



**EDUCATIONAL OVERSIGHT INSPECTION OF PRIVATE FURTHER
EDUCATION AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE COLLEGES**

EXTENDED MONITORING VISIT

ABC SCHOOL OF ENGLISH

Full Name of College **ABC School of English**

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Principal Ms Sue Rao

Proprietors Ms Bozena Grzelak

Ms Sue Rao

Age Range 12+

Total number of students 92

Numbers by age and Under 18: 4

type of study 18+: 88

EFL only: 92

Inspection date **23 July 2013**

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the Framework for Educational Oversight Extended Monitoring Visits of private further education colleges and English language schools. The focus of the visit is to confirm that the quality standards reported at the last full inspection are being maintained.

The ISI is an approved Educational Oversight body authorised by the UK Border Agency to inspect privately funded further education colleges, including English language schools in England and Wales offering courses on the Qualifications and Credit Framework. It is designed to improve the quality of education on offer to international students through Tier 4 of the points based system for student visas.

ISI inspections are required to:

- Report on the extent to which colleges comply with the published Educational Oversight Standards for private colleges;
- Assess and report on the quality of educational outcomes and provision;
- Where applicable, make recommendations to colleges outside the scope of the Standards to support continued improvement of quality.

Inspection provides objective and reliable reports on the quality of colleges, and by placing reports in the public domain, makes this information available to students, Government and the wider community. Inspection takes account of the context of each individual college, and of how it evaluates its own performance and demonstrates its success.

The inspection of the college is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, though inspectors will comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on students. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the college, its services or other physical features
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the college or its accounting procedures
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the college's compliance with employment law.

An extended monitoring visit is for those colleges found at the last inspection to have met or exceeded the quality Standards for Educational Oversight. Inspectors will make judgements on progress against any Action Points and Recommendations made at that time. The inspection will not examine all other Standards in detail but will sample to confirm that previous Standards have been maintained and that there are no contrary indicators to those quality judgements. Inspectors will also consider the impact of any material change reported since the last inspection.

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1. CONTEXT

- 1.1 The ABC School of English was established in March 2002. It is a limited company, owned and operated by the original two directors who founded the school. Its aim is to deliver quality English tuition in a personal, friendly, caring and positive learning environment. The school specialises in the Callan Method, a direct method of teaching English, and the majority of students enrol on these courses after sampling trial lessons. One general English class was running at the time of inspection.
- 1.2 At the time of the inspection visit there were 92 students enrolled, four of whom were under the age of 18, with one student studying on a Tier 4 visa. There are twice as many female students as male students, and their ages range from 12 to 50. Around fifty per cent of students are European, with Italian students forming the largest group. Other students come from Brazil, Japan and Russia. No students were identified as having special educational needs or disabilities (SEND).
- 1.3 The school was first inspected from 4 to 6 September 2012. The school has since employed two new teachers, which constitutes a change in teaching staff of more than 20 per cent. As a result, an extended monitoring visit is required to re-examine Section Three of the Framework.
- 1.4 At the last inspection the school was judged to meet expectations and the recommendations from the previous report are:
- Instigate more one-to-one discussions with shorter stay students so that their progress can be measured and discussed.
 - Formalise the induction process to include more information about life in London.
 - Use student survey questions to elicit more useful information on the day-to-day running of the school.
 - Develop a well-constructed and more self-critical self-evaluation process to include a quality improvement plan.
 - Appoint an external independent person to arbitrate on complaints.

2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1 **The language school meets expectations.** The previous inspection of 4 to 6 September 2012 was judged to meet expectations and the quality of education as judged at that time has been maintained.
- 2.2 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learning is good and effectively meets the needs of students who elect to study English using a direct method. The curriculum is suitable for both long and short-stay students who can join a class at any point following an assessment. Initial assessment effectively places students at the correct level. The syllabus is flexible and meets the specific needs of learners, ensuring that age-appropriate teaching materials are used for closed groups of younger learners. The structured, teacher-led approach is particularly effective in developing students' speaking and listening skills. One-to-one tutorials to discuss test results and progress are effective for long-term students, and are available on request for short-term students.
- 2.3 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is good. Regular fire drills ensure all students are aware of evacuation procedures. Health and safety and fire procedures are clearly outlined in induction documents, but there are no checks on arrival to ensure students' understanding. Student welfare is good; students know who to contact for help and advice. All discussions concerning welfare are logged on the student database. Attendance and punctuality are monitored very well, resulting in few incidences of lateness. Safeguarding is very good; appropriate security checks are routinely carried out for all staff. Students under the age of 18 and those studying on Tier 4 visas are monitored very closely by administrative staff.
- 2.4 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is good. Lines of responsibility are clearly defined. The directors are very supportive in providing appropriate training for staff. Regular classroom observations and appraisals identify and address any training needs, providing good support for teachers using the direct method. Directors' responsiveness to teacher and student feedback results in timely and appropriate actions in which areas for improvement are suggested. However, quality assurance systems are under-developed. The school's self-evaluation does not include a quality development plan and feedback from staff and students is not analysed to inform whole-school planning.

3. THE QUALITY OF CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENTS

- 3.1 The quality of curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is good. All key Standards continue to be met.
- 3.2 The recommendation in this area from the last inspection report is:
- Instigate more one-to-one discussions with shorter stay students so that their progress can be measured and discussed.
- 3.3 There has been no progress against this recommendation. All students are made aware of the support available to them. The school continues to offer tutorials on request to all students and notices around the school display this very clearly. Where one-to-one discussions are requested by shorter stay students, progress is recorded but not measured and there is no analysis or tracking of the take-up of one-to-one discussions with shorter stay students.
- 3.4 Students determine whether the school's course provision is suitable for their needs by taking advantage of trial lessons. At the time of the inspection all classes, apart from one general English class, use the direct method of teaching. Initial assessment is carried out through a placement session for new students as and when they arrive. This effectively places students at the correct level of tuition. Students may join classes at any point in the week and can easily move up or down a level as required. The majority of students make good progress and move up levels following progress tests.
- 3.5 Observations of teaching and learning confirm that good standards have been maintained since the previous inspection; there are no significant changes in the quality of curriculum, teaching and students' achievements. The quality of teaching is good. The direct style ensures all students participate fully and enables them to demonstrate excellent listening and speaking skills. The method is teacher-centred, fast paced and has a focus on a question and answer pattern. Random questioning ensures students remain alert throughout the lesson. Effective modifications to the curriculum can also be made to meet the needs of closed groups of young learners.
- 3.6 Individual student progress and the level at which students are working are monitored every six to eight weeks through class tests. Strengths and weaknesses are outlined in an action plan, but there is no analysis of cohorts to see whether progress is adequate, good or very good, or of the average length of time taken to complete the levels. The majority of students interviewed said they were not clear on their rate of progress in relation to the requirements of the course.
- 3.7 Learning resources are good. Alongside the standard course book, additional resources include 'readers' for students to borrow. These provide useful additional learning materials which supplement the good quality English language resources available to students online. Appropriate and varied resources are also available for younger students.

4. STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 4.1 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is good. All key Standards continue to be met.
- 4.2 The recommendation in this area from the last inspection report is:
- Formalise the induction process to include more information about life in London.
- 4.3 Good progress has been made against this recommendation. Students receive useful information about living and studying in London through emails, the student handbook and frequent informal contact prior to and on arrival. This ensures students are very well informed about life in London.
- 4.4 Effective arrangements are in place for ensuring the health and safety of staff and students. A good level of fire safety conforms to legal requirements and regular fire practices ensure the smooth evacuation of staff and students. The building is in a satisfactory state of repair and classrooms are fit-for-purpose.
- 4.5 The school maintains an accurate admission and attendance register, and arrangements are in place to report non-attendance of students on Tier 4 visas to the Home Office if required. Administrative staff are particularly effective in monitoring attendance and punctuality; as a result students are rarely late for class.
- 4.6 Pastoral support continues to be good. Students are very well supported with personal issues and view the school as a friendly and welcoming place. Although there is no formal induction on the day of arrival, students receive key information prior to arrival, including a clear and comprehensive student handbook. Improvements to pre-arrival information have been made since the previous inspection, including the use of social media, ensuring key induction information is readily accessible to students on their mobile phones.
- 4.7 The school meets legal requirements for the safeguarding of children and appropriate suitability checks are carried out on all staff.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- 5.1 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is good. All key Standards continue to be met.
- 5.2 The recommendations in this area from the last inspection report are:
- Use student survey questions to elicit more useful information on the day-to-day running of the school.
 - Develop a well-constructed and more self-critical self-evaluation process to include a quality development plan.
 - Appoint an external independent person to arbitrate on complaints.
- 5.3 The use of student survey data remains unchanged since the previous inspection. Student surveys are carried out, resulting in actions and improvements made in response to individual suggestions. However, survey questions do not elicit sufficient feedback to provide useful information, and feedback is not collated or analysed at course or whole-school level to provide useful information on the day-to-day running of the school.
- 5.4 Good progress has been made in developing a well-constructed self-evaluation, though a quality development plan has not been produced. The self-evaluation is detailed and includes key strengths and weaknesses, as well as areas for development. Its effectiveness is limited, however, as staff and student feedback is not used to identify and improve the quality of provision, and progress data is not analysed to inform improvements to performance. Quality assurance mechanisms are not systematic or formal, but outcomes for students are satisfactory and the directors promote high standards in an informal but positive and supportive culture.
- 5.5 The complaints procedure is outlined in the student handbook and includes reference to an external adjudicator. Notices reinforce and alert students to the complaints procedure, ensuring the majority of students are aware of the complaints process.
- 5.6 The school continues to provide a clear educational direction, and relationships between senior managers and teaching staff are good. Staff development and a regular system of appraisal and observation ensure that all staff are well trained to carry out their roles effectively.
- 5.7 All appropriate checks on staff have been or are being completed, and the school takes a systematic approach to ensure all relevant documents are in place for new staff.

6. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The language school has maintained the good standards found at the last inspection.

Suggestions for further improvement

In order to improve the good quality provided, the language school is advised to:

- Collate information about progress and attainment for all students which can be used to inform tutorials and set targets for both long and short-term students.
- Further develop the quality of education through the use of a systematic development plan, informed by data including student and staff feedback.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons and conducted formal interviews with students. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the proprietors. The responses of staff and students to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the language school.

Inspectors

Ms Christine Powell	Lead Inspector
Mr David Godfrey	Team Inspector