during a virtual conference with the principal. The files were generally found to be well organized and contained most of the required elements. The only correction that is warranted is the updating of the student and parent consent forms to align with the current BC Ministry of Education template that can be found on the Offshore School Program SharePoint site.

**Requirement:**

The School is required to implement the current student and parent consent form templates that have been updated and can be found on the Offshore School Program SharePoint site.



**2.10-2.18 The School meets the teacher certification requirements as outlined in sections 2.10-2.18 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.**

Requirement Met

Requirement Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

The BC program currently has 5 teachers who hold valid Certificate of Qualifications (COQ) and 1 teacher with a letter of exemption that has been granted while her credentials are being processed by the Teacher Certification Branch (TCB). This person is a highly qualified and experienced educator who works closely with the administrative team on school improvement planning and was very involved in preparing for both the BC MoE inspection as well as the WASC accreditation process.

There are currently two teachers who will be added to the BC program staff once they are granted letters of exemption. They have also filed applications with the TCB for COQ status and are waiting for these to be processed. They are currently not teaching in the BC program and are helping with other responsibilities in the School. Should they not receive appropriate certification for the start of the second semester, their assignments can be covered by other teachers currently working in the K-9 program who have BC COQ's in place. The OSR has been in regular contact with the TCB regarding the status of these applications.

All local support staff have evidence of criminal records checks on file. Staff contracts were reviewed and found to be comprehensive, addressing all the required areas. Staff turnover at the School has been reported to typically be quite low, with teachers reporting high levels of satisfaction at BCISB. Some concern was raised during the inspection, however, that the inability of teachers to travel home during school holidays because of the pandemic, may negatively impact retention rates at the end of this school year.

During the inspection it was confirmed verbally that all teachers are employed under proper work permits and visas.

Teacher files are generally in order and well maintained and include evidence that teacher evaluations are occurring as per school policy. A current principal evaluation, performed by the OSR, was also on file. The only correction that is required to teacher and administrator files is to update the teacher and principal consent forms to align with the current Ministry template.

All locally qualified teachers have certified correct translations on file of their criminal record checks, along with the original documents.

**Requirement:**

The School is required to implement the current teacher and principal consent form template that has been updated and can be found on the Offshore School Program SharePoint site.



**2.19 The School meets the requirements for curriculum implementation outlined in section 2.19 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.**

Requirement Met

Requirement Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

During the inspection a review was done of the School's work in implementing the new BC curriculum and all teachers were interviewed regarding their planning and preparation to teach their courses. It was confirmed that the School meets the requirements for implementation in grades 10-12, and in fact has excelled in the work they have done in many areas. Considering a relatively small student population, the School is also offering a wide variety of core and elective courses to appeal to student interest.

Several members of the teaching staff have recently completed graduate level university programs and have been immersed in the curriculum as part of their focus. They were well-versed in the difference between a content-based, versus a concept-based and competency-driven approach. There was also evidence of significant efforts to actively engage students in an inquiry-based approach that places them at the heart of their own learning.

**Commendation:**

The School is commended for the work that has been done to implement the new curriculum.

**2.20 The School meets the requirements for English language assessment and acquisition as outlined in section 2.20 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.**

Requirement Met

Requirement Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

The BC Principal is responsible for assessing each student prior to admission to ensure that the student's level of English language proficiency is adequate to enable the student to meet or exceed the learning outcomes identified in the Educational Program Guide. Students entering the School at the grade 10, 11 or 12 level, all complete a comprehensive assessment of their language proficiency. Students who have been in the School's kindergarten to grade 9 feeder program are assessed at the point of completion of that program and are approved for entry by the BC principal according to their performance and results at that level.

Two ELL teachers are available to provide support to students, and all teachers receive professional development to support students learning an additional language.



**2.21(a-e) The School meets the course credit requirements (equivalency, challenge, exemptions and BAA courses) as outlined in section 2.21 (a-e) of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.**

Requirement Met

Requirement Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

The School currently offers one Ministry-approved BAA course – Knowledge 11. This course was designed using the updated Board/Authority Authorized Course Framework Template. It received Ministry of Education approval in July 2019.

The School also offers two courses that have been exempted from the requirement to be delivered by BC-certified teachers – Art Studio 10 and Art Studio 12. The course syllabuses for Art Studio were reviewed during the inspection and found to be presented in an appropriate format consistent with the BC curriculum.

**2.21(f-g) The School meets the course overview/course planning requirements as outlined in Schedule B Part I, 2. (e) of the Agreement; namely, that all BC program courses offered in the School meet or exceed the ministry learning outcomes/learning standards identified in the educational program guides for each course.**

Requirement Met

Requirement Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

The Inspector confirmed that course overviews for all Grade 10-12 curricula reflect the components of the redesigned curriculum. The School uses technology to its advantage to support teacher planning – both for course overviews and for detailed unit and lesson planning.

During the inspection, interviews were conducted with teachers to review and discuss their planning and assessment practices. There was clear evidence of deep understanding when it came to talking about core competencies, curricular competencies, content, teaching strategies and assessment methods linked to the redesigned curriculum. Several teachers also shared unique ways they were engaging their students in self-assessment, and the School has adopted thoughtful approaches to sharing this information with parents.

Several teachers commented that they are still refining the processes they are using to bring life to the First Peoples Principles of Learning in their classrooms. Some spoke of the Indigenous content they were drawing upon, but most agreed that it was an area for further growth as a professional learning community.



**2.22 The School meets the instructional time allotment requirements as outlined in section 4.5 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools, including the requirements set out in sections 1.1 to 6, with the exception of s. 4(5)(b), 4 (6), 5 (8)(a) and (d) and s. 5.3 of Ministerial Order 41/91, the Educational Standards Order, enacted under the Independent School Act.**

Requirement Met

Requirement Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The School reported that they offer 5.17 hours of instruction daily in the BC program, over a school year that consists of 182 days. This results in a total of 940 hours, which exceeds the minimum number of hours by 90.

**2.23 The School meets the assessment methods requirements as outlined in section 2.23 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.**

Requirement Met

Requirement Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The School has a well-developed plan to incorporate a variety of assessment methods into its approach to monitor the progress of students. Coordinators have been appointed to monitor the vertical alignment of curriculum and to support school-wide assessments. These include doing a schoolwide write at the beginning and end of every year and completing MAP (Measure of Academic Progress) assessments 3 times a year. This data, along with formative and summative assessments done by teachers and results from provincial assessments, are used to inform both future instruction and professional development.

BC assessments are carried out following the guidelines set by the Ministry and are supervised by the principal or vice principals.

**2.24 The School meets the learning resources requirements as outlined in section 2.24 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.**

Requirement Met

Requirement Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

Comment:

Recognizing the limitations of a virtual inspection, it was apparent that the School is quite well equipped with the major learning resources that are required. Students and teachers are each provided with a laptop and it was reported that all classrooms have desktop computers and projectors. An IT coordinator is in place to support this technology. Teachers also reported having appropriate resources such as textbooks, novels and lab supplies to be able to support their students.



An obvious strength of the school is in its use of technology, particularly with tools such as the *Google Suite* of educational apps. Teachers and students interviewed referenced how helpful technology such as *Google Classroom* and *Google Meet* had been during the temporary closure of the school because of the pandemic. The School also referenced the use of the *Slack* platform as a quick and efficient way of communicating amongst staff members and collaborating over a particular topic.

The School declared its internet bandwidth to be 100Mbps, which appears to be appropriate for the potential number of users. It provided a stable connection for the virtual inspection to be conducted, even when multiple users were connected.

Commendation:

The School is commended for the effective use of technology in supporting both its business and education functions.

### 2.25 The School meets the student progress report requirements as outlined in section 2.25 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met

Requirement Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The School produces two formal report cards each semester that include the required information. These are followed by opportunities for parents to meet with teachers on designated days. The School also leverages its technology to provide parents with access to *Google Classroom* as well as to an online gradebook so that they can stay up-to-date with both course content as well as their student's progress. For at-risk students, interim reports are issued, and parents can arrange to meet with the appropriate staff member(s) to discuss challenges needing to be addressed.

### 2.26 The School meets the parent/student handbook requirements as outlined in section 2.26 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met

Requirement Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The School has a detailed parent/student handbook which addresses all required areas in sufficient clarity and detail. It contains appropriate information on such topics as the School's mission statement and philosophy, BCISB staff and their various duties, school organization and procedures, assessment and evaluation information and the appeal procedure. The Handbook is a valuable resource to support parents and students.



**2.27 The School meets the teacher handbook requirements as outlined in section 2.27 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.**

Requirement Met

Requirement Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

**Comment:**

The School has a comprehensive teacher handbook which addresses all required areas as outlined in sections 2.27 of the inspection catalogue and contains the requisite policies on staff dispute resolution, teacher evaluation, principal/vice principal evaluation, human resources policies, student supervision, and student admissions. Teacher and principal evaluation policies are in place and evidence confirmed that they are being followed in practice. It was also noted that the handbook contains valuable information to support teachers in their professional role.

**2.28 The School meets the distributed learning requirements as outlined in section 18 of the Agreement and section 2.28 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.**

Requirement Met

Requirement Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

Not Applicable

**Comment:**

The School does not have any students taking courses through distributed learning.

## CONCLUSION

### Commendations

**The Inspector wishes to recognize the Owner/Operator, Principal, staff and Offshore School Representative of British Columbia International School Bangkok for:**

- the ongoing commitment to facility improvements that help to enhance the School for existing students and staff and make it an attractive alternative for prospective families;
- the efforts of all stakeholders to complete the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) self-study and accreditation process;
- the comprehensive emergency response manual that provides valuable information to support the safety of all members of the school community;
- the comprehensive response to the COVID-19 pandemic and to ensuring the continuity of the education program for students;
- having appointed two vice principals this year to provide continuity in leadership in the event of future changes in the principalship;



- creating a structure of distributed leadership amongst the educators on staff to actively engage them in the work of school improvement;
- the highly collaborative and supportive sense of community that has been developed amongst the members of staff;
- the work that has been done to implement the new curriculum; and
- the effective use of technology in supporting both the School's business and education functions.

## Requirements

In order to meet the requirements of the *BC Global Education Program – Offshore Schools Certification Agreement*, the Team requires that by **January 31, 2021**, the Owner/Operator provide the Executive Director of Independent Schools and International Education, responsible for the BC Global Education Program - Offshore Schools, with a plan and timeline for proposed implementation of the following items:

- The School is required to implement the current student and parent consent form templates that have been updated and can be found on the Offshore School Program SharePoint site.
- The School is required to implement the current teacher and principal consent form template that has been updated and can be found on the Offshore School Program SharePoint site.

### **NOTE FROM MINISTRY:**

**The two requirement listed above have been addressed to the Ministry's satisfaction. This School remains in good standing for the 2020/21 school year.**

## SUMMATIVE RECOMMENDATION

The Offshore Inspector recommends to the Executive Director of Independent Schools and International Education that, contingent on responding to the above requirements to the satisfaction of the Executive Director, the British Columbia education program offered at British Columbia International School Bangkok continues to be recognized as a British Columbia-certified school.

