

Certification Inspection Report

BRITISH COLUMBIA PROGRAM

at

SHANGHAI UNITED INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

MINHANG DISTRICT, SHANGHAI

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

NOVEMBER 6 - 7, 2023

INTRODUCTION

On November 6 and 7, a certification inspection was completed on Shanghai United International School (SUIS) in Minhang District, Shanghai, People's Republic of China, referred to as the School in this report. The purpose of this inspection was to determine if the requirements for the British Columbia (BC) education program have been met, according to the *BC Offshore School Program Certification Agreement* (the Agreement). The inspection team (the Team), appointed by the Executive Director of the Independent Schools and International Education Branch, British Columbia Ministry of Education and Child Care (the Ministry) in accordance with the Agreement, consisted of Dave Beeke and Dan Miles, who served as Chair for this inspection.

The School's BC program has an enrolment of 278 students, in grades 9 to 12. It is one of two international programs offered at Shanghai International School, a private Chinese school. The host school is a large private Chinese school with appropriate buildings for academic instruction, administration, boarding and cafeteria facilities. The entire school, which houses the BC program, enrolls approximately 1,800 students.

During the visit to the School, the Team reviewed all standards required in the *BC Offshore School Program Certification Agreement* and *Operating Manual* and met with the representative of the Owner/Operator, Chinese Director of International Education, Chinese Principal, Offshore School Representative (OSR), BC Principal, BC teachers, school support staff and students.

The Owner/Operator, Xiehe Education Group, is responsible for the BC program. The Owner/Operator operates a total of nine Chinese schools, kindergarten schools and other international schools. The total enrolment of these schools is approximately 25,000 students.

The BC program's philosophy, objectives and special features include a strong focus on student achievement to be achieved by true partnerships with parents, students, BC and local teachers



and support staff. The School sees the key to this mission being a well-equipped teaching staff who have a passion for learning and a commitment to each student in their care. The staff's teaching methods are based on research and wise practices that allow students to demonstrate Core Competencies through various activities.

The Team would like to thank Shanghai United International School for its cooperation and preparedness for the inspection visit.

The School has satisfactorily addressed requirements contained in the previous inspection report.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Requirement Not Met	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
<p>Comment:</p> <p>The previous inspection did not have any requirements for the School to address.</p> <p>There were several suggestions that the School is still in the process of implementing.</p>			

BUSINESS PLAN 1.0

The Owner/Operator has submitted a business plan to the BC Ministry of Education and Child Care, 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:</p> <p>The Team reviewed the business plan submitted by the Owner/Operator to the BC Ministry of Education and Child Care.</p> <p>The School's enrolment was trending upwards in the 2019-2021 school years, with a goal of approximately 360 students. COVID-19 affected enrolment for several years. This year the School was able to successfully recruit several new grade 9 (pre-BC program) and grade 10 students. The Team noted that many students moving into grade 11 and grade 12 left the program to move abroad or to move to other programs with different behavior and academic expectations.</p> <p>The School continues to experience the limitations placed on enrolment by local Education Bureau requirements that state students must complete local requirements until the end of grade 9. A further restriction is that a greater number of students are expected to have a local education number (XueJi) that is assigned to the Jiaoke Campus, making it even more difficult to recruit students below grade 10 from off-campus.</p>		



However, the local middle school program on-site has started a program with students dedicated to an international education for the future. They will have a greater number of lessons in English from grade 6 through 8. These students' English skills will be strong enough to meet entrance requirements and will act as a feeder school. The Principal explained that there are currently 50 students enrolled in this program.

COVID-19 has also made it difficult for the School to attract BC teachers, causing the School to operate below its optimum number of teachers.

The recent compulsory educational changes made by the Chinese national government requiring that all students must complete the Zhong Kao (grade 9) final exams also has an unknown impact on international education. The XueJi student registration numbers and recruiting timelines for international schools have also had a negative effect on enrolment.

The post-secondary transition from last year's graduates was very good, with 100% of the students graduating with the BC Dogwood Diploma. Of these, 16 graduates transitioned to the University of British Columbia and Simon Fraser University. 28 graduates registered at post-secondary institutions in Ontario and 3 in Quebec. Most students transitioned to universities in the United Kingdom (21), Australia (11) and the United States of America (6), Hong Kong (2) and Holland (1).

Commendation:

The Inspection Team wishes to recognize the Owner/Operator of Shanghai United International School for ensuring that there are the resources available to support a high quality learning environment, as well as the staffing required to ensure high educational standards.

INSPECTION CATALOGUE 2.0

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

Requirement Met Requirement Partially Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Owner/Operator, with the Province's approval, retains an Offshore School Representative (OSR) in accordance with the requirements set out in Part II of Schedule B. The Owner/Operator is aware that it must advise the Province if it comes to it that the OSR is acting in a manner that is inappropriate or gives rise, either directly or indirectly, to any conflict of interest or the perception of a conflict of interest, in relation to the performance of their obligations to the Owner/Operator.



2.03 The Owner/Operator has written approval from the appropriate government entity to operate the School, as outlined in section 5.03 of the Agreement.

Requirement Met Requirement Partially Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Owner/Operator submitted several documents with the Annual Report that indicate the School has appropriate permissions from various government entities to operate the BC program at Shanghai United International School. These include:

- Approval of the Teaching Cooperation between the BC Ministry of Education and Child Care and Shanghai United International School, issued by the Shanghai Minhang Education Bureau (October 29, 2010).
- Approval to implement BC's curriculum in Shanghai United international School in Minhang District issued by the Shanghai Municipal Education Committee (October 11, 2018).
- Certificate of Registration issued by the Shanghai Minhang District Civil Affairs Bureau (July 11, 2022)

2.04-2.05 The School meets building inspection/safety, food preparation/cafeteria and fire safety codes/regulations. Facilities are deemed to be suitable to support the BC program.

Requirement Met Requirement Partially Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Owner/Operator submitted several documents with the Annual Report that indicate the School has appropriate permissions from various government entities to operate the BC program at Shanghai United International School. These include:

- Ownership Certificate of Real Estate to house school buildings, issued by the Shanghai Land and Natural Resource & House Management Bureau (May 20, 2000).
- Catering Service License, issued by the Shanghai Minhang District Market Supervision and Administration Bureau (valid to March 7, 2026).
- Fire Safety Certificate (original), issued by Shanghai Minhang Fire Control Command Centre (April 13, 2009). The last inspection took place on October 27, 2022 and no issues were identified.

The BC program is located on the campus of the larger host school, having its own dedicated classrooms and sharing other facilities. The dedicated rooms include 12 classrooms, several administration offices, five science labs, two IT labs, an art room and a textiles/robotics room. The shared facilities include the library/resources center, auditorium, dance & drama studios, 'AV classroom' and outdoor sports facilities (gym, track, soccer pitch, basketball courts, etc.).

The host school has developed a comprehensive 'Safety Work Plan' that the School is required to follow. Part 3 of the plan details the procedures and processes that each



stakeholder group at the School should follow to prevent infectious diseases. The stakeholder groups include doctors, homeroom teachers, students and cleaning staff. In addition, the host school employs three full-time registered nurses who provide 24/7 health services to the students and staff. First aid stations are in various rooms, e.g., science lab, art room, cooking lab and gymnasium.

Fire drills are conducted monthly and despite Shanghai not being in an earthquake zone the School does practice earthquake procedures using the “Drop, Cover and Hold” method. The last paragraph of the Safety Plan states that in the event of a school closure, the School will support its students in the continuation of their studies by contacting other BC offshore schools for placements. The Safety Plan has been vetted by the Offshore School Representative (OSR) for accuracy and functionality.

2.06 Offshore School Representative (OSR) - The Owner/Operator must appoint an individual to act as an OSR. This individual must be confirmed by the Province and must meet all the requirements set out in Schedule B, Part II of the Agreement.

Requirement Met Requirement Partially Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team examined the job description of the Offshore School Representative (OSR) and confirms that it meets the requirements in Part II of Schedule B of the Agreement. The job description of the OSR has been recently updated to align with the 2023/24 Certification Agreement. In addition to his OSR responsibilities, the Offshore School Representative also acts as a general advisor to the Owner/Operator. The OSR has been with the organization for ten years.

Conversation with the OSR confirms that he is 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 operations.

Commendation:

The Team wishes to recognize the OSR of Shanghai United International School for his consistent mentorship and support for the staff and students especially during the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and the current return to face-to-face programming.



2.07 The Principal meets the requirements as outlined in Schedule B, Part III of the Agreement and Section 2.07 (b) of the Annual Report.

Requirement Met Requirement Partially Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Principal is in her second year in this role, replacing the previous principal who returned to Canada. She is under a two-year contract. The Principal is a graduate of Memorial University, Newfoundland with a Master's degree in Educational Leadership. She has been working in BC offshore schools in China for the past 12 years. Prior to becoming the Principal, she had been the Vice-Principal at SUIS for two years. The Team confirms that the Principal's job description meets Schedule B, Part III of the Agreement. Examination of the Principal's contract confirms that it meets all the requirements as described section 2.07(d) of the Annual Report.

Commendation:

The Team wishes to recognize the Principal of Shanghai United International School for:

- taking on the challenge of leading the School and working with local and BC program administration and staff in a positive, inclusive and well-organized way.
- implementing a series of strategies to rebuild a sense of community after COVID-19 including creating multi-grade activities for students, using electronic communication methods to include all students and parents and generally focusing on celebrations throughout the School.

2.08 The School meets the administrative support requirements as outlined in Section 2.08 of the Annual Report.

Requirement Met Requirement Partially Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Principal is assisted by the Vice-Principal and a Director of Academics who function primarily to support students, including in matters of student discipline and scheduling examinations. The tripartite school leadership team operates as a collaborative unit.

The administrative support staff consists of two full-time administrative assistants, one of which also functions as the Principal's executive secretary. These staff are assigned to be responsible for the School's finances, payroll, and day-to-day administration.

The School uses the Windsor TESS and WebTESS student information system software. There is a Chinese teacher assigned to assist in translations. The host school admissions office processes student applications, working collaboratively with the BC administration.



2.09 The School meets the Student Record requirements as outlined in Section 2.09 of the Annual Report.

Requirement Met Requirement Partially Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team reviewed with the Principal the school administration software, as well as the paper files to ensure that the student records meet the requirements as described in the Annual Report. The Team confirms that through a combination of these three student record-keeping elements, the mandatory items of a student record are on file including 2022/23 student and parent consent forms, which will be updated again next school year.

2.10-2.18 The School meets the teacher certification requirements as outlined in Sections 2.10-2.18 of the Annual Report.

Requirement Met Requirement Partially Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

Currently, the School employs one teacher who practices with a Letter of Exemption (LOE).

In the 2022/23 school year, it became increasingly difficult to hire a BC certified arts teacher. The School applied for and acquired a Letter of Exemption for a locally certified, bilingual art teacher to deliver art courses for grades 10 – 12. The teacher works with the Principal and department head to ensure that planning, evaluation, and instruction meet BC standards.

The Team examined the translated teacher certification documents of the local teachers and confirmed that they each possess a valid teacher certificate from their respective provincial/municipal education bureaus where they were certified.

According to teacher laws/guidelines in Shanghai, all local teachers must have: (a) for kindergarten & primary school: college degree or above; (b) for junior high school: Bachelor's degree or above; and (c) for senior high school: Bachelor's degree or above. The Team examined the translated criminal record checks (CRC) of the local employees and confirms that each has successfully completed the check. The CRCs are current, having been conducted by the Shanghai Public Security Bureau.

The Team examined a sample teacher's employment contract and confirmed that it includes employment terms, hours of work, job description, compensation & benefits, termination clauses, vacation time and all other required items.

The Team discussed that all professional development last year was self-directed aside from the Ministry professional development session in August with Ken O'Connor (virtual) due to the challenges of COVID-19 and the Shanghai lock-down.

Most professional development surrounded online and remote teaching practices, including the various platforms that teachers were expected to use. Now that the School has returned to face-to-face instruction, professional development continues to focus on team building and embedding Core Competencies across BC's curriculum. First Peoples Principles of Learning and fair assessment practices remain topics of priority.

Other professional development sessions and discussion were on the use of AI for generating content in schools, and how the School will address this latest innovation. The staff intends to participate in the First Peoples Principles of Learning virtual professional development session organized by the Ministry in January 2024.

The Vice-Principal and Principal engaged in a variety of in-house professional development. The Principal continues to develop her Mandarin skills through lessons to facilitate communication and understanding with local staff.

2.19 The School meets the requirements for curriculum implementation outlined in section 2.19 of the Annual Report for offshore schools.

Requirement Met Requirement Partially Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The School supplied the Team with overviews detailing each of the courses currently offered in the BC graduation program. The Team reviewed curriculum implementation documents and participated in conversations with the Principal, Vice-Principal, Director of Academics, Academic Advisor, teachers, and students. During the interviews, the teaching staff demonstrated an extensive understanding and passion for the key components of BC's curriculum. All elements of BC's curriculum were evident in the course overviews. In preparation for the inspection, teachers prepared sample curricular documents and supplementary materials for their respective courses.

Teachers were available for interviews. The Team verified that all essential elements of BC's Curriculum—Big Ideas, Curricular Competencies, diversity and inclusion, First Peoples Principles of Learning (FPPL), Core Competencies, formative and summative assessment strategies, and student self-assessment—were apparent in teaching practices. The Team was impressed by the thorough preparation of the learning samples and lesson examples that helped the Team immersed themselves into the curriculum implementation at SUIS.

The team was particularly impressed with the articulate responses from the interviewed students. They exhibited a strong command of the English language and engaged in meaningful dialogues with the team on various topics, ranging from career choices to sharing their experiences as students with BC's curriculum.



Commendation:

The Team commends the staff of Shanghai United International School for building a collaborative school environment that enhances face-to-face learning for all students in this post COVID-19 era.

The Team commends the local homeroom teachers for the extensive work they have done to support their students as they navigated the challenges of COVID-19 and their return to the school environment.

2.20 The School meets the requirements for English language assessment and acquisition as outlined in Section 2.20 of the Annual Report.

Requirement Met Requirement Partially Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The School supports English language proficiency for all students throughout the BC program. The Team reviewed the English language entrance assessment and found it sufficient.

Students are offered course options in grade 10 to explore their interests while developing their English language skills. All courses emphasize vocabulary building, listening, speaking, and writing. Social Studies 10 is offered in the grade 11 year to allow students more time to develop the language skills they need to access the course, and to better prepare them for direct entry into senior-level humanities courses.

SUIS offers language support to all students throughout their journey. Students are encouraged to get involved in many English focused extra-curricular activities. Additional programming of two modules of English 11 provide English learning opportunities year round and SUIS offers English Studies 12 as a year-long course to support student achievement. Also supporting English acquisition were the small class sizes noted by the Team.

A full-time BC certified teacher is employed as a language support teacher to assist at-risk students. The teacher coordinates with English teachers, the English department head, and the school-based team (SBT) to work with classes in both a team-teaching and student-withdrawal format on an ongoing basis. The language support teacher focusses on comprehension of literature with increasing levels of complexity, using reading strategies, using context clues, and vocabulary development. English language arts class sizes are relatively small to allow more time for individual student attention. Grade 11 and 12 homeroom teachers also facilitate third party IELTS/TOEFL instruction on campus.



Commendation:

The Inspection Team wishes to recognize the School for a multi-faceted approach to support English language acquisition including small class sizes, unique course offerings and scheduling, extra-curricular options, school-based team support, and employing a BC certified full-time language support teacher.

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 Annual Report.

Requirement Met Requirement Partially Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The School currently provides the Board/Authority Authorized (BAA) courses Leadership 12 and Psychology 12. The School offers Art Studio 10 and Mandarin 10-12 taught by locally certified teachers.

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 Ministry learning outcomes/learning standards identified in the educational program guides for each course.

Requirement Met Requirement Partially Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

All elements of BC's curriculum were evident in the course overviews.

The Team conducted a review of the curriculum planning documents, finding substantial evidence that courses align with BC's curriculum. Interviews with teachers further supported the conclusion that instructional planning is in clear accordance with the BC curricular frameworks. Course overviews include Big Ideas, Curricular Competencies, content, First Peoples Principles of Learning and Core Competencies. Course overviews follow the "Know-Do-Understand" framework and have thorough core competency connections. The planning documents also include details on teaching and assessment strategies.



2.22 The School meets the instructional time allotment requirements as outlined in Section 2.22 of the Annual Report, 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 had the opportunity to examine both the annual school calendar and the daily schedule. The School is in session for a total of 197 days this year. The Team verifies that the cumulative instructional time in the School amounts to 1242 hours, surpassing the stipulated minimum requirement of 850 instructional hours outlined in Section 2.22 of the Annual Report.

2.23 The School meets the assessment methods requirements as outlined in Section 2.23 of the Annual Report.

Requirement Met Requirement Partially Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

Through classroom visits, teacher interviews, and viewing the Teams platform and course outlines, the School illustrated that assessments encompass a variety of methods across the units. These methods are in alignment with BC's curriculum, with a significant emphasis on competency-focused approaches. It is evident that teachers are using a variety of assessment instruments to determine student progress. The Team was able to review several rubrics created by the teachers. Teachers also demonstrate regular use of formative assessment, student self-assessment and peer assessment.

The School continues to develop fair assessment guidelines used by teachers to assist in providing an accurate mark from a variety of ways that demonstrate individual student learning.

The School maintains a rigorous security and invigilation procedure for the BC Graduation Numeracy and Literacy Assessments. This includes a review of testing expectations prior to the exams being conducted and entering Personal Education Numbers (PENs) and preparing computers for individual students.

The School meets the assessment methods requirements as outlined in Section 2.23 of the Annual Report for Offshore Schools.



2.24 The School meets the learning resources requirements as outlined in Section 2.24 of the Annual Report.

Requirement Met Requirement Partially Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team confirms that educational resources available meet the required standard.

The School has an adequate library of print resources and two IT labs. Classroom visits noted Wi-Fi throughout the building supporting extensive student use of laptops, tablets, and smartphones as learning tools. The Team observed teachers using interactive whiteboards, SmartTVs, and digital projection technology. Microsoft Office 365 for Education enhances teacher and student learning and is used to facilitate communication, store documents, and share resources and assignments among teachers and students.

Technology is supported with a central technology office and four full-time technicians for the campus.

2.25 The School meets the student progress report requirements as outlined in Section 2.25 of the Annual Report.

Requirement Met Requirement Partially Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

Parents and students are informed via the handbook and on course syllabi how students will be assessed and what the criteria are for success. The School communicates student progress and achievement throughout the year with four scheduled formal reports and two parent-teacher conferences.

Homeroom teachers have a close relationship with the BC certified teachers and communicate concerns regarding students' social and academic progress. Homeroom teachers connect with parents to ensure clear communication.

Cross-grade meetings occur after key reporting periods to identify any interventions such as parent meetings, intervention strategies, and next steps with students. Individual parents are invited to interviews with subject teachers as required throughout the school year.

The Team confirms that the School meets the student progress report requirements as outlined in Section 2.25 of the Annual Report.



Commendation:

The Inspection Team commends the School for supporting students in the BC program by facilitating meaningful, direct, and regular connections between the Chinese homeroom teachers and the BC certified teachers.

2.26 The School meets the parent/student handbook requirements as outlined in Section 2.26 of the Annual Report.

Requirement Met Requirement Partially Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team was able to review the School's parent/student handbook which thoroughly outlines requirements, procedures, policies and operational practices for students and parents.

2.27 The School meets the teacher handbook requirements as outlined in Section 2.27 of the Annual Report.

Requirement Met Requirement Partially Met Requirement Not Met

Comment:

The Team was able to review the School's teacher handbook, which covers all policies related to employment in the School, teacher responsibilities, and contractual obligations.

2.28 The School meets the Online Learning requirements (formerly Distributed Learning) as outlined in Section 18 of the Agreement and Section 2.28 of the Annual Report.

Requirement Met Requirement Partially Met Requirement Not Met Not Applicable

Comment:

The School offers Calculus 12, Pre-Calculus 12, Economics 12, Anatomy and Physiology 12, Chemistry 11 and Chemistry 12 as Online Learning courses. A combined total of 15 students are enrolled in these courses. The School uses the approved Online Learning service provider, Global Education – School District 73 Business Company.

The Principal and Vice-Principal facilitate the Online Learning courses.



2.29 The School meets the requirements for offering Remote Instruction under the BC Offshore School Remote Instruction Policy and as outlined in Section 2.29 of the Annual Report.

Requirement Met

Requirement Partially Met

Requirement Not Met

Not Applicable

Comment:

The School does not currently offer any courses via Remote Instruction.

CONCLUSION

Commendations

The Inspection Team wishes to recognize the Owner/Operator, Principal, staff and Offshore School Representative of Shanghai United International School for:

- ensuring that there are the resources available to support both the high quality learning environment, as well as providing the staffing required to ensure high educational standards.
- the OSR's consistent mentorship and support for the staff and students especially during the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and the current return to face-to-face programming.
- the Principal's leadership at the School, and her work with local and BC program administration and staff in a positive, inclusive and well-organized way.
- implementing a series of strategies to rebuild a sense of community after COVID-19 including creating multi-grade activities for students, using electronic communication methods to include all students and parents and generally focusing on celebrations throughout the School.
- building a collaborative school environment that enhances face-to-face learning for all students in this post COVID-19 era.
- the extensive work by the Chinese homeroom teachers to support students as they navigated the challenges of COVID-19 and their return to the school environment.
- implementing a multi-faceted approach to support English language acquisition including small class sizes, unique course offerings and scheduling and extra-curricular options, implementing school-based teams, and employing a BC certified fulltime language support teacher



SUMMATIVE RECOMMENDATION

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