

Certification Inspection Report

BRITISH COLUMBIA PROGRAM

at

SUZHOU INDUSTRIAL PARK FOREIGN LANGUAGE SCHOOL

SUZHOU, JIANGSU PROVINCE

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

DECEMBER 1-2, 2016

INTRODUCTION

On December 1 - 2, 2016, a Certification Inspection was completed on Suzhou Industrial Park Foreign Language School (SIPFLS) in Suzhou, Jiangsu Province, China, termed the School in this report. The purpose of this inspection was to determine whether the requirements for the British Columbia (B.C.) education program have been met, according to the *B.C. Global Education Program – Offshore Schools Certification Agreement* (the Agreement). The inspection team (the Team), appointed by the Director of International Education (the Director), British Columbia Ministry of Education (MoE) in accordance with the Agreement, consisted of Leslie Ramsay, Keith Watson and Edward Noot (Chair).

The School's B.C. Program has an enrolment of 169 students, in Grades 10-12. The B.C. Program is housed in the Suzhou Industrial Park Foreign Language School which enrolls some 1600 students and offers a variety of programs including an IB high school and a GAC college preparatory program.

During the inspection process, the Team reviewed all standards required in the *B.C. Global Education Program – Offshore Schools Certification Agreement* and *Operating Manual* and met with the School's Owner/Operator, Chinese Principal and Vice Principal, Offshore School Representative (OSR), B.C. Principal, B.C. Vice Principal, B.C. teachers and students. The Team met with school personnel and reviewed files, certificates, handbooks and policies.

The Owner/Operator, Suzhou Industrial Park Oriental Education Investment Co. Ltd., is responsible for the B.C. Program. The authority also operates a private Chinese school that enrolls students from Pre-School to Grade 9 on the same campus.

The B.C. Program's philosophy and objectives include partnerships with its member communities to develop responsible and educated global citizens in an environment that expects and encourages respect for each other and the community. The School's stated



mandate is to provide a high quality international education opportunity within Jiangsu Province, in an English-speaking environment, for Chinese nationals and others. Stated objectives are to:

- develop the English language skills of all students;
- develop in all students an understanding and appreciation of the rich elements of domestic and foreign cultures;
- develop in all students the capacity to be self-motivated learners;
- have all students graduate with a B.C. Dogwood graduation certificate; and,
- facilitate the successful transition of all graduating students to post-secondary institutions with a focus on British Columbia.

The Team would like to thank the Suzhou Industrial Park Foreign Language School and its staff for their cooperation and preparedness throughout the inspection process.

The School has satisfactorily addressed requirements contained in the previous inspection report.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met Not Applicable

Comment:

The 2014 Certification Inspection Report was a positive report with only one requirement and several suggestions. The Team noted that the requirement to report daily physical activity on report cards has been addressed.

The Team also noted that the suggestions made by the 2014 Inspection Team have been addressed by the School, with the exception of internet connectivity, which remains an issue as outlined in section 4.7.

BUSINESS PLAN

The Owner/Operator has submitted a Business Plan to the B.C. Ministry of Education, confirming the sustainability of the Program.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team reviewed the 2016-17 Annual Report that includes a Business Plan outlining the long-term sustainability of the B.C. Program.

The School is actively seeking to enhance and promote the quality, distinctiveness and value of the B.C. Program, with a stated goal of increasing the Grade 10 intake to 75 students for September, 2017 and 100 students in September, 2018.



While these targets may be somewhat ambitious in the current market, the B.C. Program does have a compelling story to tell. If recruitment messaging were to capture the unique opportunities provided by the B.C. Program, increased student interest should follow. The Team also engaged in conversations with the School reminding them that not all students can succeed in the B.C. Program, and recruitment goals must only be met with students who have the requisite skills to master a curriculum in a foreign language.

OWNERSHIP AND AGREEMENTS / BUILDING AND SAFETY COMPLIANCE 2.0

2.1 The Owner/Operator meets all requirements as set forth in the B.C. Global Education Program Offshore Schools Certification Agreement (the Agreement).

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

Suzhou Industrial Park Foreign Language School holds appropriate provincial verification. The Team is satisfied that the facilities are in compliance and are suitable to support the B.C. Program.

Since the last annual certification inspection, the School has:

- adjusted course offerings, particularly in Science and Business Education;
- moved to web-based reading programs;
- re-aligned administrative structure; and,
- added a literacy coordinator role.

2.2 The School meets local building, safety and cafeteria codes and regulations. The facilities are deemed to be suitable to support the B.C. Program.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team viewed translated copies of building inspections and cafeteria inspections. All reports indicate the School is in compliance with local regulations and authorities.

Fire and evacuation procedures and practices, which conform to local government requirements, are in place.

The SIPFLS campus is located on a large property and is secured with fencing and gates. The attractive campus contains several buildings which provide administrative offices, student dormitories, classrooms, labs, a gymnasium and a library. The campus also has a running track



and artificial turf field.

Most students live in dormitories and many go home on the weekends.

The School has on-site medical services with a resident nurse and clinic available to students.

The Team is satisfied that the present school facilities are entirely adequate to meet the requirements for the instruction of programs currently being offered and for longer term future growth of the school.

ADMINISTRATION 3.0

3.2 Offshore School Representative (OSR) - The Owner/Operator may 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 Not Met

Comment:

The Owner/Operator has appointed an OSR who meets all the requirements set out in the Agreement (section 14 and Schedule B, Part II). The OSR has relevant experience with the B.C. Graduation Program and with the B.C. Global Education Program. The Team reviewed the OSR job description and confirms that it meets with the terms of the Agreement.

The OSR was on site during the school inspection to answer questions and provide support.

3.3 The Principal meets the requirements as outlined in Section 3.3 of the Inspection Catalogue for Offshore Schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Principal is in his fourth year of leadership at the school and meets all requirements as outlined in the Agreement. He is an experienced educator and administrator, with a range of experience in B.C. schools, both onshore and offshore.

The job description is comprehensive and clear, outlining all elements required in the Agreement. The Principal has a current evaluation on file which was conducted by the OSR.

The Team noted a constructive relationship between the Principal, the OSR, and the Chinese Vice-Principal.



As noted in Section 4.4, the Principal has initiated a system of monitoring and responding to student learning needs to ensure that each students' individual learning needs are noted and actively supported, ensuring that no student 'falls through the cracks'.

Commendation:

The Team commends the principal for establishing a protocol for attending to and supporting the individual learning needs of each student.

3.4 The School meets the Administrative Support requirements as outlined in Section 3.4 of the Inspection Catalogue for Offshore Schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Principal receives administrative support from a B.C. Vice Principal, a B.C. Academic Advisor, B.C. Coordinator for International Staff Affairs, a Literacy Coordinator and a B.C. Program school secretary.

Additional support is offered by the Chinese administration includes the Chinese Principal, a Co-Director, a Director of Student Affairs and a Chinese Vice-Principal.

The B.C. administrative team operates from a common vision and works with the Chinese admin staff to navigate situations as they arise.

The Team appreciated consistent efforts to stay connected with other B.C. offshore schools for policy development, professional development and student interaction in athletics and music, along with efforts to establish a formal school to school relationship with a B.C. onshore school.

3.5 The School meets the Student Record requirements as outlined in Section 3.5 of the Inspection Catalogue for Offshore Schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team examined the student records that are filed in the principal's office. The records are very well organized and contain all the required elements.

Student records are securely stored, electronically backed up and updated regularly.



3.6 The School meets the Teacher Certification requirements as outlined in Section 3.6 of the Inspection Catalogue for Offshore Schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team confirms that all Authorized Persons under the Agreement possess valid and current certification under the B.C. Teacher Regulation Branch.

The School has local certificates for teachers of exempted courses duly filed. Staff files are well organized and contain all necessary documentation. Teacher evaluation procedures are in place and the files contain evidence of current practice.

The Team verified that valid local criminal record checks are in place for all non-teaching/non-certified staff in the B.C. Program.

Staff contracts were reviewed and found to be comprehensive and competitive. The Owner/Operator is commended for taking steps to remain competitive in the offshore market.

Professional development plans are well articulated.

Commendation: The Team commends the Owner/Operator for offering a comprehensive and competitive contract which enhances the opportunity to attract and retain quality teachers.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM 4.0

4.1 The School meets the requirements for curriculum implementation as outlined in Section 4.1 of the Inspection Catalogue for Offshore Schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team's review of overviews, course outlines and daily lesson plans reflected what was happening in the classroom and in the teacher's instructional practice. Staff views the redesigned curriculum as an opportunity to improve the quality and standard of education. Steps to prepare for the redesigned curriculum transition are underway, including professional development meetings with a focus on collaboration and thematic instruction. Each classroom has a national classroom teacher who provides support for the teacher, motivates students and communicates with parents on a regular basis.



4.2 The School meets the requirements for English Language Assessment and Acquisition as outlined in Section 4.2 of the Inspection Catalogue for Offshore Schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

SIPFLS has a comprehensive literacy program which provides data and supports tracking individual student progress across all subject areas. Examples of digital programs used are Total Reader, Newsela and A to Z Reading. In addition, staff uses the learning management system Schoology to enter and track student achievement as well as to effectively implement the learning tools in all subject areas.

Students transfer to SIPFLS from both outside schools and from their partner Chinese middle school. All applicants complete an entrance placement exam which covers domains of: oral, listening, reading and writing. The principal reviews all this information to determine readiness and entrance acceptance. The School continues a tracking progress using an Intervention survey (three reviews per year). As needed, an at-risk student summary is maintained to communicate learning and social needs to staff.

Communication with parents occurs throughout the school year, via formal reports, as well as, informal calls and parent conferences. The first report occurs after the first six weeks in school. Staff monitors each student's growth very carefully. For example, when vocabulary development is too weak, entrance into Foundations may be considered. The School also provides ESL 10 and Communication 11 courses to provide additional ELL development time to maximize English language learning. The presence of national teachers provides aid to the classroom teacher and social and academic support for the students.

4.3 The School meets the Course Credit requirements (equivalency, challenge, exemptions and BAA courses) as outlined in Section 4.3 of the Inspection Catalogue for Offshore Schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team completed visits to all B.C. certified teacher's and reviewed daily lesson plans, course outlines and overviews. The Team confirms that B.C. Program courses meet B.C. educational requirements.

SIPFLS has a policy that addresses course challenges or requests for equivalency credits. Equivalency for Mandarin 10, 11 and 12 is in place.

The team appreciated the diverse activities offered at the school, including a dynamic student council, choir, band and athletic programming.



Developing social responsibility and global awareness is important at SIPFLS. This takes the form of community volunteerism, school leadership and overseas travel service trips to enhance student global understanding. The teaching staff is also involved in professional groups, such as: an English round table; connection with a Canadian schools and Principals conferences.

Commendation:

There is a rich connectedness with offshore and onshore schools. The School is working to establish a Twin School Program with a school in Langley, B.C.

Students at the School benefit from a wide selection of courses across the curriculum and from a variety of extra-curricular activities.

4.4 The School meets the course overview / course planning requirements as outlined in Schedule B Part I (d) of the Agreement; namely, that all B.C. 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 Not Met

Comment:

All courses in the School meet or exceed B.C. learning outcomes. Teachers do a thorough job preparing course outlines, including daily lesson plans and thematic units. All documents are linked to provincial learning outcomes. Assessment practices reflect the learning outcomes. Lesson planning also includes both assessment and tracking tools, as well as monitoring learning challenges and progress of all students.

Teachers work well together to fully take advantage of learning management tools. Professional development days and school based team meetings are effective ways to enhance teaching and individualized learning. The Principal has developed and implemented protocols that enable staff to monitor individual student progress and to intervene when learning support is needed.

Commendation: The current professional practice has established a protocol for attending to and supporting individualized learning needs of each student.



4.5 The School meets the Instructional Time Allotments 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), of Ministerial Order 41/91, the Educational Standards Order, enacted under the Independent School Act.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team confirms the school exceeds Ministry instructional time requirements. Students are in session for 180 days a year (173 instructional days) for six hours and 50 minutes per day for a total of 1009 hours of instruction yearly, well above the minimum requirement of 850 hours.

Students in the Graduation Program complete 150 minutes of DPA weekly which is tracked by the Academic Advisor. The team noted English language support and social responsibility is encouraged through the literacy program and national teachers.

4.6 The School meets the Assessment Methods requirements as outlined in Section 4.6 of the Inspection Catalogue for Offshore Schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

Teachers use a variety of formative and summative assessment methods to determine individual student achievement. Each department organizes a minimum of eight common summative assessments including a mid-term and final exams. Formative assessment practices are also developed at the school, department and course level. The team found that performance standards, criterion referenced assessment and daily performance rubrics are in common usage. Teachers are also introducing students to self and peer assessment.

School administration reviews all classroom marks and averages before report cards are issued. Staff pay close attention to at-risk students and have on going assessment throughout the year and are very cognizant of the ability levels of the students throughout the year.

The Team noted a close correlation with classroom marks and provincial exam results.

4.7 The School meets the Learning Resources requirements as outlined in Section 4.7 of the Inspection Catalogue for Offshore Schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

SIPFL's new, spacious library holds computers, electronic readers, the B.C. Program textbooks,



and over 2000 novels and reading selections. Current school-wide programs promoting reading include: sustained silent reading, web based Newsela and Teaching Reading, 3000 Club, Drop Everything and Read Program, and double-blocked English classes for grades 10 to 12.

Computer labs are used for both classroom learning activities and for administering provincial exams which have security and exam supervision criteria. The administration team members invigilate the e-exams. Teachers use the library both as an instructional space, as well as, a research space for project based learning.

Although the internet access has been improved since the last inspection, the Team noted it was not adequate to support the needs of the B.C. Program.

4.8 The School meets the Student Progress Report requirements as outlined in Section 4.8 of the Inspection Catalogue for Offshore Schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

SIPFL meets all Student Progress Report requirements. Ongoing reporting is done through text messaging or phone calls. B.C. staff are partnered with national teachers to communicate with parents on a regular basis. Teachers not only communicate at-risk situations but also commonly communicate positive student achievement.

Report cards are issued five times per year. An interim report card has been instituted within the first six weeks of the school year. Parent-Teacher conferences are held twice a year, after the November report and April report.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT 5.0

5.1 The School meets the Parent / Student Handbook requirements as outlined in Section 5.1 of the Inspection Catalogue for Offshore Schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The School has a comprehensive Parent/Student Handbook which addresses all required areas in sufficient clarity and detail. This handbook is bilingual so it is of use to both students and parents.



5.2 The School meets the Teacher Handbook requirements as outlined in Section 5.2 of the Inspection Catalogue for Offshore Schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment: The School has a comprehensive Teacher Handbook which addresses all required areas in sufficient clarity and detail. The School has developed a clear and comprehensive dispute resolution protocol.

Teacher and principal evaluation policies are included and are being implemented.

COURSE ACCREDITED VIA DISTRIBUTED LEARNING 6.0

6.1 The School meets the Distributed Learning requirements as outlined in Section 18 of The Agreement and Section 6 of the Inspection Catalogue for Offshore Schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met Not Applicable

Comment:
SIPFLS does not offer any credits through Distributed Learning courses.

CONCLUSION

Commendations

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

- offering a comprehensive and competitive contract which enhances the opportunity to attract and retain quality teachers as outlined in section 3.6 of this report;
- the rich connectedness with offshore and onshore schools including a potential Twin School Program with a school in Langley B.C., as outlined in section 4.3 of this report;
- offering a wide selection of courses across the curriculum and a variety of extra-curricular activities as outlined in section 4.3 of this report; and,
- utilizing a protocol for attending to and supporting individualized learning needs of each student as outlined in sections 3.3 and 4.4 of this report.



SUMMATIVE RECOMMENDATION

The Offshore Inspection Team recommends to the Director of International Education that the British Columbia Program offered at Suzhou Industrial Park Foreign Language School continue to be recognized as a British Columbia Certified Program.

