



Saba Comprehensive School

Two-yearly quality inspection
The Caribbean Netherlands

Date of publication: 10 January 2022

Summary

The Inspectorate of Education carried out an inspection at Saba Comprehensive School on 26 November 2021. One purpose of the inspection was to check whether the system of quality assurance at the school was working properly and whether the basic quality requirements continued to be met. The other purpose was to encourage the school and the school governing board to work together on further quality improvements.

School governing board: Saba Educational Foundation

Board number: 21342

School: Saba Comprehensive School

Total number of pupils: 100

BRIN: 30GU

Under the heading, 'What is going well?', we have summarized those aspects of the school that we have assessed as satisfactory. We then summarize, under the heading 'What could be improved?', the areas where there is room for improvement. The section headed 'What must be improved?' sets out whether there are any statutory shortcomings.

What is going well?

In recent years, the school governing board, the school management, and the teaching staff at the Saba Comprehensive School have gradually improved the quality of the education it provides and brought it closer into line with the context of the Saban community. In doing so, the school has emphatically embraced its responsibility as the only institution for secondary and vocational education on the island.

The school has enriched its curriculum with optional activities and support in certain areas. Its vocational education has also been successfully transformed according to the CVQ system. The Education Advisory Committee is now up and running, where pupils, teachers, parents, businesses, the Saban government, and other stakeholders can discuss the development of the SCS. A strong feature of the teaching at the SCS continues to be its small scale. This gives the teachers and supervisors the opportunity to create a pleasant working atmosphere and to get to know and monitor their pupils well.

What can be improved?

There are more and more subjects in which we noticed that lessons are structured around the differences in the learning needs of the students. However, attempts at teaching or challenging the pupils effectively in line with what each pupil is capable of are not always successful. The team is aware of this and is keen to make further progress on this point.

The school governing board knows much about the quality of the teaching at the SCS through all kinds of evaluations. A further useful step towards accountability for quality could be an integrated analysis based on the various evaluations and quality readings, or an internal or external audit.

Follow-up

We have not identified any statutory shortcomings. No follow-up supervision is therefore required. We are due to visit the school again in the autumn of 2022 for a progress discussion. Among the subjects covered in this discussion will be the developments at the school in general and the quality of the teaching in particular.

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1. Structure of the inspection

The Inspectorate of Education carried out a quality inspection at Saba Comprehensive School on 26 November 2021.

Procedure

In accordance with the Caribbean Netherlands 2021 Secondary and Vocational Education Inspection Framework, we conduct quality inspections at the schools/educational institutions in the Caribbean Netherlands every two years. In addition to the inspections every four years, in which we assess quality assurance and financial management aspects at the level of the school governing board, we also conduct two-yearly inspections to verify whether the schools governed by the board still meet the basic quality requirements. For these inspections, we make a reasoned selection from the standards contained in the inspection framework.

Standard	Inspected
Teaching-Learning Process	
TLP2 Monitoring Pupils' Achievements and Support <VO (secondary education)>	•
TLP2 Developmental Support and Supervision <MBO (vocational education)>	•
TLP3 Teaching Strategies <VO and MBO>	•
TLP5 Practical vocational training <MBO>	•
Secure Environment and Atmosphere	
SEA1 Safety and Security <VO and MBO>	•
Completion of Education <MBO>	
CE1 Assurance of Certification	•
CE2 Completion of Secondary Education	•
Learning Outcomes	
LO1 Results [1] <VO>	Not assessed
Governance, Quality Assurance and Ambition	
MQA1 Vision, Ambitions and Goals	•
MQA2 Implementation and Quality Culture	•
MQA3 Evaluation, Accountability and Dialogue	•

[1] Learning outcomes in the Caribbean Netherlands are not yet covered by any benchmarks.

This is why we do not assess the LO1 standard. However, we do compare the learning outcomes with those in the past in our report.

Inspection activities

The inspection consisted of the following activities. We attended lessons, analysed documents, talked with pupils and students, teachers, team leaders, the unit director, the safety coordinator, support officials, members of the examination committee, a member of the participation council, and the board.

The team leaders attended lessons and contributed towards the

observations made.

Additional statutory requirements

We have classified the statutory requirements that are not associated with any standard of the assessment framework as ‘additional statutory requirements’ (see the Inspection Framework). We have not identified any shortcomings regarding the additional statutory requirements, to the extent that they were investigated.

Signals

As part of the preparations for any inspection, we always look at any signals that the Inspectorate may have received.

This will sometimes affect the nature of the inspection.

No signals about the school were received by us that required further investigation.

Structure of this document

Chapter 2 contains the conclusion and the follow-up to the inspection.

Chapter 3 examines the results of the inspection in more detail, based on the relevant standards. The response of the school governing board to the inspection and the report can be found in Chapter 4.

2. Conclusion and follow-up

In this chapter, we give the assessments from and conclusion of the inspection at Saba Comprehensive School.



The quality of teaching at Saba Comprehensive School is Satisfactory.

Agreements on follow-up supervision

Because Saba Comprehensive School satisfies the statutory requirements in every aspect that was inspected, we see no reason to make any follow-up agreements. This means we are due to visit Saba Comprehensive School again in November 2022 for a progress meeting. Among the subjects covered in this discussion will be the developments at the school in general and the quality of the teaching in particular.

3. Results of quality inspection

Saba Comprehensive School

3.1 Teaching-Learning Process

Teaching-Learning Process			
TLP2 Monitoring Pupils' Achievements and Support		Satisfactory	
TLP3 Teaching Strategies		Satisfactory	
TLP5 Practical vocational training		Satisfactory	

TLP2 Monitoring Pupils' Achievements and Support

The way in which the school monitors and supervises its pupils is of a satisfactory level. We assess the 'Monitoring Pupils' Achievements and Support' standard as Satisfactory.

From the moment pupils enter the school, information is systematically gathered on the pupils' knowledge and skills. The transfer of pupils from the primary school is a smooth one. At the start of the school year, the mentor draws up individual action plans and group plans, based on the information he receives from the primary school and the Group 8 teacher. The subject teachers are given good and clear information through the pupil monitoring system about the specific care needs of the pupils in their class. Pupils state they are very satisfied about the support they receive from their mentor both in and outside the classroom. A strong aspect of the support is the 'small care team'. Every two weeks, the mentor, support officer, and the EC2 case manager meet to discuss any pupil who is standing out for whatever reason or who perhaps needs extra support. The discussions also cover the progress and well-being of the pupils. The school has started the process of identifying subsequent successes by former pupils.

Last year, the SCS launched the 'mentorship' project. Around ten pupils were assigned a mentor – someone from outside the school who functions as a coach that pupils can turn to, to discuss matters such as difficulties at home. Coaches have followed special training courses to be able to fulfil this role. Various stakeholders on Saba have taken part in this project in an attempt to bring about greater integration in society. The evaluation of the project was so positive that it has been decided to continue it this year.

TLP3 Teaching Strategies

The teaching strategies used by the teachers contribute sufficiently to the learning and development of the pupils.

We assess the Teaching Strategies standard as Satisfactory.

The lessons take place in a pleasant and friendly atmosphere. The teachers have an air of calm in their lessons, and this is part of the reason why there is positive interaction between the teachers and the pupils. The lessons have a clear structure. Teachers start the lessons by not only making clear what the pupils will be doing, but also what they will be learning. Lessons are concluded by looking back at what has been learnt. By varying the type of teaching given, the teachers succeed in actively involving the pupils with their work, and the pupils themselves feel free to ask questions.

In several lessons, we saw good examples of teachers taking the various learning needs of pupils into account, but we also saw lessons where the teacher barely tailored their instructions, supervision, assignments or time according to the learning needs of individual pupils. The effect of this is that pupils who need extra support or additional challenges are not properly having their needs met. The school management recognizes and acknowledges that this lack of coordination seriously needs improving and is going to start training teachers who take too little account of the various differences between pupils.

TLP5 Practical vocational training

The preparations for and execution and supervision of practical vocational training are effective. We assess the 'Practical Vocational Training' standard as Satisfactory. Every student finds a learning/working position at a recognized host organization on time, and they are well prepared by their teachers for their practical vocational training. The level of supervision in the host organizations themselves is also generally satisfactory. However, the number of suitable host organizations on the island is limited. For this reason, the students sometimes work with multiple companies at the same time, in order to gain experience of as many competencies as possible. Also, the work methods at the companies are not always as up to date as the average in that sector. The school is aware of this and teaches students how to deal with any differences between the method used at the school and their practical vocational training. This helps create a clear link between the practical vocational training programme and the school.

3.2 Secure Environment and Atmosphere:

Secure Environment and Atmosphere			
SEA1 Safety and Security		Satisfactory	

SEA1 Safety and Security

The school assures the social, psychological, and physical safety of its pupils. This is evident from the pupils' own feeling of safety and well-being, for example. We assess the 'Safety and Security' standard as Satisfactory.

The school monitors the safety and security of pupils every year, using an instrument that provides a representative and up-to-date picture. The most recent monitor data show that pupils feel relaxed and safe at the school. Should the findings of its monitoring procedures so dictate, the school will take measures to improve the situation. In discussions with pupils, they confirmed the impression that there is no, or hardly any, bullying.

The school has set out an active safety and security policy and appointed a safety coordinator whom parents and pupils can contact in the event of bullying or other incidents. The mentor lessons have a strong focus on preventing bullying, with the aim being to create a climate in which any pupil being bullied feels able to speak out.

3.3 Completion of Education

For the 'Assurance of Certification' standard, we do not issue an assessment of the various departments in relation to CXC examinations (CSEC, CAPE, and CVQ), as there is currently no legal basis for assessing this standard. The legislation on CXC education on Saba and Sint Eustatius, which is due to replace the temporary legislation, has not yet entered into force. The proposed legislation that has been announced is not expected to include any standards on examinations in vocational education. This means there is no legal basis for assessing the quality of exams. However, we do provide a description of the way examinations in vocational education are organized and of the guarantee of proper examinations.

We previously described the quality assurance regarding the CSEC and CAPE examinations (and the assessments of same) as satisfactory, because the CXC organization had incorporated sufficient guarantees across the board.

With the introduction of the CVQ to vocational education and the disappearance of MBO education, the following aspects have changed:

- Neither the school nor the examination committee is responsible for decisions on whether diplomas should be awarded. This is because it is not the examination committee, but the Caribbean Council for Examination (CXC) that is the awarding body. The awarding body for the Construction programme is TVET Barbados. The examination

committee decides solely whether the candidate meets the requirements for progressing to Dutch education, in relation to the subject of Dutch, for example.

- The statements are checked by the CXC. The assessments are followed by a score for each work process, and for each work process the candidate must achieve a pass.
- The CXC and the National Training Agency determine who is appointed as external verifiers. These external verifiers are fully familiar with the administration and assessment of exams, for which they bear final responsibility. The external verifiers also determine themselves what methods they use in order to safeguard the quality of examination administration and assessments.
- For the above reasons, the responsibility of the school and examination committee for the quality of examinations is limited.
- However, the examination committee has set up a confirmation committee, the approval of which will be needed for specific practical examination (assessments) situations. Most assessments are carried out in simulated situations at the school.
- The school supplies detailed information to the CXC organization about all the stages of the examinations process for each candidate, to enable the CXC to check whether candidates meet all the qualification requirements.

3.4 Learning Outcomes:

Learning Outcomes				
LO1 Results				to be determined

LO1 Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes in the Caribbean Netherlands are not yet covered by any benchmarks. This is why we do not assess the Learning Outcomes standard (LO1). However, we do describe how learning outcomes compare with those in the past.

The results concern the 2020-2021 school year. We therefore confine ourselves to the final exams: CAPE, CSEC, and CVQ.

CAPE

The CAPE exam is only for candidates who already have a CSEC diploma. The school has registered four candidates for the CAPE exam.

- For a CXC CAPE diploma, they must obtain a grade of between I and V in six subjects. Three students have done so. One student did not obtain the CAPE diploma, but was awarded certificates in three of the six subjects.
- For the associate degree in Business/Logistics and Supply Chain Operation, for which the students applied, they had to successfully complete the subjects Caribbean Studies Unit 1 and Integrated Mathematics Unit 1. None of the students successfully completed both subjects or obtained an associate degree.
- The candidates were finally able to obtain the CAPE school diploma, which grants access to university education (WO) in the Netherlands. To achieve this, they had to gain grade I, II, or III in six subjects and successfully complete the subject of Dutch at level B2. The candidates were not able to take exams at this level this year and cannot therefore receive a school diploma. None of the candidates achieved the six required passes.

CSEC

For the CSEC exam, there were twelve candidates.

- Nine candidates obtained a CSEC diploma, in accordance with the requirements of the CXC (successfully complete six subjects with grade I, II, or III). Three did not pass and will have to take the exam in the next school year.
- None of the candidates obtained a CSEC school diploma. They did not complete the In-Depth Dutch subject at level B2. The school diploma grants access to Higher Professional Education (HBO) in the European Netherlands.
- All the pupils have chosen extra subjects. The number of exam subjects varied from nine to thirteen. Six of the twelve pupils have already passed all their subjects.

CVQ

- Of the twelve students taking Early Childhood Development, level 2, nine obtained their diploma. The remaining three candidates are awaiting their results from the CXC organization.

The four students who have applied to take the General Construction exam are all waiting for their results from the CXC organization.

- There were two candidates for the Community Hosting exam. They have not obtained their diplomas and will be repeating the year at the SCS.

3.5 Governance, Quality Assurance and Ambition:

Governance, Quality Assurance and Ambition			
MQA1 Vision, Ambitions and Goals		Satisfactory	
MQA2 Implementation and Quality Culture		Satisfactory	
MQA3 Evaluation, Accountability and Dialogue		Satisfactory	

MQA1 Vision, Ambitions and Goals

The school's vision for good education has wide support, and the school has identified specific ambitions in the school plan in relation to that vision, and is making satisfactory efforts at achieving those goals. We assess the 'Vision, Ambitions and Goals' standard as Satisfactory.

During the past year, the SCS has drawn up a vision, the details of which it has set out to a satisfactory degree in terms of ambitions and policy priorities. It all provides clarity about the allocation of responsibilities in the school, provides clear parameters to all stakeholders, offering them guidelines on their actions, and is properly reflected in the policies operated by the school. The long-term development plan that was previously announced by the school, as well as the verifiable goals it will include, is still in preparation. The verifiable goals will make it possible to evaluate the school's policies more accurately.

MQA2 Implementation and Quality Culture

The school achieves its goals with regard to good-quality education, promotes a quality culture, sets parameters and makes adjustments where necessary.

We assess the 'Implementation and Quality Culture' standard as Satisfactory.

The school has now converted its MBO curriculum to programmes and examinations in accordance with the requirements of the CVQ system. The curriculum has also been enhanced with excursions and optional activities in the afternoons, and a school advisory committee is also operating. This participation body is intended for the students, but also for employees, parents, businesses, government organizations, and other stakeholders from the Saban community. The present educational course has a sound support base. The quality culture is professional – everyone involved makes their own contribution to the developments at the school and is accountable for the agreements they make and for the quality of their work.

MQA3 Evaluation, Accountability and Dialogue

The school analyses and systematically evaluates whether it is achieving its goals and reports on this. Where necessary, it adjusts school policy and involves internal and external stakeholders through a proper process of dialogue. We assess the 'Evaluation, Accountability and Dialogue' standard as Satisfactory.

The school has a sufficiently clear view of the quality of its teaching, through reports about examinations from the CXC for example, satisfaction surveys among pupils and parents, safety surveys among pupils, analyses of the learning outcomes for each department, and from the teaching strategies at team level. There has also been analysis of the success of former pupils in subsequent education or on the labour market. The findings from these analyses are factored into the school's follow-up policies, such as in the plans for further professional development. The school does not hold internal or external audits.

Internal dialogue with pupils and employees is intensive. There is also ongoing dialogue with representatives of various sections of the Saban community. A permanent dialogue with businesses for the purpose of gaining feedback on education and examinations for the CVQ study programmes, and to consult on the role of businesses in those programmes, has not yet been achieved.

3.6 Additional statutory requirements

With regard to the additional statutory requirements that formed part of the inspection, we found no shortcomings.

4. Response of the school governing board

We, the board, are satisfied with the developments and have every confidence in the course being pursued by the team. We are proud of all the stakeholders who have made it possible to get this far and who each in their own way help the school and therefore the teaching it offers. We acknowledge the findings in the report and will discuss its recommendations with the team. We will also look at how these recommendations can be incorporated in the existing improvement plan.



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