



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

CAMBRIDGE ACADEMY OF ENGLISH

Cambridge Academy Of English

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| Principal | Mr John Barnett |
| Proprietor | Kamiya Schools Ltd |
| Age Range | 16+ |
| Total Number of students | 82 |
| Numbers by age and type of study | 16 – 18: 18 19+: 64 EFL only: 82 |
| Inspection dates | 21 –23 August 2012 |

PREFACE

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

The ISI is an approved educational oversight body authorised by the UK Border Agency to inspect privately funded further education colleges in England and Wales offering courses on the Qualifications and Credit Framework, and English language colleges.

ISI inspections are required to:

- Report on the extent to which colleges comply with the published 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.

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COLLEGE

- 1.1 Cambridge Academy of English aims to provide all students with a rewarding, beneficial and enjoyable course of study. It aims to help students develop a successful approach to language learning so that they can ultimately become independent of their teachers, and continue to learn and use English on their own. The school is located in Girton, on the northern outskirts of Cambridge. It was founded in 1975 by Kamiya Schools Ltd, an educational trust based in Japan, and is run by a principal. It offers general EFL, business and legal English programmes and general English for young learners aged between 14 and 18. It also runs summer schools for learners of 9 years upwards at three locations in East Anglia. These were not running at the time of the inspection.
- 1.2 The school had 82 students at the time of the inspection. Of these, 37 were female and 45 male and 18 were under 19 years of age. Most students were of European and East Asian origin and from a wide range of countries. All students spoke English as a second language.
- 1.3 Students may join courses at the beginning of any week. General English and examination courses are open to any student with an appropriate level of English. Applicants for professional English and English for lawyers courses must be over 25 and either have appropriate work experience or have studied the subject at university. The four week business courses were not scheduled at the time of inspection, but inspectors observed individual and small group lessons for business students.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection the school reports that no students currently require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE COLLEGE

2.(a) Executive Summary

| | Section of the Standards | Grade awarded 1-4 |
|----|---|---------------------------|
| 3. | The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievement | 1 Exceeds expectations |
| 4. | Students' welfare, including health and safety | 1 Exceeds expectations |
| 5. | The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management | 1 Exceeds expectations |

- 2.1 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievement exceeds expectations. Initial and diagnostic assessments are highly accurate and results are used very effectively to plan courses and to ensure students' learning goals are well met. Tutorials provide excellent opportunities for detailed individual guidance. This enables students to optimise their progress. The overall quality of teaching is good. The majority of lessons are engaging and challenging for all students. Many observed sessions were excellent. As a result of good quality teaching and learning, course completion rates are very high. Assessment is mainly informal. Measurement and recording of student progress on long courses are inconsistent. The school provides a wide range of high quality resources for teaching and for students' self-study. A varied and well-designed programme of social activities is popular with students and enables them to make good use of their time outside of lessons.
- 2.2 Student welfare, including health and safety, exceeds expectations. Comprehensive policies for health and safety and safeguarding are effectively implemented by managers and staff. All statutory safeguarding requirements are well met. Risk assessments are thorough and risk management is excellent. The premises are secure and well maintained, providing a good environment for learning. Accommodation in the young learners' suite is outstanding. The school keeps accurate records of registration and attendance, which are regularly monitored by academic and welfare staff. The school is fully compliant with UK Border Agency (UKBA) requirements. High quality pastoral support is available from both academic and support staff and is well regarded by students. Relationships between staff and students are excellent. Students feel well supported, safe and welcome in the school. Homestay accommodation for students is of high quality and is very effectively managed by the school, with particular regard to the safeguarding of young learners.
- 2.3 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management exceeds expectations. The principal is successful in communicating the proprietors' educational vision for the school to managers and staff, who implement it effectively. He works closely with the management team to develop strategy and drive improvement. Management roles are clearly defined and responsibilities are effectively delegated. Performance of all staff is closely monitored within a positive and supportive culture. Quality systems are rigorous and make effective use of feedback from students.

Self-assessment is a highly accurate process which is effectively linked to development planning. The school attracts high quality staff and provides excellent opportunities for their professional development.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with standards for Private Colleges

2.4 At the time of the inspection, the college met all the key standards for private further education colleges and quality is high. **The college exceeds expectations for the quality of education.**

(ii) Recommendation for further improvement

2.5 The college is advised to make the following improvement.

1. Introduce a system to measure and record student progress on longer courses of study.

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

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

- 3.1 The assessment of students prior to and on arrival exceeds expectations. Applicants for professional courses and long-stay programmes receive excellent and accurate advice and guidance prior to their arrival in the UK. This ensures they are placed on the most appropriate course. Students confirm that pre-course advice and guidance are fair and accurate.
- 3.2 The school has a variety of pre-course assessment processes designed for specific purposes. Students wishing to take examination courses usually take a level test prior to acceptance. This initial assessment is carried out by local agents or by telephone. Some 'closed groups' of young learners are also assessed prior to arrival to facilitate course planning. Students requiring Tier 4 visas complete a Secure English Language Test (SELT) as part of their visa application process to confirm that they meet entry requirements to study at B2 level.
- 3.3 All students are interviewed on arrival. Tests and needs analysis are also carried out to ensure students' suitability for their chosen courses. Students receive a summary of their assessment results and teachers use the initial scores to monitor progress and to provide guidance on independent study. Consequently, students use their time at the school very effectively to achieve their individual learning goals.
- 3.4 Initial assessments provide useful information for tutors, who use them very effectively to plan their schemes of work. Students contribute well to the content of many programmes and report that programmes meet their interests and needs.

3.(b) Suitability of course provision and curriculum

- 3.5 Course provision and the programmes offered exceed expectations. Students are well taught in accordance with their own objectives and the school's aims. Students show good levels of knowledge and skill, which are appropriate to the length of stay on their course.
- 3.6 The school offers a wide range of courses of a high standard. General English courses accommodate students at all levels and there are specific full-time courses to prepare students for the most popular EFL examinations. General English courses include a very good elective element which enables students to select specific skills or subjects for further study. There are clear progression routes through the levels.
- 3.7 Young learner courses are exceptionally well designed to meet each cohort's interests and needs. Schemes of work are related to levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and use high quality thematic resources created by the teachers. Students are involved in the selection of project work at induction. Courses are short so most students do not move through levels

during one stay. However, many return in subsequent years to study on further courses.

- 3.8 The professional centre courses are also specially designed by the school to meet the needs of specific students. These are open to students who meet entry requirements of both vocational subject knowledge and level of English. Groups are small and teachers plan courses directly to meet students' stated goals. Flexible modes of delivery, including one-to-one teaching, allow teachers to match courses exceptionally well to students' needs.
- 3.9 The school provides an excellent enrichment programme of social activities, which is very well matched to students' interests. Activities are well planned in response to student feedback or negotiation with the group leaders of students under the age of 18.
- 3.10 Academic staff use a range of effective systems to gain regular feedback on programmes. These include tutorials, weekly assessments and end of course questionnaires. Teachers use this information particularly well to inform course planning and to modify delivery. The school is well resourced and supports the development of banks of learning materials and the in-service training of staff. The quality of course materials and the delivery of courses are consistently good across the school.
- 3.11 Courses effectively promote development of the students' skills and assist them in pursuing their careers and future studies. Retention and completion rates are high. Many students extend their stay at the school beyond their original booking. Around 20 per cent of students return to the school after completing a first course.
- 3.12 Course content accurately matches marketing information provided in promotional brochures and on the school's website. Promotional materials are comprehensive, clear and accurate. They contain key facts about the courses offered by the school.

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

- 3.13 The quality of teaching exceeds expectations. In the large majority of classes observed teaching was good or excellent. Students of all abilities demonstrate very good progress.
- 3.14 Activities are well planned and learning materials are of a high quality. A very good rapport exists between teachers and students. Teachers are experienced and show a sound knowledge of linguistic systems. In many classes there is a strong focus on pronunciation and fluency.
- 3.15 Assessment in lessons is mostly very effective and includes appropriate error correction and feedback on speaking skills. On most courses, homework is not compulsory but is set regularly and marked thoroughly. Students are given useful feedback about how to improve their learning. Teaching and assessment enable

learners to acquire knowledge about the language and to quickly develop their linguistic skills.

- 3.16 Courses are successfully designed to meet students' varying needs with respect to their learning objectives, prior attainment and ability. Learning activities are well planned and excellent use is made of resources to support and promote learning. Teachers develop highly appropriate schemes of work, often in consultation with students. These contain clear and attainable objectives.
- 3.17 Teachers are very aware of students' linguistic and cultural differences. They use this knowledge well to celebrate diversity and promote cross-cultural understanding.
- 3.18 Teaching and learning resources are excellent. Teachers have access to up-to-date course and supplementary books with accompanying CDs and DVDs. These high quality resources are used very effectively by teachers to plan and deliver lessons which are varied in content and presentation. Resources enhance the quality of the student's learning experience, match their learning styles and contribute significantly to their enjoyment of sessions. The school's self-study centre is well resourced and is highly valued and used well by students.

3.(d) Attainment and progress

- 3.19 Attainment and progress exceed expectations. Students apply their learning very well. They successfully develop high level skills and take responsibility for their own progress and attainment. They demonstrate a very good level of fluency when speaking about complex topics.
- 3.20 The assessment of students' progress is mainly informal, but effective. Progress is monitored through tutorials, weekly tests and end of course reports, indicating their attainment in relation to the CEFR. All students receive an end of course certificate. Sponsors of students on longer courses receive regular, detailed reports on their progress. However, the progress of other long-term students is not systematically measured and recorded.
- 3.21 A relatively small proportion of students take external examinations such as the Cambridge ESOL Main Suite, the International English Language Testing System test (IELTS) and the International Legal English Certificate (ILEC). The school is a registered centre for some of these examinations. Results over the past three years are good.

4. STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY

4.(a) Health, safety and security of the premises (in line with expectations of educational institutions)

- 4.1 Health, safety and security of the premises exceed expectations. The school has an appropriate fire safety policy. It is fully compliant with fire safety regulations and keeps detailed records of fire drills. There is sufficient and clear signage for fire evacuation and location of extinguishers. Fire evacuation is practised at the start of every course and all students and staff know the procedures.
- 4.2 The first aid policy is appropriate and detailed. A record of incidents is kept centrally, though the few that have occurred have been minor in nature. Staff are appropriately trained in first aid procedures and first aid boxes are well stocked. The school has very effective medical aid procedures for students. These include arrangements with a local doctor's surgery. Students who have required medical treatment confirm the efficiency and effectiveness of these arrangements.
- 4.3 Suitably qualified staff run the social programme which has a strong focus on safety. The school carries out detailed risk assessments of all activities and risk management is effective. Students have a good understanding of health and safety procedures.
- 4.4 The school building and grounds are well maintained, particularly with regard to the health and safety of students and staff. Learning areas are clean and tidy and furniture is fit for purpose. Accommodation in the newly-built young learners' suite is outstanding.
- 4.5 Security arrangements are good. There is adequate access for all staff and students, but as stated in the school's publicity information, the nature of the building prevents access for people with mobility difficulties.
- 4.6 The school canteen is well maintained and hygiene standards are high. The number of washrooms is appropriate and they are kept very clean.
- 4.7 Students interviewed said that they feel safe and welcome in the school. They are aware of what actions to take in the case of any abusive behaviour but are not aware of any such incidents occurring. Interviews and questionnaire responses confirmed that students believe that they are respected equally.

4.(b) Student registration and attendance records

- 4.8 Student registration and attendance records meet expectations. Procedures for the collection and refund of student fees are clear and outlined on the application form. Appropriate and accurate records of fee collection and refunds are kept on the school database.
- 4.9 The school maintains highly accurate admissions data and attendance registers. Visa numbers and expiry dates are recorded on the student database. Meticulous

attention is paid to detail. For example, checks are carried out on expiry dates before student requests to extend their course are approved.

- 4.10 The attendance and punctuality policies are actively promoted to all students and staff. Attendance and punctuality rates are exceptionally good. Particular attention is paid to the welfare of students under the age of 18. Absences from class are actively monitored and follow-up action is taken where appropriate. All students are contacted on the first day of absence, irrespective of their visa status.
- 4.11 Arrangements to follow up student absences and to make the necessary reports to the UKBA are appropriate. There were no students on Tier 4 visas at the time of the inspection.

4.(c) Pastoral support for students

- 4.12 Pastoral support for students exceeds expectations. Prior to enrolment, students receive high quality advice and guidance. In discussions they reported that the pre-arrival course information provided by the school or agents was accurate. On arrival, the school provides an excellent induction for students and a very helpful student handbook. This enables students to settle quickly onto their courses. Those interviewed were aware of their responsibilities as learners, including compliance with policies on attendance and punctuality. They confirmed that absence is followed up promptly.
- 4.13 Teachers use tutorial sessions very effectively to support students in successfully achieving their individual learning goals and to provide guidance on independent study. Progress in relation to personal goals is reviewed at subsequent meetings. Tutorials are also used productively to collect student feedback about all aspects of their stay and to arrange support for any personal issues. If required, referrals for counselling support are made to appropriately qualified staff. Long-term students are assigned a personal tutor for the duration of their stay. This ensures consistency as they move through levels with different class teachers and has a very positive effect on students' progress and achievement.
- 4.14 The majority of students under 18 only attend the school for short periods, therefore progress reports are not usually provided for their parents. However, attendance or other pastoral issues are reported via the agent.
- 4.15 Although the school is unable to support students with physical disabilities, it has successfully supported learners with some learning disabilities, including Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). In addition, teaching staff have received awareness training on supporting students with dyslexia and behavioural issues. The school has a clear policy on bullying and discrimination, but there have been no instances reported.
- 4.16 Students are fully aware of how to access support if they have personal or practical problems. Those interviewed gave examples of the good support they have received

from school staff. The school also provides guidance and references for students intending to apply to universities in the UK.

- 4.17 Students confirm that the school responds promptly to their views. They return evaluation forms during their first week and on completion of their studies. They are invited to discuss any issues with an appropriate member of staff. This information is collated and analysed to inform improvements. Student satisfaction rates are exceptionally good.

4.(d) Child protection/safeguarding

- 4.18 Child protection exceeds expectations. Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks have been carried out or are being processed for staff at all levels and records are held on a central list. The school provides detailed and effective policies and guidance on child protection.
- 4.19 The accommodation officer and the director of young learners' courses have child protection training. All other core staff members have received awareness training. The school has a 24-hour emergency contact number for incident reporting. In interviews, staff at all levels demonstrated a very high level of awareness of safeguarding.
- 4.20 Separate social programme activities are organised for adults and for young students. Organisers demonstrate a particularly good understanding of safeguarding. Separate risk assessments are carried out for external activities involving students under 18. Before young students are enrolled on courses, parents complete a consent form for social programme activities and receive guidance on expected behaviour. The school records contact details for the parents of all students under 18.

4.(e) Residential accommodation

- 4.21 Residential accommodation exceeds expectations. The school arranges high quality homestays for students and uses university halls of residence during the summer months. Students are accommodated in boarding schools whenever the school uses these facilities to run residential courses.
- 4.22 Homestay accommodation is clean, comfortable and safe and is located within two miles of the school. Hosts are carefully selected and premises are re-inspected every two years. All hosts who accommodate students under 16 are subject to CRB checks. In addition, hosts complete a declaration confirming that there are no legal reasons why they should not work with students under 18.
- 4.23 Homestay providers have a good awareness of safeguarding requirements. Curfew times are in operation for students under 18. Hosts maintain phone contact with the school if students attend late evening social programme activities.
- 4.24 Students interviewed confirmed that meals are freshly prepared and healthy. The accommodation officer ensures that students with special dietary needs are placed

with suitable hosts. Accommodation records are well maintained and regularly updated to reflect changes. Records are cross-indexed to student files if information is of a sensitive nature.

- 4.25 The school handles complaints regarding accommodation very effectively. If students or hosts are unhappy with the placement, the accommodation officer intervenes quickly to resolve the issue, either through discussion or by providing alternative accommodation on the same day.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) Ownership and oversight

- 5.1 Oversight of the school exceeds expectations. The proprietors have delegated responsibility for all aspects of strategic management to the principal. The principal holds meetings with the management team throughout the year to make decisions about strategy, capital expenditure and finances. Outcomes are communicated to the proprietors in writing or through online conference meetings. An annual formal strategy report is also sent to the proprietors for approval.
- 5.2 The principal reports to the directors of the trust but exercises close governance over the school's strategic direction and ethos. He provides outstanding support and stimulus for growth in response to student demand and to drive improvement. Investment in staff, accommodation and resources is exceptionally good. As a result, there are high levels of student and staff satisfaction.
- 5.3 Leaders and managers are fully aware of all safeguarding, welfare and health and safety issues and are highly effective in discharging their responsibilities. The principal holds regular formal meetings with the management team to discuss all aspects of operational management and sets high standards for the care of students, particularly those under the age of 18. He also ensures, on behalf of the directors, that the school holds appropriate legal permissions from all relevant bodies.

5.(b) Management structures and responsibilities

- 5.4 The school's management structures and the discharge of responsibilities exceed expectations. There are clear and appropriate divisions in management functions and designated managers for each of the three programme areas. The management team demonstrates a strong commitment to the school's aims and provides clear direction to staff in line with its strategic objectives. Managers have considerable delegated responsibility for their areas.
- 5.5 The management team meets regularly to discuss all aspects of the provision and is fully involved in both strategic and operational planning, which are successfully aligned. The principal sets management targets in annual appraisal meetings and actions are decided and reviewed at weekly meetings. Communication and co-operation amongst the team are excellent and, as a result, progress against objectives is excellent.
- 5.6 Academic managers are responsible for the recruitment of staff for their programme areas. They secure high quality teachers with successful prior experience in their specialism. Teaching staff performance is very effectively monitored through an excellent lesson observation system with a strong focus on learning. Managers provide clear educational direction, which leads to very good outcomes for learners.

- 5.7 Staff at all levels are professional, highly motivated and carry out their roles to a high standard. All staff undergo a thorough and supportive annual appraisal, which is well linked to staff development. The school has a strong commitment to providing training opportunities for staff and allocates a generous budget for this purpose. For key issues such as child protection, the school provides whole-staff training.
- 5.8 The school makes effective use of data, particularly feedback from students, group leaders and agents, to plan and improve provision. The self-evaluation process is well developed, accurately identifying strengths and weaknesses, and draws upon input from all core members of staff.

5.(c) Quality assurance including student feedback

- 5.9 Quality assurance, including student feedback, exceeds expectations. Students give written feedback at several stages of their course and teachers elicit students' views on all aspects of the provision during tutorial meetings. Academic managers analyse on-course evaluations promptly and pass on concerns to relevant members of staff, who work with students to resolve them quickly. The number of students who completed the pre-inspection questionnaires was limited, but a very large majority of respondents were positive.
- 5.10 The school's self-evaluation process is rigorous and the report is both thorough and accurate. Self-evaluation is part of a cycle of review which contributes well to the annual report that is provided for the proprietors. The outcomes of self-evaluation are well linked to an ambitious development plan with clear targets and completion dates for named managers. The plan is a live document and includes updates on progress.
- 5.11 The school has a transparent, open and effective complaints procedure which is published on the website. It makes reference to the availability of an independent adjudicator. Inspectors viewed records of complaints and found they had been handled effectively.

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

- 5.12 The school sets high standards for staff recruitment. As a result, suitably qualified, experienced and committed staff are employed. Appropriate confirmation of qualifications, suitability and CRB checks are completed prior to the appointment of staff.
- 5.13 Teachers employed in one area of provision sometimes work in other areas and their records are held in a number of different locations. As a result, line managers do not have full access to staff or employment records.

5.(e) Provision of information

- 5.14 The school's website and prospectus are clear and accurate and contain all information required in the Standards.

- 5.15 The provision of information before and during the inspection was exceptionally good and enabled inspectors to make comprehensive judgements about the quality and standards at the school.

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. Inspectors visited residential accommodation. The responses of staff and students to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the college.

Inspectors

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|-----------------|----------------|
| Ms Dawn Hart | Lead Inspector |
| Mr Martin Eayrs | Team Inspector |