



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

MONITORING VISIT

CAMBRIDGE ACADEMY OF ENGLISH

Full Name of College **Cambridge Academy of English**

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Principal Mr John Barnett

Proprietor Etsuo Tsuji

Age Range 9+

Total number of students 86

Numbers by age and Under 18: 18

type of study 18+: 68

EFL only: 86

Inspection date **10 Sep 2013**

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the Framework for Educational Oversight 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, 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 students' 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.

A monitoring visit is for those colleges found at the previous 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.

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1. CONTEXT

- 1.1 Cambridge Academy of English (CAE) was founded in 1975 by Kamiya Schools Limited, an educational trust based in Japan. The school is run by the principal, who reports to the directors of Kamiya Schools.
- 1.2 The school is located in Girton, in the northern outskirts of Cambridge, allowing homestay families to be recruited from the nearby residential areas of Girton and Oakington.
- 1.3 The school aims to provide its students with a rewarding, beneficial and enjoyable course of study, fostering their independence and confidence. The school offers general English together with examination, business and legal English courses and general English for groups of young learners aged between 14 and 18 years of age. The school also runs summer schools for young learners from nine years upwards at three locations in East Anglia, although these were not running at the time of the inspection.
- 1.4 Eight general English classes, two professional English classes and one closed group for young Italians were running at the time of the inspection. Students may join classes at the beginning of any week. Examination classes require students to pass a barrier test. Students for the professional and legal English courses must be over 25, either having appropriate work experience or having studied the subject at university.
- 1.5 Students are from a wide range of countries, including Europe, the Middle East, Asia and South America. At the time of the inspection, 86 students were registered, 17 of whom were in the closed group aged between 14 to 17 years. The rest, which included five business students, were aged from 17 to 53. The majority of the students were male.
- 1.6 The school reported no students requiring support for special educational needs or disabilities at the time of the inspection (SEND).
- 1.7 The previous inspection took place from 21 to 23 August 2012 and the school was judged to exceed expectations in all areas.
- 1.8 The main recommendations from the previous report are:
 - Introduce a system to measure and record students' progress on longer courses of study

2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1 **The language school exceeds expectations.** At the previous inspection of 21 to 23 August 2012, Cambridge Academy of English was judged to exceed expectations and the quality of education as judged at that time has been maintained.
- 2.2 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is excellent. Pre-arrival and on-arrival testing is highly effective in placing students in the appropriate class, and a highly effective on-line system exists to allow continual monitoring of students' progress and achievement. Students do not yet fully access this system in order to improve awareness of their progress. The curriculum is first class and meets students' needs. The overall quality of teaching is excellent, and provides students with a very effective learning environment. As a result, students make excellent progress.
- 2.3 Welfare, health and safety are excellent. The school garden and premises are well-maintained. Fire safety and first aid provision conform to all legal requirements. Attendance registers are accurate. At present there is no means of rapidly calculating students' attendance ratios. Accommodation and welfare standards are of a high quality, particularly for students under 18 years. The school provides a first class social activities programme for both adults and students under 18. Students report high satisfaction with the school and the support it offers them. Arrangements for residential accommodation and for safeguarding students under 18, including those under 11, are excellent.
- 2.4 Governance, leadership and management are excellent. The management structure of the school is particularly good, with highly effective channels of communication between all levels of staff. Development plans for the school are proceeding extremely well. A first-class staff appraisal system contributes directly to improvements in welfare, teaching and learning, and staff are highly committed to the school and their students. Student satisfaction is rigorously monitored in order to identify areas for improvement.

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

- 3.1 The quality of curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is excellent. All key Standards continue to be met.
- 3.2 The recommendation in this area from the previous inspection report is:
- Introduce a system to measure and record student progress on longer courses of study
- 3.3 Excellent progress has been made on this recommendation. The college has invested in an on-line system, which comprehensively records tutorials and tracks students' progress and attainment throughout their course. Students confirm that they are kept well-informed of their progress by their teachers, but do not yet regularly access their own tutorial records and recommendations for self-study, in order to make best use of the on-line progress tracker.
- 3.4 Assessment is excellent. Initial assessment of students on arrival is comprehensive and accurate and is highly effective in placing students in the appropriate class. Initial assessment is used particularly well to structure individual learning plans for all students and supports the planning of successful lessons. Assessment of students' work during their time at the school is thorough and effective, enabling all students to make excellent progress and achieve well. Almost all students achieve their intended qualifications.
- 3.5 The curriculum is first class. It provides a wide variety of opportunities for progression and students speak enthusiastically of their selected courses. Varied and stimulating teaching materials encourage students to participate actively in class and to develop and refine their skills. Learning is enhanced by the excellent social activities programme, which links to events in the local community and beyond. The curriculum enables students to move confidently towards a range of examinations and meets the requirements of the Tier 4 guidance.
- 3.6 The quality of teaching is excellent. Teachers have first-class knowledge of their subject and employ a wide variety of methods and resources to challenge and motivate students. Students are engaged and enthusiastic in class, although a very small minority of less effectively structured lessons do not allow for enough student participation. Teachers actively encourage the autonomy of their students by a focus on relevant study skills, providing detailed feedback to written work and additional coaching where required. Students show a high level of competence in English when talking to inspectors, and report that they are extremely satisfied with the support they receive from their teachers.

4. STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 4.1 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is excellent. All key Standards continue to be met.
- 4.2 Health, safety and security of the premises are of a high standard. The school complies with statutory regulations on fire maintenance and drills. Signage is clear. All electrical equipment is rigorously tested. Trained fire marshals are appointed for each building. Comprehensive risk assessments exist for all areas. First aid provision is good. The school has five first aiders and kits are well-stocked and up-dated. Portable kits exist for off-site activities.
- 4.3 The school's garden and premises are attractive and well-maintained. Newly-built premises include facilities for students with disabilities.
- 4.4 Student registration and attendance records are good. Procedures for registration are thorough, particularly for Tier 4 applicants and students under 18. Students' attendance is systematically monitored by means of a computerised system, although there is at present no means of rapidly calculating attendance ratios. The school's policy on attendance is clear and students are expected to achieve a minimum of 80 per cent. Unexplained absence is followed up promptly, particularly for students under 18. The school has appropriate procedures in place for reporting the absence of Tier 4 students to the Home Office. At the time of the inspection there were no students on Tier 4 visas.
- 4.5 Pastoral care continues to be outstanding. Excellent arrangements remain in place for the safeguarding of students, particularly those under 18 years old. Students receive a comprehensive induction on arrival, and consequently are well informed about safety, school regulations and life in the UK. All students state that the school provides an exceptionally friendly, welcoming and safe environment. They highly value the support offered by all members of staff on both personal and academic matters.
- 4.6 The school also provides an excellent programme of social activities, offering a wide variety of stimulating activities. The school arranges a higher level of activities for juniors and meticulous care is taken to supervise these at all times with an appropriate adult to student ratio. Admirable efforts are made to help the integration of shy or homesick students through this provision.
- 4.7 The school maintains an extensive list of local host families, with clear procedures for its very effective management, particularly for the safeguarding of vulnerable young people and adults. Students' feedback is important to monitor satisfaction. Host families are given extensive guidance by the school to ensure that they are informed of their responsibilities. Host families for juniors undergo appropriate checks carried out by Cambridgeshire Social Services.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- 5.1 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is excellent. All key Standards continue to be met.
- 5.2 Communication between senior managers and staff and between the school and Japan is outstanding. Frequent meetings are highly effective in maintaining the good operation of the school at all levels. The relationship with the Kamiya Educational Trust in Japan has been highly supportive and constructive. Senior staff work highly effectively together to oversee crucial areas of the school's operations. The school has come through the summer with high levels of agent and student satisfaction.
- 5.3 Current development plans for the school are proceeding extremely well. Rigorous costing has enabled the recent successful implementation of the building and extension plans. For the next two years the aim is to consolidate and increase student numbers using the new facilities.
- 5.4 The staff appraisal system is extremely effective. Reviews are comprehensive and particularly good at identifying opportunities for further development. Teachers' reviews are linked to a well-organised observation programme and teachers confirm that they feel well-supported, with ample opportunities for external training and further qualifications.
- 5.5 The school has a good system for monitoring students' satisfaction with the services offered. Comprehensive feedback is collected at regular intervals from students, then analysed and circulated to the relevant departments to identify areas for improvement.

6. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The language school has maintained the excellent standards found at the previous inspection.

Suggestions for further improvement

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

- Review the current arrangements for students' induction and tutorial support in order to encourage all students to make full use of their personal on-line records.
- Implement a system whereby attendance data can be more swiftly and readily accessed in order to facilitate the monitoring of students' attendance.

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 principal. The responses of staff and students to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the college/language school.

Inspectors

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| Ms Liz Brynin | Lead Inspector |
| Mr David Malachi | Team Inspector |