



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

MONITORING VISIT

BEDFORDSHIRE COLLEGE

Full Name	Bedfordshire College
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Principal	Mr Arman Uddin
Proprietors	Mr Mir Uddin Mr Mohammed Mojumder Mr Naymul Islam Mr Abdul Hye
Age Range	18+
Total number of students	4
Numbers by age and type of study	18+: 4 EFL only: 4
Inspection date	29 May 2014

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the Framework for Educational Oversight Monitoring Visits and 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 Home Office to inspect privately funded further education colleges and 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 who attend UK colleges 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;
- Assess and report on the quality of educational outcomes and provision;
- Where applicable, make recommendations 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.

A monitoring visit is for those colleges found at the last inspection to have met or exceeded the 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.

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1. CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT

- 1.1 Bedfordshire College is a private further education institution located in the centre of Luton, Bedfordshire. Established in December 2007, it is a private company limited by shares, governed and owned by its directors. The institution's mission is to be a leading private college. It aims to provide academic excellence through high quality, inspirational teaching within a supportive and inclusive environment. At the time of the visit, an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) preparation course at Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) level B1 was being offered. Enrolment is on a continuous basis.
- 1.2 At the time of the monitoring visit there were four students enrolled, all male and aged over 18 years. All students are from Bangladesh and none has English as their first language. No students have been identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- 1.3 The college was inspected on 23 July 2013 when it met all Key Standards and the quality of education was judged to meet expectations. The recommendations from the previous report are:
- Develop the initial assessment process to accurately identify individual language support needs which can be used to inform planning.
 - Raise the quality of accommodation by providing better ventilation in teaching areas and improved student association facilities.
 - Use the outcomes of the observations of teaching and learning in the teachers' appraisal process to support improvements in the quality of teaching.
 - Write and implement a development plan which takes forward the areas for improvement identified in the self-evaluation.

2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

2.1 **The college does not meet expectations.** The quality of education found at the previous inspection of 23 July 2013 has not been maintained. The college does not meet the following Key Standards:

1. Does the leadership of the college or language school provide clear educational direction, as reflected in the quality of education, the care of students, and the fulfilment of the college or language school's aims and ethos? **[Standard 40]**
2. Does the college or language school have adequate quality assurance mechanisms in place which lead to the improvement of the quality of educational experience or the maintenance of existing high standards? **[Standard 44]**

2.2 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is satisfactory. A limited but appropriate curriculum is offered that effectively meets the needs of the current students. Initial assessment is satisfactory, and is used effectively to ensure that students' language skills are appropriate to meet the demands of their chosen programme of study. Teaching is good. Teachers are enthusiastic and have good subject knowledge. Classes are well planned and make effective use of a range of quality resources to engage and maintain the interest of students. Effective systems are in place to monitor students' progress and attainment. Overall, students make satisfactory progress given their starting points.

2.3 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is good. The college's premises are appropriately maintained and provide a satisfactory learning environment. Appropriate health and safety policies are in place and effectively implemented. Measures taken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards are satisfactory. Registration and attendance recording are accurate and appropriately managed. Appropriate procedures for complying with Home Office regulations are in place, although no Tier 4 students are currently enrolled. The college's pastoral structure provides a good level of support and guidance for the students in accordance with the college's aims. Relationships between students and teachers are very good. Students report that they are happy at the college and feel safe and secure.

2.4 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is unsatisfactory. A clear educational strategy and curriculum policy are in place. However, oversight of college performance is not effective. Leaders and managers fail to ensure previous high standards are maintained. Consequently, the number of students achieving their goals since the previous July 2013 monitoring visit is very low. Management roles and responsibilities are clearly specified, and policies and procedures are well defined and appropriate. Self-evaluation and quality assurance mechanisms are unsatisfactory and have not resulted in the identification of priorities for improvement and planning to meet those. Communication and relationships between staff and students are good. The college has reliable arrangements for staff

recruitment. However, professional references have not been taken up prior to employment. Staff are well qualified and appropriately experienced. Students do not have access to a fee protection scheme. The college website has significant omissions and inaccuracies in the information provided for students and prospective students.

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

- 3.1 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is satisfactory. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 3.2 The recommendation in this area from the previous inspection report is:
- Develop the initial assessment process to accurately identify individual language support needs which can be used to inform planning.
- 3.3 Satisfactory progress has been made against this recommendation. Appropriate processes are now in place to assess each student on arrival through formal testing of English literacy, numeracy, keyboard skills and dyslexia. The process is accurate and ensures that students are placed on the most appropriate course and can make good progress.
- 3.4 The current range of provision is limited but effective in catering for the age, aptitudes, language capabilities and differing aspirations of the small number of students who attend the college. The college is accredited to offer a range of business courses at levels 4, 5 and 7. However, these courses were not being offered at the time of the monitoring visit. The current B1 English language course does not meet Home Office requirements for Tier 4 students.
- 3.5 The quality of teaching and its impact on learning are good. Teaching is characterised by good planning, with care taken to match tasks to individual levels of ability. Lessons are delivered at a lively pace and include a wide variety of appropriate teaching methods and high quality resources. Teachers are enthusiastic, have good knowledge and motivate their students to enjoy and engage with their learning. They ask searching questions that prompt students to think and respond successfully, with students rising to the challenge. Students' progress is effectively monitored and recorded. Assessment is regular and accurately identifies strengths and weaknesses in students' progress.
- 3.6 Students' progress is satisfactory. Evidence from lesson observations and discussions with students show that appropriate standards are being reached in relation to their starting points. College data provided indicates that success rates before December 2013 were good.

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 previous inspection report is:
- Raise the quality of accommodation by providing better ventilation in teaching areas and improved student association facilities.
- 4.3 Good progress has been made against the recommendation. An air conditioning unit has been purchased so that students and tutors have a comfortable learning environment during the summer. In addition, a pool table and table top football game is available to students in the common room. As a result, students report that the college's premises provide a comfortable environment and that facilities are adequate and appropriate. Inspection findings support this view.
- 4.4 The college has clear policies in place for health and safety which are consistently implemented and updated. The premises are secure, fit-for-purpose and appropriately maintained. The building is clean and classrooms are of an appropriate size, light and well furnished. All necessary measures to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards have been taken. The college has an appropriate number of fire marshals and staff trained in first aid.
- 4.5 Systems for recording registration and attendance are well managed. Admission procedures are detailed and appropriately observed. A central register is accurately maintained. Attendance records are accurate and attendance is effectively monitored. Appropriate procedures for complying with Home Office regulations are in place, although no Tier 4 students are currently enrolled.
- 4.6 Pastoral support for students is good. Students are very clear about who to see and where to go if they have a concern. They feel that the college is providing them with a safe, supportive and comfortable environment, which effectively meets their learning needs. Inspection evidence supports their views.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- 5.1 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is unsatisfactory. Not all Key Standards continue to be met.
- 5.2 The recommendations in this area from the previous inspection report are:
- Use the outcomes of the observations of teaching and learning in the teachers' appraisal process to support improvements in the quality of teaching.
 - Write and implement a development plan which takes forward the areas for improvement identified in the self-evaluation.
- 5.3 Unsatisfactory progress has been made against the first recommendation. Lesson observations are undertaken and recorded in staff files. However, the performance criteria used in the appraisal forms are different to those used in the observation policy. As a consequence, there is no clear link between the observation and appraisal processes to support improvements in the quality of teaching.
- 5.4 Unsatisfactory progress has been made against the second recommendation. A development plan has been completed. However, the plan is descriptive, not clearly linked to the areas identified in self-evaluation for improvement and does not contain clear actions, success criteria or intended outcomes. No staff have been identified as being responsible for the implementation, monitoring or completion of any of the identified actions. In addition, progress review dates and interim success criteria are not built into the plan. Consequently, there is no way for the college to review or monitor the feasibility or progress of any actions taken, or to ensure completion of the plan.
- 5.5 The college has a clear educational strategy and curriculum policy, but these aims are not fully aligned to college activities or monitored effectively to ensure that all key operational responsibilities are undertaken effectively. As a consequence, the number of withdrawals from programmes since the July 2013 monitoring visit is very high. The college has appropriate management structures and responsibilities, and policies and procedures are well defined and appropriate. Each member of staff has a variety of different roles in the organisation and they are all clear about their responsibilities.
- 5.6 Self-evaluation and quality assurance mechanisms are underdeveloped. Senior managers display a limited understanding of how they will analyse their data and use it to further develop the provision to ultimately improve the quality of education. The current self-evaluation report identifies a few relevant strengths and weaknesses. However, it is not sufficiently reflective or critical, lacks a sufficiently explicit evidence base and tends to overestimate its strengths. As a result, it is not effective in identifying specific priorities and actions to quickly improve outcomes for students.

- 5.7 The college has an appropriate recruitment policy which outlines procedures for appointing new staff. Well-maintained staff files for all members of staff contain relevant personal details, certified copies of qualifications and proof of eligibility to work in the UK. However, professional references have not been taken up prior to employment. Staff are well qualified and appropriately experienced. Communication and relationships between staff and students are good. A fee protection scheme is not in place.
- 5.8 The provision of information is unsatisfactory. The college website has significant omissions and inaccuracies in the information provided for students and prospective students.

6. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The college has not maintained the quality found at the last inspection.

Actions required to meet the Standards

In order to meet the Standards of Educational Oversight, the college must:

1. Ensure that the college provides clear educational direction, as reflected in the quality of education and the fulfilment of the college aims and ethos. **[Standard 40]**
2. Ensure that the college has adequate quality assurance mechanisms in place which lead to the improvement of the quality of educational experience or the maintenance of existing high standards. **[Standard 44]**

Recommendations for further improvement

In addition to the above action points, the college should make the following improvements:

- Ensure that achievement data is used effectively to inform the self-assessment process to further improve student performance.
- Write and implement a development plan which takes forward the areas for improvement identified in the self-evaluation.
- Ensure that references are taken up before the appointment of staff.
- Use the outcomes of the observations of teaching and learning in the teachers' appraisal process to support improvements in the quality of teaching.
- Update the website to ensure it contains accurate information regarding courses, educational performance and college policies and procedures.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with students and examined samples of students' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the proprietor, and attended registration sessions. The responses of staff and students to confidential pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the college.

Inspectors

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