



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

**INTERNATIONAL HOUSE LONDON TRUST**

**(1239120)**

Full Name	<b>International House London Trust</b>
Address	16 Stukeley Street, London WC2B 5LQ
Company name	IH Trust Ltd
Telephone Number	020 7611 2400
Email Address	info@ihlondon.com
Website	www.ihlondon.com
Chief Executive	Mr Mark Rendell
Proprietor	IH Trust Ltd
Age Range	8+
Total number of students	828
Numbers by age and type of study	Under 16: 1 16 – 17: 6 18+: 821 EFL only: 206 FE only: 622 EFL & FE: 828
Inspection dates	<b>28 – 30 September 2021</b>

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the Framework for Educational Oversight of private further education colleges and English language schools. The inspection consists of a three-day team inspection of the institution's educational provision.

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 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.

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## 1. CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT

- 1.1 International House (IH) London is a language school located in central London. It is an affiliate of the International House World Organisation (IHWO), the largest network organisation of independent schools in the world. IH London was established in 1959 and is a registered charity. It moved to its current premises in March 2007. Its mission is to promote education as a force for good, and its aim is to raise standards of teaching and training worldwide. A board of trustees oversee the management of the school. The operational oversight is under the direction of the chief executive, who reports to the board. He is supported by the director of education and senior management team.
- 1.2 The school offers courses in general English from beginners to advanced levels, and preparation for the Cambridge and International English Language Testing system (IELTS) examination and Occupational English Test (OET) for healthcare professionals. The main teacher training courses are full and part-time Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (CELTA) and Diploma in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (Delta) courses. Part-time courses in eleven foreign languages at different levels and bespoke executive English courses are also offered. Courses are face-to-face, online or a mix of both. A minority of these courses are also delivered at the weekend. Junior centres operate at five locations in the UK for children in the summer. These courses are face-to-face. All language courses are appropriately aligned to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), so allowing for a shared understanding of levels.
- 1.3 Enrolment patterns differ for courses: general English course students can enrol weekly, those taking IELTS every four weeks and those taking OET on specified dates; executive English students can enrol any day; trainees on the teacher training courses can enrol every four or 12 weeks and those taking modern languages courses enrol every six weeks. English and modern language courses do not specify a language level in order to enrol. On teacher training courses and for those taking OET, a specified standard of education and language are required. These are determined prior to acceptance.
- 1.4 IH London offers accommodation to students in homestay providers or in residences. Accommodation on the summer courses is provided in the residences of the schools being used to deliver the courses.
- 1.5 At the time of the inspection 828 students were enrolled, the majority of whom are on part-time courses. A small minority are under the age of 18 years. Students come from a wide range of countries, with highest numbers from Turkey, Italy, Spain and China. These students have English as an additional language. Students on teacher training and modern foreign languages courses are mainly from the United Kingdom (UK) and the vast majority have English as their first language. Two students were identified with language and learning difficulties or disabilities.

- 1.6 The school was last inspected on 4 December 2018 when it met all Key Standards and the quality of education exceeded expectations.

## 2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1 **The language school exceeds expectations for the quality of education.** At the time of the inspection, all Standards for Educational Oversight were met and quality is excellent.
- 2.2 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is excellent. Initial assessment is excellent and is used effectively to place students in appropriate classes and by teachers to plan their lessons. Course provision is outstanding and is highly effective in meeting students' needs. The courses on offer to students on student visas meet the definition of an approved qualification as set out in Home Office guidance. Teaching is excellent. Lessons are well planned and teachers have excellent subject knowledge. Students are motivated and engaged. This is effective in promoting progress. Assessment is reliable and helpful in identifying areas for improvement. Students with additional learning needs are effectively identified and supported to improve. Regular tutorials support students in knowing their progress. Overall progress is successfully measured and indicates high levels of progress made.
- 2.3 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is excellent. The school's premises are of high quality and well maintained and provide a comfortable environment for teaching and learning. A comprehensive range of excellent policies and procedures to support safety and security are in place and implemented effectively. Provision for first aid is excellent. Fire signage on the two stair cases is not consistently clear to ensure that staff and students know what to do in the case of an emergency evacuation. Admission and attendance registers are accurate and well monitored. Procedures for contact with the Home Office are appropriate. Levels of pastoral support are excellent, including an outstanding programme of leisure activities. A small minority of students do not access the induction online to inform themselves on life in the school and in London. As a result, they are insufficiently informed about aspects of the provision. Safeguarding of students under the age of 18 is highly effective. All staff are checked for suitability through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and have undergone appropriate training. Management of accommodation in residences or homestay families is excellent.
- 2.4 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is excellent. Strategic direction and oversight by leadership are highly effective and ensure that the school's aims are met. Leadership and management successfully appoint high quality staff who maintain the culture of excellence and improvement. Communications are effective and keep staff informed. Self-evaluation is accurate. Priorities for improvement are identified and carefully monitored to support implementation. Quality assurance is excellent. A range of feedback is obtained regularly. It is collated and analysed to drive improvement. An excellent system of staff appraisal, which includes lesson observation for teachers, effectively identifies development targets and training needs, so supporting development. Staff benefit from an outstanding programme of internal and external professional development activities. Checks to confirm suitability and identity are excellent.

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

#### **3.(a) Assessment of students prior to or on arrival**

- 3.1 Initial assessment is excellent. Students enrolling for a general English or foreign language course complete a suitable online grammar and vocabulary placement test prior to arrival to test their language level. A thorough online oral language assessment with a member of academic staff verifies their level. This process is highly effective in placing students in the most suitable class. Where necessary, students can easily change to a class at a more appropriate level. Executive students complete a thorough needs analysis, with information being used effectively to develop a course to suit their needs.
- 3.2 For courses with minimum requirements such as the CELTA or Delta, candidates follow a selection process determined by the awarding body. This involves a pre-interview task and an online interview with a teacher trainer. For language courses with minimum requirements, such as the IELTS and OET preparation courses, students take a set pre-course test which is carefully assessed by an academic member of staff before placement. Information is appropriately shared with teachers or trainers so they better understand their students, as well as to inform planning. Students with additional needs or disabilities are suitably identified prior to or on arrival. This information is given to teachers and used effectively to inform their planning. It supports a good understanding of student needs.
- 3.3 Students obtain accurate information about courses from the website, from brochures or from agents. This is helpful in allowing them to make informed choices.

#### **3.(b) Suitability of course provision and curriculum**

- 3.4 Suitability of course provision and curriculum is excellent and supports the students' education in accordance with their objectives and the school's aims. An appropriate statement of educational purpose, supported by schemes of work, is implemented effectively.
- 3.5 The English and foreign languages courses are suitably based on up-to-date coursebooks, allowing students to make appropriate progress. Schemes of work are well-planned to support student progress. They are effective in allowing for teacher personalisation to foster student interest. They have been developed to ensure students can make progress through the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) levels. The syllabi provided by the awarding body for the teachers' courses, suitably support the development of knowledge and skills required to take up related employment.
- 3.6 Courses on offer to students on Student visas meet the definition of an approved qualification as set out in Home Office guidance.



- 3.7 Student satisfaction with their courses is high, contributing to the high completion rates.

### **3.(c) The quality of teaching and its impact on learning**

- 3.8 Teaching is excellent and supports progress and learning. Teachers demonstrate a good understanding of their students' needs as well as excellent subject knowledge. Lessons are well planned and promote progress. They feature a wide variety of activities and classroom interactions and are successful in providing excellent opportunities for students to interact with one another, and with the learning process. These opportunities are enhanced through excellent use of technology. Responsibility for learning is devolved to the students, supporting them to develop confidence and independence. They are further supported to improve their language through effective monitoring and questioning, and frequent appropriate correction and feedback. Where teaching is less effective, teachers keep too tight a control over lessons, so reducing opportunities for student participation. Where changes to teaching have been necessary to support students with additional learning needs, staff have put in place appropriate measures to ensure the students have maximum opportunities to achieve.
- 3.9 Teaching effectively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. It encourages respect for other people including those with protected characteristics, such as nationality, religion, sexual orientation, as set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- 3.10 The process for monitoring learning is effective. Monthly tutorials allow students to know their progress. Realistic targets are identified to support improvement. Effective use of the student portal extends opportunities for assessment of learning and progress, so promoting the development of language and subject knowledge.
- 3.11 Written and oral assessment of work is excellent. Teachers provide constructive comments on homework and assignments, which allow students to know what to do to improve.

### **3.(d) Attainment and progress**

- 3.12 Progress and attainment are excellent. Progress is effectively monitored through regular testing. Assignments given on the examination and teacher training courses allow students to know progress in their subject. Academic staff are now able to see individual students' results, which are analysed to identify trends and key areas for improvement. Data, progress observed in lessons, scrutiny of work and feedback from students indicate that the vast majority of students are making excellent progress.
- 3.13 Students report satisfaction with their rates of development and state that they benefit from the high levels of support from their teachers. Inspectors agree with this.

- 3.14 External examination results are collated and indicate high levels of achievement. Levels of attainment based on students' starting point and the length of their course are good.

## **4. STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **4.(a) Health, safety and security of the premises**

- 4.1 Procedures for managing health, safety and security are excellent. Suitable policies and procedures are in place to ensure the safety of all. These are effectively communicated to staff and students. Up-to-date general and fire risk assessments further support safety. During interviews, students reported that they feel extremely safe.
- 4.2 Measures taken to support fire safety and reduce risk from fire are comprehensive and well documented. A number of suitably trained fire marshals are on-site. Fire evacuation drills take place twice a year. Appropriate related records are maintained. Signage on the two staircases is not consistently clear to ensure that staff and students know what to do in the case of an emergency evacuation.
- 4.3 Provision for first aid is excellent. A suitable policy is in place and is implemented effectively. There are an appropriate number of suitably qualified first aiders on-site. A well-equipped first aid room effectively supports those who are unwell. First aid boxes are regularly checked and are well stocked, so supporting the high standards of this provision.
- 4.4 Appropriate procedures are in place to ensure the health and safety of students involved in off-site activities. These activities are effectively assessed for risks.
- 4.5 The standard of the premises is excellent. They are well maintained, clean and tidy and have good lighting and a recently-overhauled ventilation system. The décor is of a high standard. Classrooms vary in size to accommodate classes with different numbers of students. They are appropriately furnished and suitably equipped with an interactive screen. The executive centre provides a comfortable relaxation area as well as a coffee machine for executive students. Water drinking machines are in place on every floor. There are sufficient numbers of washrooms, including for those with special needs. A lift allows ready access to those with mobility issues to enter the premises and move between floors. At weekends, parts of the premises are used by another organisation for the delivery of examinations. These areas do not allow access to the school's students, so ensuring their safety and welfare are not compromised. Security is satisfactory.

### **4.(b) Student registration and attendance records**

- 4.6 Student registration and attendance registers are excellent. They are accurate and well maintained. Attendance registers are completed online in each lesson by the teachers. Excellent procedures are in place to monitor attendance, including knowing when to make contact with students missing classes. Students who arrive late are permitted to join the class, but time lost is deducted from their attendance rates. Substantial analysis of data regarding attendance and retention takes place and is reported to senior management. Appropriate procedures are in place for

reporting to the Home Office on students enrolled through the Student visa route. Levels of attendance are high.

- 4.7 Fair and clear procedures for the collection and refund of fees and deposits are appropriately communicated.

#### **4.(c) Pastoral support for students**

- 4.8 Pastoral care is excellent and students feel well supported. Staff provide effective support and guidance in accordance with the school's aims. Access to support is readily accessible and can be easily organised. Any issues that arise are dealt with promptly and effectively. A welfare log has been introduced to systematically record all welfare issues. This is carefully monitored and informs suggestions to deal with future problem situations. A need to support mental health issues was recently identified, and consequently staff have been trained to effectively address this. Students report that staff are highly supportive.
- 4.9 Induction is satisfactory. It has been moved online and the related presentation is excellent. However, it is not consistently accessed by students. Consequently, a small minority of students are not being provided with information to prepare them for their life in the school or in London.
- 4.10 The programme of leisure activities is outstanding. A wide range of different activities take place regularly, with suggestions provided by students. Needs are therefore well met. This allows students to maximise their time in the UK. Excellent careers advice for trainees on the teachers' certificate course is available, so supporting them into employment. An external specialist comes to the school annually to talk about university applications and to support students in writing their personal statements for university entrance. This provides suitable support.
- 4.11 Effective procedures are in place to prevent bullying and harassment. Students report that relationships between staff and students and students themselves are excellent and contribute to the positive atmosphere in the school. Inspectors support this view.

#### **4.(d) Safeguarding for under 18s**

- 4.12 Safeguarding arrangements are excellent. Comprehensive and effective safeguarding policies support the safety of students under the age of 18 years and vulnerable adults. They are reviewed regularly to ensure their relevance. The designated leads are trained to an appropriate level and all other staff have been suitably trained. Updated training is provided regularly. All staff have been checked for their suitability through the DBS. A central register is in place containing information on suitability checks on staff. All staff have been appropriately trained in protecting staff and students from risks associated with radicalisation and extremism to help keep them safe. The safeguarding policies appropriately include e-safety, so supporting students in relation to using technology appropriately.

#### **4.(e) Residential accommodation**

4.13 Arrangements for accommodation are excellent. Accommodation is appropriately managed, monitored and, where relevant, registered in accordance with national requirements. The halls of residence, either in London or those used for the residential summer schools, provide good standards of accommodation to support a positive experience for students. Management of accommodation in homestay families is of a high standard, with students being well matched to the families to ensure they have an excellent experience. The school maintains close contact with homestay families and checks the accommodation every two years to ensure on-going quality. These different types of accommodation effectively meet student needs. They play a valuable part in the students' education and development and contribute to achieving the school's aims.

## **5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

### **5.(a) Ownership and oversight**

- 5.1 Ownership and oversight are excellent. The board of trustees, through the chief executive officer (CEO), set high standards for the school and effectively communicate these through the senior management team (SMT). The board fully discharge their responsibilities for educational standards, resources, welfare and safeguarding of students and staff and meeting the schools stated aims. Robust financial management ensures the school and its staff are suitably provided for. The board have excellent insight into the work of the school. They provide clear and effective educational direction as reflected in the quality of the provision.
- 5.2 The board fulfil their statutory duties for students under the age of 18 and for health and safety. They effectively exercise their monitoring role and provide challenge and support for growth and continuous development. They provide required policies, which are regularly reviewed for suitability and for the maintenance of high standards.
- 5.3 All necessary legal permissions are in place from the relevant bodies.

### **5.(b) Management structures and responsibilities**

- 5.4 Management structures and responsibilities are excellent. Leaders and managers are appropriately experienced and provide excellent direction, as reflected in the quality of the students' education, their welfare and the standard of their achievements. They are highly effective in the discharge of their delegated responsibilities. Lines of responsibility are clear and well understood. The positive and supportive leadership assures the commitment and trust of staff.
- 5.5 Communications throughout the school, both formal and informal, are frequent and effective in keeping staff abreast of developments and in providing opportunities for discussion. Staff feel well supported and support the school's vision.
- 5.6 Self-evaluation is highly effective and benefits from the input of all staff. The self-evaluation document produced for the inspection clearly indicates the school's strengths and areas for development. Development plans from each department area are linked to the self-evaluation document. They include an associated action plan where priorities have been developed and targets established. This leads to growth and improvement in the provision.
- 5.7 Staff throughout the school are of high quality. Management are successful in securing, supporting and developing staff to ensure they are suitably trained for their roles in meeting the needs of all students.

### **5.(c) Quality assurance including student feedback**

- 5.8 Quality assurance is excellent. A culture of excellence and quality improvement are key characteristics in the success of the school. Managers are highly effective in their on-going monitoring of activity and constantly strive to achieve higher standards of excellence.
- 5.9 Regular feedback is gained from students through questionnaires. The results are systematically collated and analysed. A register of quality improvement is successfully maintained to track trends from the feedback and to address issues promptly. Feedback obtained from homestay families and education agents further enhances quality development. Annual feedback from staff is valuable in informing management of staff views on the provision and in driving improvement. As a result of all the feedback, standards are driven to higher levels of quality. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, students and staff both reported high levels of satisfaction with the quality of the provision.
- 5.10 The school is committed to staff development. An outstanding programme of internal and external workshops and webinars, tailored to the needs of the staff and the school, is provided. The excellence of development activity has been evidenced recently in the training of teachers in an extremely short space of time to deliver online lessons. Presenters at training events are frequently staff employed in the school, who are experts in the field. This has given rise to an international profile for the school and also has a positive impact on the provision. The school has its own teacher training department and is generous in supporting teaching staff to undertake higher level qualifications to support improved teaching.
- 5.11 Regular observations, including peer observations, promote a culture of on-going development. A system of online observations recently has been effective in the sharing of good practice. Annual appraisals of all staff are useful in indicating areas of strength and improvement, as well as in establishing development goals and training needs for the year. They not only have a positive impact on the individuals' development but also bring about improvements to the business.
- 5.12 Achievement data for the teacher training courses, IELTS and general English examinations indicates high success rates. The results are collated and reviewed, so allowing trends to be analysed to support on-going improvement.
- 5.13 A suitable detailed complaints procedure is in place. An external body is appropriately identified in the case of complaints that cannot be resolved.
- 5.13 Students have access to a suitable fee protection scheme.

### **5.(d) Staff recruitment, qualifications and suitability checks**

- 5.14 Staff recruitment, qualifications and suitability checks are excellent. The school adheres to a policy of safer recruitment, with training provided for relevant staff. Required checks are carried out appropriately in a timely manner. Checks on the

identity of staff and their right to work in the UK are suitably carried out before their appointment is confirmed. Checks are recorded on a single central register of appointment and appropriate documentation is kept in staff files.

### **5.(e) Provision of information**

- 5.15 Provision of information is excellent. The website and brochures provide detailed information, including about courses, accommodation, visas and living in London. This allows students to make informed choices about studying at IH London.
- 5.16 The college provided inspectors with information before and during the inspection in a timely fashion. The college plans to make available and distribute this report to its students.



## **6. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Recommendations for further improvement**

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

- Ensure the online induction is effectively communicated to all students to support them in their life in the school and their time in London and the UK.
- Provide further emergency fire signage on the stairs areas so that staff and students are easily directed where to go in the event of an emergency evacuation.

## 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 chief executive officer. 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

Ms Nicole la Hausse de Lalouvière	Lead Inspector
Ms Kanwaljit Dhillon	Team Inspector
Mr Tim Miller	Team Inspector
Ms Janet Simms	Team Inspector