



Inspectie van het Onderwijs
*Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en
Wetenschap*

REPORT

Quality inspection at Saba Comprehensive School

Place: Saba
BRIN number: 30GU
Date of school inspection:
Report approved in Tilburg on 24 May 2018

9 March 2018

Summary

The Netherlands Inspectorate of Education inspected Saba Comprehensive School on 9 March 2018. On the one hand, this inspection aims to verify whether the school's quality assurance system is operating properly and whether it still demonstrates the basic quality achieved. On the other hand, with our supervision and inspection we want to encourage the school and the governing body to work together on further improving the quality of education.

Governing body: Saba Educational Foundation
Governing body number: 21342

School: Saba Comprehensive School
Total number of students: 100
BRIN: 30GU

We first summarize, under the heading 'What is being done right?' below, which aspects of the school we have assessed as being adequate. Under the heading 'What can be done better?', we then summarize those aspects where there is still room for improvement. Under the heading 'What must be done better?', we summarize any legal shortcomings that may exist.

What is being done right?

The governing body and school management have ensured that the education delivered at Saba Comprehensive School continues to meet the basic quality requirements. The governing body and school management have a clear picture of the quality of the lessons and improve them if necessary. The school management observes many of the teachers' lessons.

The students experience the school as a safe and inspiring learning environment. We have noted that the relationship between students and teachers is good. The teachers invest a great deal of time and energy in guiding their students and there is positive interaction between teachers and students, both during and outside lessons. The school's culture is based on rewards and recognition. The rewards aspect is visible in the trophies that students receive for various achievements, and recognition is shown by the large amount of work by students hanging in the rooms.

The care taken by most teachers in preparing their lessons means that we have seen many well-thought-out and challenging lessons in which students learn a lot. The teachers show great enthusiasm and dedication.

When Saba was hit by Hurricane Irma, teachers came to the school just days after the hurricane to support colleagues and students who had been affected and to join forces to help repair the damage to the building and the classrooms.

What could be done better?

Teachers could further improve the quality of their lessons by focusing on the English language in various ways in the lessons.

A group of language teachers is currently drawing up a plan to show how all teachers can be aware of the linguistic aspects of their profession. Up to now, we have seen this being applied too little in the lessons.

In order to know what extra help students need in language and arithmetic/mathematics, the school is still looking for a test that fits in best with the teaching program used by Saba Comprehensive School. Perhaps the secondary schools of Saba and St. Eustatius could cooperate more closely in this area.

We have already seen good examples of teachers who take account in their explanations of differences between students. A further step is for teachers to take more account of language difficulties when preparing lessons and giving assignments.

In practical training, the lessons a student attends could focus more strongly on the kind of work that the student would like to do and could do after leaving school. In addition, it is a good idea to record in a formal document the agreements you make with students about the lessons they attend and the work they want to do later.

What must be done better?

In this inspection at the school level, we did not see any aspects that need to be improved on the basis of legal requirements. For this reason, no remedial measures have been formulated in this report.

Agreements on follow-up supervision

In principle, we will visit the school again in spring 2019 within the framework of a progress meeting.

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1 Structure of the inspection

The inspectorate carried out an inspection of Saba Comprehensive School on 9 March 2018.

Background

During the quality inspection in fall 2016, it was ascertained that the Vocational Education and Training [*MBO*] (VET) department fulfilled the basic quality requirements and that secondary education had been able to maintain this basis quality. The planned progress meeting in fall 2017 did not take place due to Hurricane Irma.

Working method We arrive at our assessments by assessing the educational practice of the school against the standards of the 2017 Inspection Frameworks for the supervision and inspection of secondary education (Appendix 6: Assessment framework for education in the Caribbean Netherlands)

Table overview of standards

Standard	Inspected
Educational process	
OP1 Educational provision	•
OP2 Monitoring development	•
OP3 Teaching skills	•
OP 7 Practical training/Internship	•
Examination and certification	
ED1 Quality assurance of examination and certification	•
ED2 Examination instruments	
ED3 Examination procedure and assessment	
School climate	
SK1 Safety	•
Educational results	
OR1 Results	•
Quality assurance and ambition	
KA1 Quality assurance	•
KA2 Quality culture	•
KA3 Accountability and dialogue	•

Inspection activities

The inspection consisted of the following activities: we observed lessons, analyzed documents and had meetings with students, teachers, the special needs care coordinator, and the school management. In addition, we observed lessons together with the director. We concluded the inspection with a feedback meeting in which we gave the school management feedback on our findings from the inspection. The governing body was also present at this meeting.

Structure of this document

Section 2 reports the assessments, the conclusion and the follow-up supervision. Section 3 examines in more detail the results of the inspection in relation to the standards examined.

Legend

Assessments as given in the reports

Good - G

Adequate - V

Inadequate - O

Can do better - K

Quality areas

Educational process

Examination and certification

School climate

Educational results

Quality assurance and ambition

2 Main conclusion and follow-up

On 9 March 2018, we carried out an inspection of Saba Comprehensive School.

Saba Comprehensive School meets the basic quality requirements.

3 Results of the inspection



Educational process

Standard	Inspected	Assessment
Educational process		
OP1 Educational provision (secondary education (VO) and VET)	•	V
OP2 Monitoring development	•	V
OP3 Teaching skills	•	V
OP7 Practical training/internship	•	V

SECONDARY EDUCATION

OP1 Language policy curriculum in development

The curriculum prepares the students adequately for further education and society. In the core phase, the curriculum is in accordance with the requirements of the CCSLC (Caribbean Certificate of Secondary Level Competence). In the opinion of the teachers, the CCSLC lays a good foundation for the CSEC (Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate) in the advanced phase. The Academic program (CSEC) in the advanced phase prepares the students well for the final examinations. The curriculum of Saba Comprehensive School (SCS) is further enriched with activities both in and outside school, such as archeology, swimming and homework support.

A working group has been set up to shape language policy for all languages. The group is working on specifying policy for 'Dutch as a foreign language'. This effort is undermined by the fact that it has not been established which criteria Dutch as a foreign language has to meet. The language working group does have clear ideas about language policy, but has not yet been able to define them precisely or implement them. For example, to date not every subject teacher is deployed as a 'language teacher'. This is because not every teacher is focusing as yet on supporting students effectively in the case of language difficulties in that teacher's subject, or on language enrichment.

The teaching content for the seven students of practical training [PRO] is also adequate. In the advanced phase, they do an internship that is in line with their abilities and interests. In the core phase, the program is also aligned to the individual student's abilities. For example, students do English and Arithmetic/Mathematics at their individual level. The practical training students are also deployed for practical activities such as working in the school canteen. However, there is still no tailor-made curriculum that is systematically aligned to the individual abilities and ambitions of the student and specific development prospects. If it is clear within two years whether the student can be educated and trained for VET, paid work or supported employment, for example, and it is also clear which sector he or she is interested in, then carefully considered individual teaching content can be elaborated. That curriculum can consist of parts of subjects, learning skills for functioning independently in society, and internships. Specific individual learning goals can be defined for each year and can also be evaluated. This approach has the advantage that the teaching content is well-thought-out and the student has a clear educational or job prospect in view at an early stage. It can also be verified whether every student is making sufficient progress.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING [MBO] (VET)

OP1 Ambitious through extra subjects Program

The educational program prepares the students adequately for professional practice, further education and society. The program is tailored to the educational and training goals of the qualification. A positive point is that, in addition to their VET program, four out of six students have achieved the CSEC level in at least three theoretical subjects. This not only helps their chances in the labor market, but also their general development and, not least, their self confidence. Furthermore, this year the program was enhanced by the 'Skills competition', in which students from various countries compete on their vocational skills. In addition, there are the extra activities inside and outside school, such as swimming and archeology.

OP2 Sufficient focus on student development

The school monitors and guides the students in such a way that they can enjoy uninterrupted development. The school places great emphasis on support for its students. It has a sound special needs care plan that describes clearly how support for students is arranged. For those students who need extra support, the mentor draws up an individual treatment plan that sets out what support the student requires and receives in order to be better able to work through the educational program.

Developments relating to a student are meticulously recorded and updated. If a student needs guidance outside school, the expertise center (EC2) offers appropriate additional support.

We do ask for attention to be paid to students who are behind in the areas of language and arithmetic/mathematics. The school administers standardized and uniform English language tests (Terra Nova), but these focus on the US curriculum and therefore give a somewhat distorted picture. The school is aware of this limitation. It is continuing to look for a more suitable test that is a better fit for its own curriculum. This would allow the school to identify better where students' weaknesses lie and what specific support they need to catch up in language and arithmetic/mathematics. Good test instruments are of benefit for continuing to work in a results-oriented manner.

OP3 Lessons with adequate learning efficiency

The teaching strategies of the teachers enable the students to learn and develop. The lessons are orderly and quiet. The students are amenable and get down to work willingly. There is a positive educational climate in the class.

Teachers not only compliment the students frequently, but are also able to give effective feedback. The teachers explain clearly to the students why certain answers are correct or incorrect and let students think themselves about which steps they can take to make progress in their learning process.

Sound lesson preparation ensures that most of the lessons we observed had a sound structure, logical development and a clear beginning and end. It is positive that work is done effectively through the use of lesson plans. Most of the teachers start their lesson by making the learning goal of the lesson clear to the students, and end their lesson by discussing with the students what they have learned. Compared with our previous visit, it was noticeable that most of the teachers make great use of visual aids and a wide variety of teaching methods. Partly as a result of this, the students are very actively involved. In addition, we saw good examples of lessons in which students provide a large part of the lesson with presentations. In view of the target group, we think that this deserves a compliment.

We have learned that differentiation is a priority area and that teachers are aware of the added value of tailoring teaching to individual needs. We also saw good examples of teachers who know which learning problems specific students struggle with, and in the lessons they give targeted instructions and feedback to individual students. One issue of concern, however, is the preparation of assignments. On the basis of our lesson observations, we noted that there was too little differentiation in assignments to address different levels. Differentiated assignments make it possible to support or challenge students in a more targeted way.

OP7 Practical training/Internship

The preparation, implementation and supervision of the on-the-job training continues to be adequately effective. The students learn enough during their on-the-job training. Because opportunities for jobs and internships are limited on the island, it is not always possible to train for all components of the qualifications at the workplace. For this reason, the school has decided that the students will do their on-the-job training with three internship providers. The internship coordinator ensures that each student can become competent in all elements of the qualification. It is important that, during lessons, the subject teacher makes it clear to the students what the connections are between what they learn during the internships and the practical and theoretical program at school. This makes the program a consistent whole for the student.



Examination and certification

Standard	Inspected	Assessment
Examination and certification		
ED1 Quality assurance of examination and certification	•	V
ED2 Examination instruments	•	V
ED3 Examination procedure and assessment	•	V

ED Examination and certification

In 2016, the Inspectorate assessed the examination and certification of the VET programs at SCS. The manner of examination has not changed since. Only the checks on examination processes have been strengthened somewhat. Because the same examinations are involved that were judged at the time to be adequate with respect to all standards, the Inspectorate adopted the assessments from 2016.



School climate

Standard	Inspected	Assessment
School climate		
SK1 Safety	•	V

SK1 Safe learning environment

The school management and teachers ensure there is a safe environment for students, and there is a pleasant and safe educational climate. It is noticeable in every aspect that the school attaches great importance to creating a feeling of safety for its teachers and students. The school has a safety policy and monitors the well-being of the students on an annual basis. In addition, the school has a 'closure protocol' in the event of severe weather conditions.

The students feel very safe at the school. There are clear rules, which can be seen on posters in all the classrooms. The school has an overview of suspensions, which lists the number of suspensions and the reasons. Moreover, the school gave its students a 'bullying questionnaire' to fill in. The questionnaire showed that there is little bullying. If it does occur, it is dealt with thoroughly during lessons.



Educational results

Standard	Inspected	Assessment
Educational results		
OR1 Results	•	No assessment

secondary education (VO) and VET

OR1 Results

There are as yet no standards for educational results in the Caribbean Netherlands. Therefore, we will not yet assess the results (VO) standards and student success (VET) standards. However, we do describe developments in student success.

We note that in 2017, all candidates passed the Academic (CSEC) examination. This means that they obtained grade 1, 2 or 3 in at least six subjects. Two candidates additionally completed the required subjects and modules to be admitted to the Dutch Higher Professional Education (HBO) program.

All VET students also passed their examination in 2017. Four of the six candidates additionally obtained a further three certificates in one of the subjects for 'Academic' education. The examination board notes that the results in Dutch were disappointing. In the Caribbean Netherlands, this does not as yet have any consequences for obtaining the VET diploma.



Quality assurance and ambition

Standard	Inspected	Assessment
Quality assurance and ambition		
KA1 Quality assurance	•	V
KA2 Quality culture	•	V
KA3 Accountability and dialogue	•	V

KA1 Sharp focus on the quality of education

Saba Comprehensive School (SCS) and the governing body have established a quality assurance system and improve the quality of education on that basis. The management is focusing sharply on the various aspects of the quality of education at the school. The most important basis for this are the lesson observations carried out by management to assess teaching strategies. The resulting findings are discussed in the performance appraisal meetings with the teachers and are followed up, if necessary, with training. There is also an annual report from the examination board and the school activity plan is evaluated.

The school's management effectively directs educational developments. Among other things, this has resulted in better lessons than in 2016, more systematic special needs care and the development of updated programs or curricula in the core phase and in the vocational and practical training departments.

The team members have a clear idea of the policy priorities and know what is expected of them in order to achieve the goals of the school activity plan. Incidentally, these goals are not always formulated in a way that allows them to be tested, and they can therefore not be accurately evaluated. However, management is able to monitor closely the goals from the activity plan, because they are present at virtually all consultations.

The governing body is fully informed by the director regarding developments at SCS and also about the quality of education. However, there is no 'dashboard' showing how quality is developing and whether there are risks for the future. Parts of such a dashboard are available, though, such as the report from the examination board. It is worth considering how the governing body can be even better provided with data and analyses concerning the development of the quality of education for which the governing body is responsible.

KA2 Strong awareness of professionalization

The governing body and the school have a professional quality culture and operate in a manner that is characterized by transparency and integrity. Changes in the teaching team appear to have made it possible to have a more professional relationship between teachers and between the teaching team and the management team. There are clear agreements at the school and everyone can be addressed and challenged regarding these agreements. Teachers are also given space professionally to shape their teaching and to improve. There is effective educational leadership and this is not only top-down, but just as much bottom-up.

The teachers as well as the heads of department are encouraged to keep their skills up-to-date. However, the possibilities for this are limited on the island itself. Sometimes courses can be done elsewhere and people often use the possibilities of the Internet, for example with webinars.

KA3 Adequate communication with stakeholders

The school takes sufficient responsibility internally and externally for the educational quality and conducts an active dialogue on this subject. For example, there is an annual report and an examination report with an analysis of the educational results. There are also separate notes on tuition time spent and suspensions. In addition, there is a newsletter for parents and the inspection reports can be read on the school's website.

Internally, the school systematically organizes its response in the Participation Council. However, it takes a lot of effort to find people to take the seats reserved for parents. The internal dialogue is shaped further by all students periodically assessing their teachers' lessons. The students feel that they are seen and heard properly.

The external dialogue is intensive and that is essential on this small island. The school cooperates closely with the other educational institutions, the Expertise Center for Educational Care [*Expertisecentrum voor onderwijszorg*] (EC2) – a center of expertise to help children with learning difficulties and other problems – the school attendance officer, and the Island Government. Cooperation is also intensive beyond Saba. The director is in close contact with his colleague from secondary education and VET on St. Eustatius, the governance coach, and the coordinator for transition to English-language education on St. Maarten. There is also an active dialogue with the companies that provide on-the-job training. Representatives from the professional field are present at the VET examinations.