

Certification Inspection Report

BRITISH COLUMBIA PROGRAM

at

SUZHOU INDUSTRIAL PARK FOREIGN LANGUAGE SCHOOL

SUZHOU, JIANGSU PROVINCE

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

OCTOBER 19-20, 2020

INTRODUCTION

On October 19-20, 2020, an online certification inspection was completed on Suzhou Industrial Park Foreign Language School (SIPFLS) in Suzhou, Jiangsu Province, People's Republic of China, 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 inspection team (the Team), 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), consisted of Dr. John Churchley and Des McKay, Chair of the team.

The School's BC program has an enrolment of 29 students in grade 11 and 44 students in grade 12 for a total of 73 students. SIPFLS is a large and very modern campus which includes a kindergarten school with 250 students, a primary school with 912 students, a middle school with 327 students and an IB high school with 120 students. The entire School, including the BC program, enrolls 1682 students.

During their online inspection of the School, the Team 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 representative, Offshore School Representative (OSR), BC Principal and vice principal, and BC teachers.

The Owner/Operator, Suzhou Industrial Park Oriental Education Investment Co. Ltd., is responsible for the BC program. As mentioned above, SIPFLS offers an IB high school program which will replace the BC program. The Owner/Operator also has a kindergarten in Xuzhou.

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

"The BC program at Suzhou Industrial Park Foreign Language School, in partnership with its member communities, continues to develop responsible and educated global citizens of the



21st century by providing an educational environment that fosters and encourages respect for each other and the community.” The School is collaborating with students and staff to build criteria and develop self-reflection activities around the core and curricular competencies that will assist them with monitoring their growth and development toward becoming responsible global educated citizens.

The Team would like to thank SIPFLS for its cooperation and preparedness for this online inspection.

The School has satisfactorily addressed requirements contained in the previous inspection report.			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
<p>Comment: The School had no requirements from its previous inspection and in spite of COVID-19 related shutdowns and challenges, has taken affirmative action to address all the suggestions as noted in the September Follow-up report.</p>			
<p>Commendation: The School is to be commended for addressing all the suggestions in the last report in spite of the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the phasing out of the BC program.</p>			

BUSINESS PLAN 1.0

The Owner/Operator has submitted a business plan to the BC Ministry of Education, confirming the sustainability of the program.		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met
<p>Comment: The Owner/Operator has submitted a business plan to the BC Ministry of Education which now includes the phasing out of the BC program by the end of June 2022. The Owner/Operator has committed to maintaining a robust graduation program and is working with the OSR and school administration on exit plans for staff and students.</p> <p>As part of the exit plan, meetings have been held with parents to keep them up to date and informed about the closing of the BC program and the importance of having students stay focused and committed to their studies. The School offers a credit recovery block and the Principal keeps a list of high-risk students for whom he arranges specific interventions. In spite of the challenges of a COVID-19 pandemic and the personal and professional</p>		



uncertainties associated with shuttering the BC program, it was evident to the Team the staff has remained committed and focused on preparing their students to graduate with a BC Dogwood diploma.

The academic advisor also meets with parents and students to keep them informed about their child's progress, and the options available to them after the BC program closure. In some cases, students have chosen to repeat courses to strengthen their language proficiency skills, and a few students, who have struggled in the program, have chosen to return to a Chinese school. For students who may not meet graduation requirements, but have their grade 11, enrolling in an Australian program is an option. Students who chose this route will enroll in a bridging program in Australia for one year before entering a college or university.

The OSR and the Principal are also reaching out to other OSRs and BC program schools in the vicinity of SIPFLS. Students who are unable to graduate before the closure will have the option of enrolling in a neighboring BC program. Two schools currently under consideration are Sino Canada which is within half an hour of SIPFLS and GCA Jiaying which is just over an hour from Suzhou.

The OSR is working with the Director of the BC Program, Mr. Oscar Mao, to identify employment opportunities for BC program staff. Next year will be the final year for the BC program resulting in fewer teaching positions. Offering a variety of courses across the curricular areas that will lead to graduation will be challenging, but the Owner/Operator has committed to doing what is necessary to meet the graduation requirements of all the students.

The OSR and the Director of the BC Program, on behalf of the Owner/Operator, are exploring a number of options that will meet the scheduling needs of the BC program and provide employment opportunities for BC staff. The Director indicated that the staff have provided a significant commitment to developing the BC program at SIPFLS over the years and looking for ways to support them through this transition is important. To assist teachers with their future plans, the OSR is working with the Director to provide teaching assignments for next year that would include teaching in more than one school on the SIPFLS campus. Designing teaching assignments that include the IB high school and middle school will make it possible to offer a greater range of courses with smaller class sizes in the final year of the BC program. It is hoped that offering staff teaching positions before Christmas will help reduce the anxiety around future employment opportunities and provide continuity for the final year of the BC program.

In addition to working with the Director of the BC Program, the OSR is also reaching out to other OSR's regarding employment opportunities for SIPFLS staff. He is confident that SIPFLS staff will have teaching opportunities after the closing of the BC program.



Commendation:

The administration and staff are to be commended for their commitment to the BC program and their unwavering focus to have their students meet graduation requirements.

The administration is to be commended for their commitment to working with parents and high-risk students through the shutdown of the BC program.

The administration and OSR are to be commended for searching out alternatives for students who do not meet graduation requirements by the end of June 2022.

The OSR is to be commended for working with the Director of the BC Program to develop teaching assignments that will maintain a robust graduation program and teaching opportunities for the staff in its closing year.

The OSR is to be commended for reaching out to other OSR's in search of teaching opportunities for the SIPFLS staff after the shuttering of the BC program.

INSPECTION CATALOGUE 2.0**2.02 The Owner/Operator meets all requirements as set forth in the BC Global Education Program Offshore Schools Certification Agreement (the Agreement).**

Requirement
Met

Requirement
Partially Met

Requirement
Not Met

Comment:

The Owner/Operator meets all the requirements set forth in the Agreement.

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.

Requirement
Met

Requirement
Partially Met

Requirement
Not Met

Comment:

The Team confirmed that the Owner/Operator is meeting the requirements set forth in the Agreement and has the appropriate permits and licensing in place to operate the SIPFLS school. The following permits and licenses, all of which are current and translated into English, were made available to the Team:

- Suzhou Municipal Education Bureau Letter of Approval for Operation of BC Offshore School
- BC Ministry of Education - Annual Certification (#10396809-020)



- People’s Republic of China Independent School license: (No.132050130000011)

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.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met
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Comment:

The Team examined inspection approval certificates from the local fire authority, and the local municipality for the inspection of the school buildings, cafeteria and, indoor and outdoor sports facilities. The following certificates and documentation were reviewed by the Team:

- Fire Safety certificate
- Building safety and compliance – occupancy certification
- Building safety and cafeteria compliance – to 2022
- Gymnasium Safety Compliance
- Football Field Safety Compliance
- Track & Field Safety Compliance
- Dormitory Building Safety Compliance
- Emergency Evacuation Drill Procedures
- Plans for Temporary Emergency or Permanent closure
- Emergency protocols for natural disasters – earthquake

The School has plans in place for an unplanned temporary emergency or permanent closure of the school as well as COVID-19 safety protocols. The OSR confirmed that he has reviewed all the plans for accuracy and functionality.

The Team confirmed that the School has scheduled fire and earthquake drills each semester in addition to the drills scheduled by the Chinese administration for the entire campus. Scheduled dormitory drills occur in the evenings and wayfinding signage is posted around the School indicating what to do and where to go in the event of a school emergency evacuation.

SIPFLS has instituted COVID-19 safety response protocols that in part have been mandated by Chinese government agencies and the Suzhou Education Bureau. SIPFLS COVID-19 response protocols and expectations include the following:

- Only student and staff are allowed onto the campus.
- Everyone entering the campus must have their QR Code scanned and have their temperature taken.
- Contact tracing is done by cell phone QR Code scanning. GREEN means clear, YELLOW means travel has occurred to a region that has since been declared a risk, and RED



means travel has occurred to a high-risk region. If a YELLOW or RED reading occurs, entry to the campus is denied and COVID-19 testing is mandatory. (Just prior to this inspection two staff members had to undergo COVID-19 testing because after returning from a visit to Qingdao, two cases were discovered in the city and it was designated a restricted region.)

- A tented triage centre has been set up at the school gate for students and staff who register a YELLOW or RED on their QR Code scan.
- Everyone entering the campus must wear a mask, however, once on campus wearing a mask is optional.

PRECAUTIONARY STEPS

- Staff and students are encouraged not to travel outside Suzhou unless necessary.
- Staff and students must inform the School if they plan to travel outside Suzhou.
- Students who plan to travel outside the province must inform the school where they are going, who they are traveling with and the mode of transportation.
- Parents are not allowed on campus unless they have a pre-scheduled Chinese Administration approved appointment.
- If an elevated temperature is detected, access to the campus is denied.
- If a student isn't feeling well, they must report to the campus nurse and be checked for signs of COVID-19. The nurse decides whether to keep the student for observation, send them back to class, send them home, or send them to the hospital.
- SIPFLS has an isolation centre complete with medical and personal protection supplies for worst case scenarios – high fever and signs of COVID-19.
- When the Education Bureau first ordered schools back in session, the SIPFLS cafeteria provided takeout only. To prevent students from various schools on campus mixing one person from each class was designated to pick up student lunches that were eaten in the classrooms.

Commendation:

The Team commends the School for providing English translations of all the safety and government certificates.

The School is to be commended for its COVID-19 response protocols.



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 School has appointed Mr. Lee Smith as its Offshore School Representative and he has been confirmed by the BC Ministry of Education. Mr. Smith is aware of all his responsibilities under the Agreement including his responsibility to report critical information relating to changes in the operation of the school or ownership structure that could significantly impact the School's operations.

Mr. Smith has 24 years' experience as a teacher and school administrator. Six of those years were spent in Canadian schools and 18 years in international schools. Mr. Smith has also served for four years as a vice principal and five years as a principal in BC offshore schools. He is in his second year as OSR for SIPFLS and is a full-time PhD student in the Department of Education at the University of Alberta.

Commendation:

The OSR is to be commended for being present at all the virtual meetings and available throughout this online inspection.

The OSR is to be commended for his direct involvement, guidance and strategic interventions throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and phasing out of the BC program.

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 has 14 years' experience as an educator, all of which have been in offshore schools. He spent five years in England and the remaining nine years in China. He has held a number of leadership positions including three years as vice principal and since June 2019, the Principal of SIPFLS. The Principal has his BC certification, is fully qualified to be principal of the school, and meets the required items outlined in the inspection catalogue.

Commendation:

The Principal is to be commended for his leadership and organization in preparing SIPFLS for this online inspection.



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:

The School has a 0.8 principal, a 0.5 vice principal, and administrative assistant, who is also assistant to the Director of the BC Program. The School also has an Academic Advisor whose duties include counselling students for post-secondary placement.

The School meets the administrative support requirements as outlined in section 3.3 of the inspection catalogue.

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:

The Team examined a random sample of 20 student records, ten from each grade level. Each student record contained the updated parent and student consent forms. The Team was grateful for having all the records digitized for the examination.

All student records examined are in full compliance with the requirements outlined in section 3.4 of the inspection catalogue

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 Team examined every teacher and administrator file and each file fully meets the requirements outlined in section 3.5 of the inspection catalogue.

The BC program does not employ locally certified teachers for BC courses; however, as part of their assignment at SIPFLS, they assist students and teachers as bilingual support teachers, homeroom supervisors and morning and evening study supervisors. The Team confirmed the School has a "Criminal Record Check Guarantee Certificate" for all locally certified teachers providing student support.



The Team confirms that all authorized persons under the Agreement possess valid and current certification under the Ministry of Education.

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:

The Team reviewed curriculum planning documents and interviewed teachers, providing evidence that the School has fully implemented the new curriculum for grade 10, 11 and 12 courses. Indigenous Perspectives and Ways of Knowing, Diversity and Inclusion, Big Ideas, core competencies and curriculum competencies are addressed in the planning documents of all courses.

Structured Professional Development activities to support the ongoing work in curriculum implementation were provided in August by the Leadership Team, supported through their involvement in BCPVPA workshops in summer 2019.

Big Ideas are highlighted in a number of courses in course outlines and classroom posters. This helps students understand what and why they are learning. Other evidence of instructional practices that reflect the BC curriculum included:

- Two-stage testing
- Student choice in project topics, novels/short stories
- An interdisciplinary project on mental health that involved the whole school, and covered a number of curricular and core competencies
- Applied projects in mathematics

Commendation:

The School is commended for their implementation of all aspects of the revised curriculum, in particular for creative hands-on learning activities, and collaborative interdisciplinary projects.

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 Team confirms that the School meets the requirements for English Language assessment and acquisition.



The Principal administers an English language assessment to all students who apply to enter BC program and makes the final decision on admission. This process is used minimally at this time, as the school is transitioning away from the BC program and there was no intake of grade 10 students for the 2019-2020 school year.

English language learning is supported in a number of ways:

- English language arts courses are taught with twice the time commitment on a linear year-long schedule for all grades.
- Homeroom teachers support English language acquisition by running a Sustained Silent Reading activity for 20 minutes each morning.
- National teachers support ELL in many classes and are paired with BC teachers according to their subject knowledge.
- Weekly tutoring sessions with BC and National teachers as well as peer tutoring
- A focus on vocabulary development in all courses

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 does not offer equivalency, challenge exceptions or BAA courses. All courses are taught by BC-certified teachers. There are course choice options for students, even though the School is transitioning from the BC program and the enrolment has declined accordingly.

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 Team confirms that the School meets the requirements for overview/course planning. A standard template for course overviews is used and includes Diversity and Inclusion, ELL support, and Aboriginal Perspectives and Ways of Knowing. All learning standards are laid out in a unit by unit grid that includes a list of learning activities and assessments.



In addition to course overviews, some course outlines/syllabi include Big Ideas which connect the traditional syllabus structure with the revised curriculum. This is helpful as it provides with the “what” and “why” of their learning expectations.

Commendation:

The School is to be commended for the MIC (Multi-grade Interdisciplinary Connections) projects which gives all students at the School time and teacher mentors to create group passion projects. This supports personalized learning, collaborative work, and inquiry. It also encourages self-assessment of core competencies and scaffolds to the CLC capstone project.

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 Team confirms that the School meets the requirement for instructional time allotments. Student instructional time totals 972 hours per year, which exceeds the minimum requirements for grade 10-12.

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 Team viewed evidence that shows effective and current assessment methods in all classes. There is extensive use of rubrics – often 4- or 6-point scales. These rubrics demonstrate effective grading practices through a move away from the traditional 100-point scale for many assignments. Students have many types of opportunity to demonstrate achievement of Learning Standards and have opportunities to complete failed classes through the Credit Recovery block.

Regular follow-up systems are in place to ensure students are successful. These include:

- Tutoring sessions several times each week
- Peer mentoring
- A rotation of all BC teachers through homerooms, to provide check-ins, opportunities for follow-up, and supporting student self-reflection
- “virtual” tutoring and teacher support through the QQ social media app



- Credit Recovery program
- Bi-weekly early intervention forms
- Communication with parents through homeroom teachers.

A variety of formative and summative assessment strategies are used in classes with opportunities for student choice.

Teachers collaboratively mark together where possible to calibrate marking standards. Teachers also use old BC provincial examinations to assist this calibration.

BC provincial assessments are invigilated and kept secure according to Ministry of Education requirements. They are offered at multiple points during the year to allow for re-writes.

Commendation:

The School is commended for the Credit Recovery block and the philosophy underlying it which ensures that students are able to demonstrate their achievement of learning standards when they have been unable to do this during the normal timeline for a course.

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:

The Team confirms that the School meets the expectations for learning resources. The School shares a large library/learning common with the host school. As the host school is international, there is a large collection of books in English. Individual students and entire classes make use of the library.

The BC program wing of the School has 2 computer labs as well as a mini lab for Media Studies. Wi-Fi is available in each classroom when needed. Students also have access to computers in the library, including a set of iMacs which has been used by the Music Production class.

The use of student tech devices (laptops) is encouraged and supported in the school through Wi-Fi. The safe and efficient use of these devices has been explicitly taught to students through an extensive Digital Literacy/Citizenship program led by the vice principal. Teachers use the QQ social media app to communicate with students.

The Principal signs off on the acquisition of all learning resource requests, and the School has adequate resources to support learning.



Commendation:

The School is commended for the support and use of student technology devices. The support includes a Digital Literacy/Citizenship program to ensure safe and efficient use of technology and the use of the QQ social media app for student-teacher communication.

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 has four report cards per year and an interim report sent out early in Semester. There are two formal sets of parent-teacher interviews. Parents are also contacted individually as needed – the communication being facilitated by National teachers.

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 parent/student handbook has been updated for the 2020/2021 academic year. It is comprehensive and contains policies on the conduct of students, student assessment, parent and student dispute resolution, student admissions and student supervision. The parent/student handbook meets the requirements of the inspection catalogue.

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 teacher handbook was reviewed by the Team and has been updated for the 2020/2021 school year. The handbook contains policies on teacher and principal evaluation as well as dispute resolution processes for staff and administrators. The School has also added the acknowledgement that the Province of British Columbia is not party to the contract of employment between the Owner/Operator and the teacher and that the Province of British Columbia is not liable in any instance where the Owner/Operator is found to be in contravention of the laws or requirements of the country of operation.

The teacher handbook meets the requirements as outlined in section 5.2 of the inspection



catalogue.

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.

<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
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Comment:

The School does not have any students enrolled in distributed learning courses.

CONCLUSION

Commendations

The Inspection Team wishes to recognize the Owner/Operator, Principal, staff and Offshore School Representative of Suzhou Industrial Park Foreign Language School for:

- addressing all the suggestions in the last report in spite of the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the phasing out of the BC program.
- their commitment to the BC program and their unwavering focus to have their students meet graduation requirements.
- the commitment of the administration to working with parents and high-risk students through the shutdown of the BC program.
- the work of the administration and OSR in searching out alternatives for students who do not meet graduation requirements by the end of June 2022.
- the work of the OSR in working with the Director of the BC Program to develop teaching assignments that will maintain a robust graduation program and teaching opportunities for the staff in its closing year.
- the work of the OSR in reaching out to other OSR's in search of teaching opportunities for the SIPFLS staff after the shuttering of the BC program.
- providing English translations of all the safety and government certificates.
- its COVID-19 response protocols.
- the presence of the OSR at all the virtual meetings and available throughout this online inspection.
- the direct involvement, guidance and strategic interventions of the OSR throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and phasing out of the BC program.
- the leadership and organization of the Principal in preparing SIPFLS for this online inspection.



- their implementation of all aspects of the revised curriculum, in particular for creative hands-on learning activities, and collaborative interdisciplinary projects.
- the MIC (Multi-grade Interdisciplinary Connections) projects which gives all students at the School time and teacher mentors to create group passion projects. This supports personalized learning, collaborative work, and inquiry. It also encourages self-assessment of core competencies and scaffolds to the CLC capstone project.
- the Credit Recovery block and the philosophy underlying it which ensures that students are able to demonstrate their achievement of learning standards when they have been unable to do this during the normal timeline for a course.
- the support and use of student technology devices. The support includes a Digital Literacy/Citizenship program to ensure safe and efficient use of technology and the use of the QQ social media app for student-teacher communication.

SUMMATIVE RECOMMENDATION

The Offshore Inspection Team recommends to the Executive Director of Independent Schools and International Education that the British Columbia education program offered at Suzhou Industrial Park Foreign Language School continues to be recognized as a British Columbia-certified school.

