

Certification Inspection Report

BRITISH COLUMBIA PROGRAM

at

OSAKA GAKUGEI CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

OSAKA

JAPAN

OCTOBER 26-27, 2023

INTRODUCTION

On October 26 and 27, a certification inspection was completed on Osaka Gakugei Canadian International School (OGCIS) in Osaka, Japan, 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 Inspector, 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, was Cathy Lowenstein.

The School's BC program has an enrolment of 27 students, in grades 10-12. The BC program operates on the second, third, fourth and seventh floors of the host Japanese school, namely, Osaka Gakugei Junior and Senior High School (grades 7-12). The entire school, which houses the BC program, enrolls 2,060 students.

During the visit to the School, the Inspector reviewed all standards required in the *BC Offshore School Program Certification Agreement* and *Operating Manual* and met with the School's Owner/Operator, school foundation board Chair, BC Principal, BC Program Director, BC teachers, administrative support staff, and a group of BC program students representing the different grades.

The Owner/Operator, Osaka Gakugei Educational Foundation is responsible for the BC program. The Principal of the host school takes an active role in the success and sustainability of the BC program which is currently in its fifth year of operation.

The BC program's philosophy, objectives and special features include a mission statement, "[t]o empower future mindful leaders who flourish in and enrich a global society".



The school culture and philosophy are based on the core values of integrity, respect, compassion, reliability and curiosity.

The staff spent several professional development sessions creating an enhanced vision statement which includes, “[p]roviding a diverse, forward-thinking learning experience for an ever-changing, interconnected world”.

The Inspector would like to thank Osaka Gakugei 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.			
<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:</p> <p>There were no requirements in the previous report from 2022. However, the School positively and proactively responded to some suggestions made by the previous inspection team.</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 Owner/Operator has submitted a business plan confirming the eligibility of the program. The promotion of the BC brand as a high quality, internationally recognized educational program is ongoing. Offering students a dual diploma in the form of a Japanese high school diploma and a BC Dogwood Diploma upon graduation is a key message for recruitment.</p> <p>The School is in the process of making further enhancements to their growth plan. Effective marketing and recruitment continue to be the overarching goal at the School. Establishing new and effective means of reaching a wider audience has been helpful as well as identifying new cohorts of interest such as families returning from overseas and settling in Osaka. There has been a significant increase in enrolment over the past year. This can be attributed to the easing of COVID-19 restrictions, excellent results from the graduating class, and well received school open houses facilitated by OGCIS staff. However, enrolment remains an issue and a focus for school leadership.</p>		



Another current area of exploration is the establishment of a grade 7-9 after school program that will open more interest and a pathway for students currently attending the host school to be prepared to enter OGCIS in grade 10.

The Inspector viewed a well-presented new school brochure which was distributed widely and clearly laid out the BC program and its benefits. The Principal and Program Director have taken the lead in expanding the recruitment initiatives which include video meetings with interested international parents and students, emails and letters to interested families as well as numerous tours to observe teaching and learning. The School has also held campus and information sessions at the host school with presentations by the international department and the BC Principal. Demonstration lessons were also led by BC teachers focused on grade 9 students in the host school. Student-led parent teacher conferences in grade 10 have also been effective ways of connecting with parents.

As part of the ongoing and supportive partnership, the host school continues to offer a language arts preparation program to prepare grade 9 students for the BC program should they be able to meet the rigorous entrance requirements.

The small school environment and professionalism amongst faculty has helped to create a strong shared vision that supports students to become intrinsically motivated, independent learners and leaders.

Commendation:

The School is commended for their strong shared vision that supports students to become intrinsically motivated, independent learners and leaders.

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:

OGCIS has received authorization from the province of British Columbia to operate as a certified BC program. The School has continued to meet the requirements under the Agreement. The Owner/Operator is highly supportive of and committed to the success of OGCIS and has a strong strategic commitment to offering a quality educational program. He generously helps to ensure that professional support staff and resources are present at the School to continue to build a quality BC graduation program.

The BC Principal, leadership team and the Owner/Operator and Japanese leadership collaboratively participated and supported the inspection.



Commendation:

The Owner/Operator is highly supportive of and committed to the success of OGCIS and has a strong strategic commitment to offering a quality educational program.

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 School was able to provide documentation from the appropriate government authorities that indicated approval to operate the BC program, including:

- a 2018 approval from Osaka Prefecture to establish the BC offshore school;
- a 2022 Certificate of Proof indicates approval for ongoing operations of the BC offshore program, including a business license; and
- a 2018 certificate from Osaka Prefecture confirming the admissions capacity for private schools.

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 BC program is in a large seven storey host school building complete with office space on the second floor and classroom space on the third, fourth and seventh floors. The BC program has access to the host school's facilities including a large gym, a well-supplied science lab, a computer lab, a large courtyard artificial turf field, roof top sports courts, a library, and a cafeteria.

The Inspector reviewed translated copies of inspection documents, including a Report of Fire Safety Inspection, Cafeteria Operating License, Evacuation Drills and Protocols and Emergency Plans and Building Inspection.

All documents indicate the School is in full compliance with local regulations and authorities and that the facilities are suitable to house the BC program.

The Inspector reviewed the School's detailed emergency preparedness plan which confirms the School has plans in place in the event they face a temporary or permanent closure due to natural disaster/unforeseen events. The plans have been vetted by the Offshore School



Representative (OSR) for accuracy and functionality and include ensuring learning continuity with the support of the sister schools in Tokyo (Bunka Sugunami) and Langford, BC (Belmont Secondary School) as well as offering Online Learning through the approved provider, Global Education - School District 73 Business Company.

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 Offshore School Representative (OSR) is an experienced and committed educational leader who has been instrumental in the School's ongoing success. She has represented the School since its inception and has been the key driver of effective teacher recruitment and oversight of school management and initiatives.

The OSR is hands-on with faculty and school leadership from both the BC and Japanese side and demonstrates ongoing vision when it comes to supporting the School to be sustainable in the future.

The Team examined the OSR's job description and confirms that she has the right to legally represent the Owner/Operator in dealings with the Ministry. The job description outlines the responsibility of the OSR to the Owner/Operator and of the School and teachers.

The OSR is aware of her 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 OSR is an experienced and committed educational leader who has been instrumental in the School's start-up and ongoing successes.

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 has been an administrator in both onshore and offshore schools and meets the requirements as outlined in the Annual Report. He is well supported by both the Owner/Operator and the Offshore School Representative (OSR).



The Principal has been focused on the fulfillment of the goals of the business plan, especially the focus on student recruitment. The Principal is supportive of all teachers and has collaboratively built a learning community among the BC program teachers. He has a good understanding of the challenges, the rigour and the successes of a quality BC program. Continuing to build a solid relationship with the host school to provide additional fulsome support for all students will be helpful for now and the future.

Commendation:

The BC Principal is commended for the supportive and collaborative way he has built a cohesive learning community among the BC program teachers. Through his experience with prior onshore and offshore schools, he has a good understanding of the challenges, the rigour and successes of a quality BC program.

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 School has developed a team of professionals who support the daily operations of the BC program. A newly hired bilingual BC Program Assistant manages the school files for teachers and students as well as a host of other administrative duties that are part of the administrative support requirements.

The School is also fortunate to have a highly effective Project Director who is the direct liaison between the BC program and Japanese host school. He has a leadership role in recruitment strategies, technology and communicates with the host school and wider community to create new interest in the BC program. The Project Director has been an integral leader at the School since its inception.

Commendation:

A highly effective Project Director who understands the landscape of recruitment and is positioned well to be able to liaise with the host school and wider community to create new interest in the BC program.



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 School has a newly hired BC assistant who manages the student record requirements. The Inspector reviewed a sampling of student records and confirmed the presence of all required elements as outlined in section 2.09 of the Annual Report for offshore schools, including the English language entrance assessment. Hard copies of student files are secured in a locked filing cabinet in the BC office, and digital student records are managed securely within the student management system.

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:

The School has retained most of the BC teachers since its inception. All staff are committed to supporting student achievement and success in the BC program.

The Inspector confirmed all teacher files were reviewed and all those delivering the BC program have valid and current BC teaching certificates. Teacher contracts and teacher files were reviewed and found to be complete, addressing all the required areas.

Each file contains all the necessary elements including copies of the Ministry teaching certificates, employment contracts, teacher evaluations, updated Ministry personal information consent forms, contact information, and Japanese work permits.

All current BC program teachers have valid Certificates of Qualification, and one teacher has a subject restricted teaching certificate and is teaching within the boundaries of her subject restriction. All locally certified teachers have evidence of valid certification and local criminal records checks on file and supporting documents attesting to their qualifications.

The Inspector noted the competence and motivation of teachers who are committed to the success of all students. A high percentage of teachers stay for multi-year assignments and the School has taken the steps to ensure that teachers are qualified before arriving in Japan.

The Inspector confirms that all Authorized Persons under the Agreement possess valid and current certification under the Ministry of Education and Child Care.



Commendation:

The School is commended for their high staff retention, where many teachers stay for multi-year assignments, and for staff's commitment to supporting student achievement and success in the BC program.

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:

Through a review of planning materials and interviews with teachers, administration and a selection of grade 10, 11, and 12 students, the Inspector verified that the BC grade 10 to 12 curriculum and planning documents contain all the necessary elements of BC's curriculum and are personalized and dynamic. Teachers new to the School and to BC's curriculum are well supported in this regard. All teachers are participating in ongoing professional development which addresses curriculum and planning.

The School is implementing the 2023/24 graduation requirement of four credits of Indigenous-focused coursework in the form of Literary Studies and New Media 11. The Teacher Librarian is knowledgeable regarding the First Peoples Principles of Learning (FPPL) to ensure that the foundational skills of the program are presented authentically for a Japanese student. The School has six professional development days where teachers can plan and participate fully.

Commendation:

The School is commended for their extensive teacher planning documents that contain all the necessary elements of BC's curriculum and are personalized and dynamic.

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 Principal manages the admission process and makes the final decision with regards to admission. The School conducts an initial assessment of students' English language proficiency and uses a variety of classroom-based assessments to monitor students' language acquisition.



The teachers spend time to ensure that students are improving in their literacy skills as well as ensuring that there are supports in place for struggling students. The School has created some tutorials which take place after school for all subjects. This is offered by the BC teachers and is open to all students and specifically grade 10 students who are new to the program and the demands of the BC program. These tutorials serve to allow these students more direct, small-group instruction and a comfortable space for them to practice their oral language skills.

Students take a literacy assessment in grade 10 and each year until graduation. The results are used to make sure students are on track and poised to do well in university. The School has under 10 students per grade at this time and therefore can offer a significant amount of individualized attention. The addition of a new drama course offering into the curriculum is being explored to help students with expressive language and confidence.

OGCIS prioritizes the enhancement and improvement of every student's English skill and ability. Teachers offer one-on-one support for English language and assistance with assignments and subjects in all courses. Direct one-to-one teacher to student tutoring before, between and after regular instruction in all subjects is offered. The English language arts teacher regularly meets with students outside of classroom time to provide ongoing expressive and receptive language support. English language proficiency support, including subject specific support with students, is a routine aspect of the School with teachers being available after regular instruction five days a week.

Commendation:

The School is commended for ensuring a diligent and intentional focus in supporting English language learning (ELL) for all students.

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 Inspector confirms the School demonstrates compliance with the International Student Graduation Policy for equivalency and challenge. The School currently offers the following courses that are exempted from having BC certified teachers: Physical and Health Education 10, Culinary Arts 10, Instrumental Music: Concert Band, and Active Living 11. The course overviews for these courses are fully developed.



The School currently offers the Board/Authority Authorized (BAA) course, Japan and Canada in the Modern World (grade 11). The course overview for this course is fully developed and the School has an approval letter on file from the Ministry dated June 15, 2020.

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:

The Inspector was able to conduct a comprehensive review of all planning documentation including overviews, unit plans and lesson plans. Teachers are committed to the success of all students and utilize a variety of formats to describe their plans, but all course plans include the required elements such as Big Ideas, Core Competencies, Curricular Competencies, English language learning strategies, First Peoples Principles of Learning, and various assessment strategies.

This year the School is offering Contemporary Indigenous Studies 12 for the first time, meeting the graduation requirement to include an Indigenous-focused course in its program of studies that is authentic, relevant and meaningful for students.

Through a review of course planning documents and in interviews with teachers, the Inspector was able to verify that the School meets the course overview and planning requirements. It is notable that faculty have been trained recently in BC and understand well how to plan and organize the implementation of the course requirement.

Commendation:

The School is commended for implementing a fully executed curriculum, including the First Peoples Principles of Learning, ensuring that the learning is authentic, relevant and meaningful for students.



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 Inspector confirms that the School exceeds the instructional time allotment requirement of 850 hours. The School provides 1118 hours of instruction per school year for grade 10, 1085 hours of instruction for grade 11, and 976 hours of instruction for grade 12, all of which exceeds the Ministry requirement of 850 hours.

The School divides the school year into three equal trimesters and the school day begins and ends at the same times as the host school. Students at the School complete both the Japanese and BC diploma program and therefore attend classes six days per week. On Saturdays there are no BC classes, therefore BC program students attend exclusively Japanese classes on those days.

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:

Examination of course outlines, and unit and lesson plans show evidence that the teachers use a wide variety of teaching and assessment strategies. Detailed descriptions of the teaching strategies and assessments are included in all documents. Assessment is embedded in the practice of all teachers and is supported by ongoing professional development, and the use of standards-based assessment and proficiency scales in high school.

Every course outline refers to the performance standards available for their subject matter. The links to access the standards are sent to parents before student-led conferencing. All assignments are required to have an attached performance rubric or referenced to a standing rubric for regular assignments. When possible, elements of the standards are included in the rubric. The School has incorporated a school wide "write" into the practice with partner marking. All entrance exams are double marked for accuracy.

The School follows all the Ministry instructions/expectations regarding provincial assessments. The Principal ensures that the invigilators read and understand the instructions and sets up the online assessments. There are a minimum of three BC staff members involved: the Principal, a teacher-invigilator per each room and an administrative assistant.



The School's security and invigilation procedure for BC provincial graduation assessments meets Ministry requirements and is supervised by the Principal.

Commendation:

The School is commended for using a wide variety of teaching and assessment strategies which are embedded in teacher practice.

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 School meets the learning resources requirements to effectively deliver BC's curriculum. The School has an excellent library located in the host school which contains mostly fiction books and is part of a consortium of schools using an online library. The library is highly used by students. All students are given orientation at the beginning of the school year and are encouraged to visit the library regularly to access resources aimed at improving literacy.

The collection gives students access to more than 300 e-books and 700 audio books. The library/commons area are used by students to replace their silent reading books, for research, or for self-directed reading and studying. Students use technology for all classes, for research, writing assignments, editing, sharing, connecting with the class and/or teacher via Microsoft Teams, a web-based platform used by all teachers. New resources have been purchased in consultation with teachers to fit BC's curriculum.

Technology is used extensively by teachers in support of learning as well as to communicate with students. All students are provided with a Microsoft Surface tablet. The host school has two dedicated (100 Mbps and 1Gbps) broadband connections and several static IP addresses for internet access. There are dedicated WIFI servers with routers and repeaters installed in all buildings to ensure consistent internet access for staff and students. The host school also provides the School access to a dedicated tech support desk for teachers and students for troubleshooting, maintenance, and warranty/insurance claims.

The Principal has signed off on all learning resources.



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:

The student progress reports meet the Ministry's requirements. The School provides three formal reports per school year (July, December, and March). There are also two informal reporting sessions and one set of student-led conferences (March) as well as two interim report periods per year (June and November).

The School tracks students who might be struggling with their learning and holds team meetings in coordination with the students' Japanese teachers to ensure a consistent approach to facilitating student success.

The Inspector reviewed progress reports from a sampling of student files and noted the presence of teacher comments in English for courses taught in English and in Japanese for courses exempted for delivery in Japanese.

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 handbook has been translated for easy reference in both languages.

The Inspector reviewed the School's parent/student handbook and confirmed that it contains appropriate and relevant information for students and their parents, assessment policy and practices, dispute resolution policy, emergency procedures, graduation information, and COVID-19 protocols.

The Inspector verified that the parent/student handbook meets the requirements as outlined in section 2.26 of the Annual Report.



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 Inspector reviewed the teacher/administrative handbook and confirmed it contains all items outlined in the Annual Report.

The School's teacher handbook has been updated for the 2023/2024 school year. It includes the annual calendar, an overview of the program, course descriptions, relevant policies, and information supporting teachers' professional needs, evaluations and appeals.

The Inspector verified that the teacher handbook meets the requirements as outlined in section 2.27 of the Annual Report.

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 currently offers Calculus 12 through Global Education - School District 73 Business Company. There is one student who is enrolled in the course and in person support is received from a math teacher in the BC program. The School plans to continue to offer courses via SD 73 as enrolment grows and student interest demands.

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 offer currently offer courses via Remote Instruction.



CONCLUSION

Commendations

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

- a shared vision that supports students to become intrinsically motivated, independent learners and leaders.
- a highly supportive Owner/Operator who is committed to the success of OGCIS and has a strong strategic commitment to offering a quality educational program.
- the supportive and collaborative way the BC Principal has built a cohesive learning community among the BC program teachers. Through his professional experience, he has an understanding of the rigour and expectations of a BC offshore school.
- the commitment of the Offshore School Representative (OSR) as an experienced and committed educational leader whose vision has been instrumental in the School's start-up and early successes.
- the effectiveness of the Project Director who understands the landscape of recruitment and is positioned well to be able to liaise with the host school and wider community to create new interest in the BC program.
- the committed staff for supporting student achievement and success in the BC program.
- the teacher planning documents that contain all the necessary elements of BC's curriculum and are personalized and dynamic.
- the diligent and intentional focus in supporting English language learning (ELL) for all students. Teachers use a wide variety of teaching and assessment strategies which is embedded in their practice.
- a fully executed curriculum including the First Peoples Principles of Learning, ensuring that the learning is authentic relevant and meaningful for students.

SUMMATIVE RECOMMENDATION

The Inspector recommends to the Executive Director of the Independent Schools and International Education Branch that, the British Columbia education program offered at Osaka Gakugei Canadian International School continues to be as a British Columbia-certified school.

