



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

**MONITORING VISIT**

**BRITISH STUDY CENTRES, BOURNEMOUTH**

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Principal	Mr Roland Sharp
Proprietor	Mr Simon Cleaver
Age Range	16 - 54
Total number of students	82
Numbers by age and type of study	Under 18: 4
Numbers by age and type of study	18+: 78
	EFL only: 82
Inspection date	<b>19 March 2015</b>

## 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 British Study Centres is a private language school teaching English to international students in the centre of Bournemouth which began operating in 2010. The school is part of a group of schools and is managed jointly by a managing director and proprietor. The school's mission is to offer high quality, varied and stimulating lessons directly linked to the students' needs.
- 1.2 The school offers general English and examination English language courses to international students. The minimum booking period for a course is two weeks although occasionally groups will be accepted for one week and also one week extensions are allowed. There is no maximum length of stay at the school. Students can choose from courses consisting of 20, 25 or 30 lessons per week. They enrol from all over the world but particularly from Europe, South America, the Middle East and a smaller number from the Far East.
- 1.3 Students are tested on arrival for proficiency in grammar, writing and speaking and placed in classes according to their English language proficiency. Courses are offered from elementary to advanced level. Nationality and gender are also considered in the makeup of classes to ensure a good mix of students. The minimum age for enrolled students is 16 in the adult school. The school also provides courses for closed groups of students aged 12 to 16 but these were not running during the time of the monitoring visit.
- 1.4 At the time of the visit there were no students identified by the school with learning difficulties.
- 1.5 The previous monitoring visit took place on 19 March 2013 and the language school maintained the excellent standards found at the last inspection.
- 1.6 The recommendations from the previous report are:
  - Analyse student progress and feedback data so that it can be easily understood and demonstrate trends over time.
  - Standardise the appraisal system to ensure that all staff benefit equally.
  - Ensure that all staff are trained in safeguarding.
  - Increase awareness of how to identify students with learning difficulties and how to better support such students.

## 2. SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

- 2.1 **The language school exceeds expectations.** At the previous inspection of 19 March 2013 the language school was found to exceed 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. Teaching is very good and the majority of lessons are excellent. Teachers are well qualified and highly motivated and as a result plan interesting and enjoyable lessons. Levels of achievement in class are high. Outside the classroom the students' academic experience is enhanced by access to high quality on line self-study materials and support for further study and careers. Courses for Tier 4 students meet Home Office requirements. Excellent progress has been made against the recommendation in this area. Consequently staff are well prepared to identify any students with learning difficulties. Teachers support students very effectively outside the classroom with regular homework and tutorials. This enables students to identify their strengths and weaknesses and make good progress.
- 2.3 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is excellent. Provision for health and safety and fire safety is very good through the implementation of robust policies and procedures which are subject to regular review. As a result students are safe and well cared for. Admissions and attendance registers are well maintained and accurate. The school discharges its responsibilities for reporting to the Home Office appropriately. The school has a relaxed, friendly atmosphere. Staff know students well and levels of pastoral care and support are very good. Safeguarding is excellent. Students under 18 are well cared for and the school meets all its obligations in this respect. Students enjoy a good, varied social programme and benefit from advice and support with further study and future careers.
- 2.4 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is excellent. Management provide clear educational direction and both formal and informal channels of communication are very good. Very good progress has been made against the recommendations relating to analysis of data and staff training and development. A standardised framework for use across the organisation that supports staff in assessing their own performance and managers in reporting outcomes from appraisal meetings. However, targets are not clear and specific which reduces their effectiveness in helping managers to monitor performance. The school assures quality through analysis of student feedback and regular teacher observations. Staff benefit from extensive opportunities for continuing professional development (CPD) which are linked effectively both to observations and regular appraisal. Recruitment procedures are robust and the school retains highly qualified staff. Management seek student feedback and analyse data from exit questionnaires completed by students. Although the school seeks to act on the feedback sought, this is not consistently apparent to students who have departed before having seen the action taken.

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

- 3.1 The quality of the 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:
- Increase awareness of how to identify students with learning difficulties and how to better support such students.
- 3.3 Excellent progress has been made against this recommendation. Teachers have participated in related training sessions covering information on different learning difficulties, identifying strategies with learning difficulties and resources for supporting students. As a result staff are better prepared to identify and support these students.
- 3.4 Courses are well organised and support students in progressing through language levels. Classes are well organised and students are placed according to aptitude and capability. Classes for students travelling on a Tier 4 visa meet the requirements of the Home Office for qualifications. Teaching is very good. Most lessons are excellent. They are exceptionally well planned and resourced. Teachers employ a wide range of strategies to engage and enthuse students. As a result students thoroughly enjoy their lessons. Teachers are well qualified and highly motivated. Lessons are energetic and students display very high levels of enjoyment. This results in high levels of achievement. Students are encouraged to develop confidence in working independently and with their peers which leads to excellent outcomes. Lesson activities are highly successful in supporting students to challenge themselves and each other. Students have the opportunity not only learn about British culture but also to share experiences from their own countries and cultures.
- 3.5 The high quality lessons are supported by regular homework and access to a range of self-study materials accessible in the computer suite in the student lounge. Teachers use consistent criteria for marking and provide students with constructive feedback to enable them to make further progress.
- 3.6 Students report that they are placed accurately according to their level. A comprehensive testing, tutorial and progress tracking system ensures that students can see what progress they are making and easily identify any areas requiring additional work. Data from weekly progress tests is analysed by management and support such as additional tutorials is provided to keep all students on track.
- 3.7 Courses for students studying on a Tier 4 visa meet the requirements of the Home Office.

#### **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 The recommendation in this area from the previous inspection report is:
- Ensure that all staff are trained in safeguarding
- 4.3 Progress against this recommendation is excellent. All staff have received safeguarding training to level one and the principal, academic director and designated safeguarding person have been trained to the appropriate level in line with official guidance.
- 4.4 Arrangements for managing health and safety are excellent. The management ensure that all policies relating to health and safety are fit for purpose and reviewed and updated regularly. The language school ensures the health and safety of its students in relation to fire safety effectively and conducts regular drills.
- 4.5 Admission registers are accurate and well maintained. Systems and procedures are underpinned by clear policies which are consistently applied. The school's expectations are high and as a result students' attitudes to attendance and lateness are excellent. Robust and well managed attendance monitoring and reporting practices ensure the school complies with Home Office requirements.
- 4.6 The building is of a very good quality and students benefit from light, bright classrooms with sufficient space to enable teachers to use a variety of activities in class. Social space is of a high standard with a pleasant cafeteria and lounge providing students with good quality, reasonably priced food and access to games machines. This facility, alongside a varied social programme, encourages students to spend time together using their English. Students benefit from a self-study lounge with computer terminals preloaded with academic activities to support their studies. Designated Wi-Fi stations are also available for students' social use.
- 4.7 Pastoral care is excellent. There is a friendly, family atmosphere in the school, which students cite as a very valuable part of their experience. Students report that they feel happy and safe in their studies but would be confident talking to their teachers or the designated welfare officer if they ever had a problem. The school encourages regular informal interaction between staff and students. This helps staff to address all issues early on and therefore resolve them swiftly and satisfactorily.
- 4.8 The school provides very good careers advice and support with further education in the UK to enable students to maximise the benefit of their studies.
- 4.9 Safeguarding procedures are excellent. The school has very good measures in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students under the age of 18. Clear safeguarding policies are made available and are fully implemented, including specific policies relating to social media and electronic devices. The school holds a



central record of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for all staff. References are taken up in advance of employment. There are designated home stays for hosting students under 18 where the lead carer holds a DBS check. Where home stays host students under 18, appropriate additional guidance is offered to enhance students' welfare and security. The school residence is only available to adult students.

- 4.10 All staff receive level one safeguarding training, and the principal, academic director and designated safeguarding person (DSP) are trained to level three. The social programme leader is also the DSP and accompanies all off site activities. Thorough risk assessments have been conducted and procedures are in place to ensure the safety of all under 18s taking part in off-site activities. The school hosts an under 18s club which provides an opportunity for students to meet other students of the same age. It provides an effective platform for staff to identify any concerns and to convey information specific to that age group.

## 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 The recommendations in this area from the previous inspection report are:
- Analyse student progress and feedback data to that it can be easily understood and demonstrate trends over time.
  - Standardise the appraisal system to ensure that all staff benefit equally.
- 5.3 Very good progress has been made against the first recommendation. Comprehensive data is compiled from student feedback and this is presented in a clear format. Information indicates strengths and areas for development providing managers with an excellent overview of students' experience at the school. However, the analysis is predominantly based around exit questionnaires and the students who provide the feedback do not see it actioned. Progress monitoring is comprehensive and provides an excellent overview of students' achievements. Feedback data is shared with all departments and trends examined to encourage improvement.
- 5.4 Progress against the second recommendation in this area is good. The British Study Centres group have implemented a standardised framework for use across the organisation that supports staff in assessing their own performance and managers in reporting outcomes from appraisal meetings. Staff are set a range of useful professional and organisational targets. However, these are not clear and specific which reduces their effectiveness in helping managers to monitor performance.
- 5.5 The management of the school is a particular strength. The management team takes advantage of support from the British Study Centres group as a whole by maintaining regular contact with other centres in the network and sharing best practice. The managing director and principal benefit from an excellent, very effective relationship. Self-evaluation is highly effective and as a result the development plan is coherent and pragmatic. It effectively responds to the needs of the school. Self-evaluation successfully identifies areas for development. The development plan is cohesive and is clearly linked student outcomes
- 5.6 The leadership of the school provide clear educational direction which is demonstrated by excellent outcomes in lessons. The statement of educational purpose provides a clear, concise and accurate overview of what the school offers, how it will be delivered and how standards are validated. There is excellent regard to cultural diversity and assimilation into the English way of life.
- 5.7 There are regular formal and informal opportunities for the sharing and dissemination of information between management and staff. Outcomes and actions from meetings are recorded and followed up accordingly. The school has a relaxed and friendly atmosphere and relations between staff are very good.

- 5.8 The systems and procedures for managing staff recruitment and pre-employment checks are excellent, including in relation to child protection and safeguarding where meticulous records are maintained. Exemplary procedures are in place for quality assurance and staff development. Lesson observations are regularly undertaken and excellent records are maintained. Feedback to teachers is both informative and developmental. Staff consider they are given high quality feedback by academic managers. Information from these class observations feed into the appraisal process and effectively inform the school's continuing professional development planning.

## 6. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The language school has maintained the excellent quality found at the last inspection.

### **Recommendations for further improvement**

In order to further improve the excellent quality provided, the language school should:

- Strengthen student feedback by informing students how the school uses their feedback and what actions they will take.
- Ensure targets for staff generated by the appraisal process are clear and specific so that progress against them can be measured effectively.

## INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

### Inspectors

Ms Sarah Williamson	Lead Inspector
Mrs Jacqueline Lawrence	Team Inspector