

Certification Inspection Report

BRITISH COLUMBIA PROGRAM

at

BUNKA SUGINAMI CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

TOKYO

JAPAN

OCTOBER 29-30, 2018

INTRODUCTION

On October 29-30, 2018, a certification inspection was completed on Bunka Suginami Canadian International School (BSCIS) in Tokyo, Japan, referred to as 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 inspection team, appointed by the Executive Director of International Education and Independent Schools, British Columbia Ministry of Education (MoE) in accordance with the *B.C. Global Education Program – Offshore Schools Certification Agreement* (the Agreement), consisted of Dr. Laurie Anderson (the Inspector).

The School's B.C. program has an enrolment of 77 students, in grades 10, 11 and 12. The B.C. program is housed within a larger school, Bunka Suginami Junior/Senior High School. The host school which houses the B.C. program, enrolls 885 students and has been in existence for 44 years. BSCIS and the host school both became co-ed schools in 2018. The school is renowned for its high scholastic standards and its commitment also to student achievement in the arts and athletics.

During their visit to the School, 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, offshore school representative (OSR), B.C. principal, B.C. teachers, and principal and vice-principal of the main Japanese school.

The owner/operator, Bunka Suginami Educational Foundation (BSEF) is responsible for the B.C. program. The BSEF oversees the Bunka Gakuen University in Tokyo. The BSEF is a well-established, reputable non-profit foundation committed to broad educational goals of high academic, athletic and artistic standards and achievement.



The B.C. program's philosophy, objectives and special features include:

The School's philosophy places critical thinking, creativity and collaboration at its centre. This is a dual Japanese and B.C. diploma school, where the aim is excellence in scholastic achievement and the arts.

The Inspector would like to thank Bunka Suginami Canadian International School for its hospitality, cooperation and preparedness for the inspection visit.

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

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met Not Applicable

Comment:

There were no requirements in the previous inspection report (2017).

This has enabled the School to focus on the upcoming growth and the B.C. education plan under the new principal's leadership.

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 School has a thorough business plan, which includes a 5-year school growth plan with targets and recruitment strategies. There is strong evidence in the plan, now in its fourth year, that the investment in establishing a positive working relationship with the host school, and, in implementing a strategic recruitment drive, are jointly ensuring the school's sustainability.

The sustainability of the B.C. program is reinforced by the complementary relationship with the host school, including sharing teaching and learning strategies from the B.C. Program.

Commendation:

The School is commended for developing and implementing a 5-year growth plan that has increased enrolment significantly while maintaining strong academic results.



**OWNERSHIP AND AGREEMENTS / BUILDING
AND SAFETY COMPLIANCE 2.0**

<p>2.1 The owner/operator meets all requirements as set forth in the B.C. Global Education Program Offshore Schools Certification Agreement (the Agreement).</p>
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met <input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met</p>
<p>Comment: The School's records include the necessary local government approval documentation (with translated copies).</p>
<p>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.</p>
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met <input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met</p>
<p>Comment: The facilities for the School is very well maintained. There is very thorough documentation outlining the health and safety inspections, protocols and procedures. The School has both written policy and physical infrastructure (e.g. emergency door closures) designed to maximise the safety and wellbeing of students and staff in the event of emergency (earthquake, fire, other disasters).</p> <p>The School has access to an impressive set of well-resourced gyms, offering students learning opportunities in archery, dance, and the traditional Japanese martial arts of kendo and naginata. The science labs are well-equipped and the School uses the resourceful art rooms for Applied Skills and Fine Arts (jewellery making, clothing and fashion design). There is adequate classroom space for the School's projected growth.</p> <p>The School has developed and implemented a school closure contingency plan. The plan clearly outlines the options for students and B.C. teachers in the event the School has to close temporarily or permanently.</p>
<p>Commendation: The School has developed and implemented a school closure contingency plan. The plan clearly outlines the options for students and B.C. teachers in the event the School has to close temporarily or permanently. Having a transparent, proactive plan in this area provides reassurance to parents and an incentive for the B.C. teaching staff.</p>



ADMINISTRATION 3.0

3.1 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 Not Met

Comment:

The offshore school representative (OSR) is in her third year at the School. With decades of offshore school experience in several countries, coupled with years of experience as a curriculum and instruction leader in B.C., the OSR is ideally suited for the role.

The OSR has a demonstrably positive relationship with the school principal and staff, and also with the senior administrative team of the host school. The OSR has biweekly Skype meetings with staff and takes an active role in the School's summer program on Vancouver Island.

3.2 The principal meets the requirements as outlined in section 3.2 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The newly hired principal comes to the School with two distinct attributes: 1) broad and deep school leadership in several school B.C. school districts; 2) Japanese language and cultural fluency.

The principal has laid the foundation for positive relations with the B.C. teaching staff and the staff and administration of the host Japanese school. The School is at a critical juncture in its evolution: a) successful first three years with continued growth; b) introduction of new B.C. Education Plan, and c) new principal. This convergence represents an ideal opportunity to review the School's practices and protocols around communications, planning, policies and cultivating strong, mutually supportive relationships.

The principal's job description meets the requirements of the Agreement.

Commendation:

The School is commended for hiring a fluently bilingual principal, who combines broad, varied leadership experience in several B.C. school districts with a deep understanding of Japanese culture.



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

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The School has an extremely efficient, supportive B.C. program assistant, whose familiarity with the program criteria and her exceptional organization skills are strong assets. In addition, there is a strong connection between the host school administration and the B.C. program office.

3.4 The School meets the Student Record requirements as outlined in section 3.4 of the Inspection Catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

All requirements in the Inspection catalogue are met or exceeded. Student records are maintained in an exceptionally organized and accessible way.

3.5 The School meets the teacher certification requirements as outlined in section 3.5 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Inspector confirms that all authorized persons under the Agreement possess valid and current certification under the B.C. Teacher Regulation Branch.

Staff turnover at the School is low, with the OSR and principal committed to retaining the quality staff they currently have.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM 4.0

4.1 The School meets the requirements for curriculum implementation outlined in section 4.1 of the inspection catalogue for offshore schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The School continues to move towards full implementation of the new B.C. Education Plan in clear and integrated ways. Teachers were observed teaching their comprehensive lesson



plans based on the “know-do-understand” curriculum model. The Inspector observed creative applications of the First People’s Principles of Learning being woven directly into lessons (including references to the indigenous peoples of Japan). Students’ work is on display in classrooms and hallways. The teachers in all subject areas are shifting the content focus towards the revised curricula. The School’s professional development program is ongoing, tied directly to practice, and draws upon the ideas and strategies of thought leaders in the B.C. education scene (e.g. Brownlee, Kaiser).

The School has introduced the new numeracy assessment examination and is integrating the learning within lesson plans.

Commendation:

The School is commended for cultivating a strong team of educators (teachers and the principal) committed to professional growth, and open to new ideas and creative teaching and learning strategies.

The School is commended for its ongoing, planned in-service program for staff, with summer and year-long professional development embedded into their program.

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:

The School has a comprehensive English language placement test. The host school, Bunka Sugunami Secondary School, has a thriving English language program in grades 7-9, and cooperative links between the programs are well established. The students’ English language development is supported by the School’s summer program with the Qualicum school district.

As the School grows, and as the importance of English language fluency increases within the revised B.C. program, the School should consider a review of the English language placement process for entry into the B.C. program. This includes the content of the assessment and the level required for acceptance into the program.

Commendation:

The School is commended for establishing a strong “study abroad” twinning program with their sister school in the Qualicum school district, a contributing factor in students’ English language acquisition and cultural awareness.



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 School has documented approval granting exemption status for Fine Arts/Applied Skills 10, and similarly for Physical Education 10, 11 and 12. The Inspector observed these courses being taught, and found the quality of instruction, the learning resources and the level of student engagement to meet or exceed standards in a B.C. onshore school.

4.4 The School meets the course overview/course planning requirements as outlined in Schedule B Part I, 2. (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:

The course overviews and lesson plans notably reflected the curricular framework of the revised B.C. curriculum, with clear links between what the goal of the lesson was (what the students were expected to understand, know and do), what was being taught (content) and by what means (instructional strategy), how student learning was being measured (rubrics, self assessment), and how a particular lesson or learning activity related to prior knowledge.

4.5 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 Not Met

Comment:

The School exceeds the instructional time allotments set out in the inspection catalogue. The school year in Japan runs from April through March, resulting in more days of instruction for this dual degree program (students meet B.C. and Japanese graduation requirements).



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:

The Inspector observed the use of a range of innovative assessment practices, including rubrics for various demonstrations of learning (e.g. levels of inquiry, quality of oral presentations), self-assessment measures, and various forms of criterion-referenced assessment (students compared to a learning standard, not to each other.) Due to the School's short history (in 4th year) exam results are limited, although initial results indicate they meet or exceed provincial averages. The teachers were collaborating on introducing the Numeracy assessment, given the mathematical and language requirements of the assessment.

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:

The School has an extensive collection of text books and digital resources to support delivery of the B.C. program. The Inspector noted that a wealth of online learning resources are used to supplement core materials.

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:

The School meets all the reporting requirements. Communications with parents in their language is supported by teachers in the hosts school and by the bilingual principal of the B.C. program.



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 very detailed (bilingual) parent/student handbook. The handbook clearly addresses all the pertinent information students and their parents need, including the School's vision, admissions' policy, code of conduct guidelines and dispute resolution.

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 very comprehensive teacher handbook in place. Among many other relevant aspects of the teachers' roles and responsibilities addressed in the handbook, there are sections on protection of privacy, dispute resolution, guidelines for field trips and the use of technology in the School.

The School also has an extensive orientation program for new B.C. teachers, making the transition to life in Tokyo as smooth and positive as possible.

Commendation:

The School is commended for maintaining extremely well organised, comprehensive and informative documentation. The material is easily accessible, clearly written and efficiently organised.

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:

The School offers Physics 11 (17 students) and Physics 12 (one student) online through the DL program at SD73 (Global Education).



CONCLUSION

Commendations

The Inspector wishes to recognize the owner/operator, principal and staff of Bunka Suginami Canadian International School for:

- Developing and implementing a school closure contingency plan. The plan clearly outlines the options for students and B.C. teachers in the event the School has to close temporarily or permanently;
- Its ongoing, planned in-service program for staff, with professional development opportunities embedded into the school year and during the summer;
- Supporting students' English language acquisition and cultural awareness by establishing a strong "study abroad" twinning program with their sister school in Qualicum;
- Recruiting a fluently bilingual principal with broad leadership experience in several B.C. school districts, as well as cultural competency in the Japanese context;
- Developing and implementing a 5-year growth plan that has increased enrolment significantly while maintaining strong academic results;
- Maintaining extremely well organised, comprehensive and informative documentation. The material is easily accessible, clearly written and efficiently organised;
- Cultivating a strong team of educators (teachers and the principal) committed to professional growth, and open to new ideas and creative teaching and learning strategies.

SUMMATIVE RECOMMENDATION

The Offshore Inspector recommends to the Executive Director of International Education and Independent Schools that the British Columbia education program offered at Bunka Suginami Canadian International School continue to be recognized as a British Columbia-certified school.

