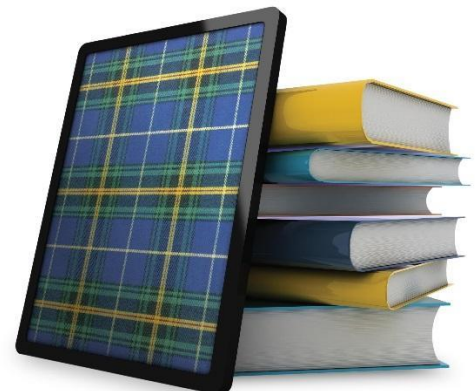


Annual Inspection Report

Nova Scotia International Programs 2021-2022

NAME OF SCHOOL Abu Dhabi Grammar School (Canada)
ADDRESS OF SCHOOL Tourist Club Area, P.O. Box 27161 Abu Dhabi, UAE
NAME OF OWNER/OPERATOR/COMPANY Fatima Assad
DATE OF INSPECTION November 1-18, 2021



ANNUAL INSPECTION REPORT

NOVA SCOTIA INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

at

Abu Dhabi Grammar School (Canada)

On November 18, 2021 the annual inspection of the Nova Scotia Program was completed at Abu Dhabi Grammar School (Canada). The purpose of the inspection was to determine whether the requirements for the Nova Scotia (NS) Program have been met, according to the agreement between the program operator and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (the Department). The inspection was conducted by Vera Grayson Kocay, Director International Programs, EECD and Eileen English, who was appointed by the International Programs Division at the Department.

This visit was conducted virtually. During the visit to the school, the inspection team reviewed the criteria for the annual inspection, and met with the NS principal, NS teachers, students and parents.

The NS Program has an enrollment of **932** students, including **33** students in Grade primary, **46** students in grade 1, **68** students in grade 2, **71** students in grade 3, **82** students in grade 4, **94** students in grade 5, **66** students in grade 6, **80** students in grade 7, **85** students in grade 8, **76** students in grade 9, **85** students in grade 10, **77** students in grade 11 and **69** students in grade 12. The NS Program has been in operation at Abu Dhabi Grammar School since 1994.

Comments reflective of school strengths

The Nova Scotia program has been successful in meeting many of the recommendations in the action plan following the 2020-21 inspection.

The inspection team would like to thank Fatima Assad for her hospitality, cooperation and preparedness for the inspection visit.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

1. Organizational Structure

The organizational structure is as follows:

The main administrative team consists of the two vice-principals who work closely with, and report directly to, the principal. The principal communicates directly with the owner, who is also the director of the program. For the daily operations of the school, there is also a guidance counselor, an assistant director, admissions officer, IT director and Middle/grade level leaders. There are over 75 staff at the school.

The organizational structure is clearly understood by all staff and all staff understand their respective roles and responsibilities.

Yes No Somewhat

COMMENTS

The organizational structure at AGS is clearly defined for all. The grade level responsibilities for the vice-principals have changed this year, and the duties are clearly outlined. The administration team works together as a cohesive team and is there for all staff.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. Communication

The principal communicates regularly and effectively with teachers.

Yes No Somewhat

The principal communicates regularly and effectively with parents.

Yes No Somewhat

Teachers communicate regularly and effectively with the principal.

Yes No Somewhat

Teachers communicate regularly and effectively with students outside of classroom hours.

Yes No Somewhat

COMMENTS: Teachers report getting regular and timely information and that there is transparency of communication between teachers and the administration. Teachers felt respected and that their input matters. Administration is visible and has an open door policy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

3. Student Recruitment and Admissions

A clear process is in place for student recruitment and admissions.

Yes No Somewhat

A high-quality entrance test approved by the NS principal is given to all prospective students.

Yes No Somewhat

The NS principal participates in the admissions process.

Yes No Somewhat

The NS principal makes the final decision on student admissions.

Yes No Somewhat

COMMENTS

The majority of the new student admissions are siblings of current students. The school has an excellent reputation and is well known in the community. There is a clear process for admissions. overseen by the admission officer who is a qualified teacher, trained in reviewing and assessing the test results.

An application is received and academic documentation from the previous school is reviewed.

The admission test is updated each year and consists of an oral component, reading, written and math. There is also an Arabic component.

The number of students accepted this year was restricted by the physical layout of the school and the restrictions imposed on the school due to Covid and the need for social distance.

The teacher in charge of admissions told the inspectors that all interviews were conducted virtually

A hard copy of all tests are kept on file and available for review.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Due to the curriculum aspects of the admittance tests it is recommended that the individual replacing the current admissions officer be a certified teacher.

4. Student/Teacher Records

Student files are stored in a secure and easily accessible location.

Yes No Somewhat

Student files contain report cards, credit checks and NSE 10 mark record forms.

Yes No Somewhat

Student files contain entrance test results.

Yes No Somewhat

Files containing relevant information about teaching staff are located in the principal's office.

Yes No Somewhat

Teacher files include annual performance reviews conducted by the NS principal.

Yes No Somewhat

COMMENTS

Student records are kept in a separate locked file room. Each student file includes the admissions application, entrance tests, previous reports from the previous school and letters of recommendation. Each year, the final report card, NSE results are also placed in the file.

Professional growth plans are done annually, reviewed, signed off and filed in each vice-principal's office.

Permanent teacher files are stored under lock and key in the assistant director's office. Personal information and professional information can be found there.

RECOMMENDATIONS

PROGRAM DELIVERY AND STUDENT ASSESSMENT

5. Curriculum Implementation and Resources

Teachers have a good understanding of the Nova Scotia curriculum.

Yes__ No__ Somewhat_X_

Teachers have access to adequate resources to teach their courses.

Yes__ No__ Somewhat_X_

Teachers have submitted long term plans to the principal for each course.

Yes__ No__ Somewhat_X_

Teachers are aware of and have access to curriculum documents and learning outcomes as well as resources to support curriculum.

Yes__ No__ Somewhat_X_

All courses meet the minimum requirement of instructional hours as stated in the PSP.

Yes_X_ No__ Somewhat__

Teachers use the following additional platforms to communicate with students, with each other and with the principal:

Google classroom , DOJO in the lower grades is used to communicate with students and parents to share what is being learned in the classroom and to send messages home.

COMMENTS

Teachers commented on the need for more resources. They were unsure about what resources were at the school given a year and a half of restrictions and limited ability to be physically at the school or use books. They indicated that they hadn't yet been able to refamiliarize themselves with books, supplies and digital resources currently at the school. They were not familiar with the work that International Programs has done over the last year and a half in building a digital resource platform. This platform was constructed in response to an identified need during the pandemic and in collaboration with curriculum consultants in all subject areas at the Nova Scotia Department of Early Childhood Education. It is an important source for resources in teaching Nova Scotia courses as it compiles digital versions of required textbooks as well as many other resources.

High school girls must take Dance since PE is not offered this year. Some students do not want to take dance and are frustrated with the limited options available to them.

Students and parents were pleased with the Individual Student Reports that were distributed this year. They were happy to see their progress in Nova Scotia courses clearly outlined. They would like to see the Arabic and Islamic Studies course assessment information included on these reports.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the administrative team lead a process whereby inventory is done of all resources available to teachers at the school both physically and digitally, including resources on the International Programs Ourcloud platform.

It is recommended that the administrative team draw up a list of resources to purchase, in order of priority and based on the inventory.

It is recommended that teachers be given access to the International Programs Ourcloud resources relevant to their teaching assignments.

It is recommended that each grade level be given a budget to purchase classroom supplies.

It is recommended that PE be offered to high school girls.

It is recommended that Arabic and Islamic Studies courses be included on the Individual Student Reports distributed to students and parents each month.

6. Student Progress and Achievement

Students understand how they are assessed and can describe the various types of assessments that determine their course marks.

Yes No Somewhat

In addition to quizzes and tests, students take part in projects and presentations to demonstrate learning and understanding.

Yes No Somewhat

Teachers have provided examples of how they check for understanding during class work and how they use cooperative learning strategies to assess group work and presentations.

Yes No Somewhat

Teachers have set up their PowerSchool Gradebooks to reflect a variety of assessment types.

Yes No Somewhat

Teachers have provided examples of rubrics used in assessing students.

Yes No Somewhat

Parents understand how their children are assessed.

Yes No Somewhat

Parents know where they can go to address concerns about their child's progress.

Yes No Somewhat

PowerSchool is used to generate report cards regularly.

Yes No Somewhat

PowerSchool is used to generate monthly Student Reports which are given to students.

Yes No Somewhat

Teachers are provided with the necessary resources to help them set up their Gradebooks and keep them up to date.

Yes No Somewhat

COMMENTS:

Students and parents appreciate the monthly Individual Student Reports that indicate student achievement in all subjects. This satisfies last year's recommendation. However it is important for students to also receive regular feedback and not just at the end of a month.

Not all teachers are updating their PowerSchool gradebooks in a timely manner. Often a month goes by before new assessments are given. Students need regular feedback as to their progress. In some cases students are doing extremely well in their daily work but poorly on tests, indicating that more assessments are needed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that teachers be required to provide regular feedback to students and update their gradebooks weekly.

It is recommended that the school utilize the ability to directly email students their reports so all students receive the report cards at the same time. This also provides a digital pdf for student and parents.

7. Programming and Support for Students

Teachers have regular office hours to provide help for students.

Yes No Somewhat

Students are comfortable requesting assistance from the teachers.

Yes No Somewhat

There is a process in place to contact parents if there are concerns about a student's well-being or academic progress.

Yes No Somewhat

Programming allows students to acquire all required credits for graduation in three years of high school.

Yes No Somewhat

Credit checks are printed and verified regularly by administration.

Yes No Somewhat

COMMENTS

Teachers, administrators, guidance counsellors and support staff are all available to meet with students and parents. A new referral form for K-6 has been put in place for students who are struggling. Despite the hard work of all, there remains a need for more qualified support teachers to support students who are struggling with academic as well as social and mental well-being issues.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that additional Resource teachers be hired to help support students.

It is recommended that a formal referral process be put into place for students in 7-12.

8. Facilities to Support Learning

The following facilities are in place at the school when students are attending classes on-site:
Classrooms big enough to seat students comfortably in desks and equipped with technology required for instruction.

Yes__ No__ Somewhat__

Science laboratories equipped with the necessary materials to deliver the science curricula.

Yes__ No__ Somewhat__

Separate and safe storage area for science materials.

Yes No__ Somewhat__

Offices for teachers and a private office for the NS principal.

Yes No__ Somewhat__

A gymnasium and/or large outdoor spaces for the delivery of physical education curricula.

Yes__ No__ Somewhat__

A library equipped with a large variety of English resources including print books and online reading materials.

Yes__ No__ Somewhat__

Common areas where students can study or work in small groups.

Yes__ No__ Somewhat__

COMMENTS

As pandemic restrictions begin to ease, it is hoped that the library, science labs and gymnasium can be used or used more often. There are not enough busses to transport students which has some parents feeling frustrated since they are now back working in their offices and are not available to transport students to and from school.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that a plan be made to open up the library, lab and office spaces as restrictions ease.

It is recommended that more buses be made available to transport students to and from school.

9. Technology Integration

The internet is reliable, stable and accessible throughout the building, including in classrooms.

Yes No__ Somewhat__

All computers in the school have English operating systems.

Yes No__ Somewhat__

Classrooms are all equipped with the required technology to support student learning and instructional strategies.

Yes No Somewhat

Teachers have personal desktop computers for use in their individual work spaces.

Yes No Somewhat

IT support is readily available, and repairs are done immediately.

Yes No Somewhat

COMMENTS

Google classroom is used on a daily basis to keep students, parents and staff informed. The guidance dept also uses google classroom to post activities and let students know about university visitations and requirements

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that there be greater access to chrome books/IPADs for KG-3. An additional cart be purchased to share with the lower elementary classes depending on identified needs as described in the resources section above.

TEACHING AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

10. Leadership

The principal is well-versed in the NS curriculum and graduation requirements.

Yes No Somewhat

The principal conducts regular classroom and/or virtual classroom visits.

Yes No Somewhat

The principal conducts yearly written professional evaluations of all NS teachers using a common framework.

Yes No Somewhat

The principal attends to all issues regarding student academic progress and personal well-being promptly and effectively. There are supports in place for students, and teachers and students are aware of these supports.

Yes No Somewhat

The principal encourages open communication among and between the Nova Scotia and host school staff to support students and enhance the reputation of the program.

Yes No Somewhat

The NS principal is proficient in using PowerSchool and works with the NS PowerSchool consultant to ensure that PowerSchool is used effectively.

Yes No Somewhat

COMMENTS

The principal is new this year and has worked at the school in previous years. He has experience working in an international context and is showing effective leadership in his position this year. He has established good communications with staff, students, teachers and parents. He is a visible leader and his presence is reassuring to parents.

RECOMMENDATIONS

11. Teacher Recruitment and Retention

All teachers are NS certified.

Yes No

If there are teachers who are not NS certified, they are in the process of becoming NS certified through Nova Scotia Teacher Accreditation.

Yes No Somewhat

The school is fully staffed and all teachers are teaching in their area of expertise.

Yes No Somewhat

Teachers feel supported by the principal.

Yes No Somewhat

Teachers feel that they work in a stable and successful learning environment.

Yes No Somewhat

NS teachers and host school staff maintain respectful and collegial relationships.

Yes No Somewhat

A process is in place to cover classes if a teacher is ill.

Yes No Somewhat

COMMENTS

The school advertises for teachers on the NS government website and through social media and word of mouth. There is not a huge turn over of teachers as teachers have indicated to the inspectors that they are happy at the school. The staff work together and help each other when needed but there is a need for supply teachers. Some staff are in the process of applying for Nova Scotia teacher certification. Others have been denied certification from the Nova Scotia Office of Teacher Certification.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that all teachers be Nova Scotia certified.

It is recommended that supply teachers be hired to relieve teachers when they are sick.

SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES

The inspection team recognizes the principal and staff for the following:

- Parents indicated that the principal was very visible and were impressed that he was always there in the morning to greet the students and parents.
- Parents appreciate the pedagogical approach at the school where well-being and character building is valued as much as academics.
- Teachers indicated that they felt very supported by all levels of administration.
- Students appreciate the multicultural nature of the school and feel accepted and supported.
- There is a good rapport between students and teachers. Students feel they can reach out to teachers for support.
- Teachers indicated there was a very collegial atmosphere at the school and they felt respected and appreciated.
- Staff, students and parents praised the google classroom that keeps everyone up to date on assessments and events. In the lower grades DOJO is used that provides the same infor for everyone.

Practices:

Comments from students and parents:

“Communication with the school is very open, transparent, handy and regular.”

“I see increased self-confidence in my daughter since she came to this school.”

“The school provides a good balance between character building and academics.”

“I feel accepted for my nationality.”

“Safe and joyful surroundings.”

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

List all recommendations from the boxes above:

Due to the curriculum aspects of the admittance tests it is recommended that the individual replacing the current admissions officer be a certified teacher.

It is recommended that the administrative team lead a process whereby inventory is done of all resources available to teachers at the school both physically and digitally, including resources on the International Programs Ourcloud platform.

It is recommended that the administrative team draw up a list of resources to purchase, in order of priority and based on the inventory.

It is recommended that teachers be given access to the International Programs Ourcloud resources relevant to their teaching assignments.

It is recommended that each grade level be given a budget to purchase classroom supplies.

It is recommended that PE be offered to high school girls.

It is recommended that Arabic and Islamic Studies courses be included on the Individual Student Reports distributed to students and parents each month.

It is recommended that teachers be required to provide regular feedback to students and update their gradebooks weekly.

It is recommended that the school utilize the ability to directly email students their reports so all students receive the report cards at the same time. this also provides a digital PDF or student and parents.

It is recommended that additional Resource teachers be hired to help support students.

It is recommended that a formal referral process be put into place for students in 7-12.

It is recommended that a plan be made to open up the library, lab and office spaces as restrictions ease.

It is recommended that more buses be made available to transport students to and from school.

It is recommended that there be greater access to chrome books/IPADs for KG-3. An additional cart be purchased to share with the lower elementary classes depending on identified needs as described in the resources section above.

It is recommended that all teachers be Nova Scotia certified.

It is recommended that supply teachers be hired to relieve teachers when they are sick.

ADHERENCE TO THE AGREEMENT FOR THE DELIVERY OF THE NOVA SCOTIA PUBLIC SCHOOL PROGRAM

Fatima Assad is responsible for adhering to the Agreement for the Delivery of the Nova Scotia Public School Program. Fatima Assad is further responsible for ensuring that the Nova Scotia program at is offered in accordance with the Nova Scotia *Public School Program* and meets the requirements and expectations described in the Nova Scotia International Programs *Operations and Procedures Manual*.