

Organisation name	Ardmore Language Schools, Maidenhead
Inspection date	8 August 2017

Section standard	Met	Not met
Management: The management of the provision will operate to the benefit of its students, in accordance with its publicity and in accordance with the <i>Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance</i> .	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Resources and environment: The learning resources and environment will support and enhance the studies of students enrolled with the provider, and will offer an appropriate professional environment for staff.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teaching and learning: Teachers will have appropriate qualifications and will be given sufficient support to ensure that their teaching meets the needs of their students. Programmes of learning will be managed for the benefit of students. The teaching observed will meet the requirements of the Scheme.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Welfare and student services: The needs of students for security, pastoral care, information and leisure activities will be met; any accommodation provided will be suitable; the management of the accommodation systems will work to the benefit of students.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Care of under 18s section	N/a	Met	Not met
There will be appropriate provision for the safeguarding of students under the age of 18 within the organisation and in any leisure activities or accommodation provided.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Recommendation

We recommend accreditation with a spot check focusing on the course provision outside the summer season. Evidence must be submitted within three months to show that weaknesses in publicity, accommodation and C4 have been addressed.

Summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited Ardmore Language Schools, Maidenhead in August 2017. The Accreditation Scheme assesses the standards of management, resources and premises, teaching, welfare, and care of under 18s and accredits organisations which meet the overall standard in each area inspected (see www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation for details).

This private language school offers residential and homestay courses for under 18s.

The inspection report noted a need for improvement in the areas of publicity and accommodation.

Strengths were noted in the areas of staff management, student administration, quality assurance, premises and facilities, academic management, care of students, and leisure opportunities.

The inspection report stated that the organisation met the standards of the Scheme.

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	2009
Last full inspection	2013
Subsequent spot check (if applicable)	N/a
Subsequent supplementary check (if applicable)	N/a
Subsequent interim visit (if applicable)	N/a
Current accreditation status	Accredited
Other related non-accredited activities (in brief) at this centre	Study Tour Groups – no lessons or activities, just full board and accommodation
Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates	Ardmore seasonal multicentres
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	English language courses in the USA and Outbound trips to Europe, South America and China through Ardmore Educational Travel. School Integration and Academic Year Programmes.

Private sector

Date of foundation	1984
Ownership	Name of company: Ardmore language schools Company number: 1647636
Other accreditation/inspection	N/a

Premises profile

Address of main site	Ardmore language school, Berkshire College of Agriculture, Hall Place, Maidenhead SL6 6QR
Details of any additional sites in use at the time of the inspection	N/a
Details of any additional sites not in use at the time of the inspection	N/a
Profile of sites visited	<p>The school is situated on a very large campus in countryside approximately five miles from Maidenhead. It is the home of the Berkshire College of Agriculture (BCA), with whom Ardmore has a close working relationship. The head office of the Ardmore organisation is also based on this site.</p> <p>At the time of the inspection, no BCA students were following courses so Ardmore had sole use of the facilities. These include a large purpose-built teaching block, a central block with the course office, staffroom and dining hall, together with additional rooms as required. A room is allocated for homestay students to eat their packed lunches.</p> <p>There are eight accommodation blocks, all located close to the central block. Sports facilities include a new multi-purpose sports hall and outdoor football and rugby pitches. Specialist facilities are also available to support the 'Academy' programmes in horse-riding, tennis, and golf.</p>

Student profile

	At inspection	In peak week: July (organisation's estimate)
Of all international students, approximate percentage on ELT/ESOL courses	100	100
ELT/ESOL students (eligible courses)	At inspection	In peak week
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) 18 years and over	0	0
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) aged 16–17 years	26	27
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) aged under 16	75	174

Part-time ELT aged 18 years and over	0	0
Part-time ELT aged 16–17 years	0	0
Part-time ELT aged under 16 years	0	0
Overall total ELT/ESOL students shown above	101	201
Junior programmes: advertised minimum age	9	9
Junior programmes: actual minimum age	7	9
Junior programmes: advertised maximum age	17	17
Junior programmes: actual maximum age	17	18 (closed groups)
Junior programmes: predominant nationalities	French Chinese	French Chinese
Adult programmes: advertised minimum age	N/a	N/a
Adult programmes: actual minimum age	N/a	N/a
Adult programmes: typical age range	N/a	N/a
Adult programmes: typical length of stay	N/a	N/a
Adult programmes: predominant nationalities	N/a	N/a
Number on PBS Tier 4 General student visas	N/a	N/a
Number on PBS Tier 4 child visas	N/a	N/a
Number on short-term study visas	0	0

Staff profile

	At inspection	In peak week (organisation's estimate)
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	6	8
Number teaching ELT 20 hours and over a week	6	
Number teaching ELT 10–19 hours a week	0	
Number teaching ELT under 10 hours a week	0	
Number of academic managers for eligible ELT courses	1	1
Number of management (non-academic) and administrative staff working on eligible ELT courses	5	
Total number of support staff	12	

Academic manager qualifications profile

Profile at inspection	
Professional qualifications	Number of academic managers
TEFLQ qualification	1
Academic managers without TEFLQ qualification or 3 years relevant experience (NB Rationales need to be prepared for academic managers in this category)	0
Total	1
Comments	

None.

Teacher qualifications profile

Profile in week of inspection	
Professional qualifications	Number of teachers
TEFLQ qualification	0
TEFLI qualification	5
Holding specialist qualifications only (specify)	0

YL initiated	0
Qualified teacher status only (QTS)	0
Teachers without appropriate ELT/TESOL qualification (NB Rationales need to be prepared for teachers in this category)	1
Total	6

Comments

None.

Course profile

Eligible activities	Year round		Vacation		Other: N/a	
	Run	Seen	Run	Seen	Run	Seen
General ELT for adults	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General ELT for juniors (under 18)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
English for academic purposes (excludes IELTS preparation)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
English for specific purposes (includes English for Executives)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher development (excludes award-bearing courses)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ESOL skills for life/for citizenship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments

All courses are for students aged between nine and 17. They offer a general English component of three hours a day; this consists of a 90-minute general English class, and a 90-minute project class. Normally these two classes are taught by different teachers. Excursions and a wide range of sports and activities are provided. 'Academy' programmes are offered with specialist tuition in a range of sports (horse-riding, golf, tennis). At the busiest times of the summer, the centre operates a zig-zag programme with lessons and activities being run both in the morning and afternoon for different groups.

Accommodation profile

Number of students in each at the time of inspection (all students on eligible courses)

Types of accommodation	Adults	Under 18s
Arranged by provider/agency		
Homestay	N/a	24
Private home	N/a	N/a
Home tuition	N/a	N/a
Residential	N/a	77
Hotel/guesthouse	N/a	N/a
Independent self-catering e.g. flats, bedsits, student houses	N/a	N/a
Arranged by student/family/guardian		
Staying with own family	N/a	N/a
Staying in privately rented rooms/flats	N/a	N/a
Overall totals adults/under 18s	N/a	101
Overall total adults + under 18s	101	

Introduction

Ardmore was founded in 1984 by the current chairman of the group, and is engaged in a variety of activities in the education and educational travel sector. It has been running short general English courses for many years. The centre at Maidenhead has been accredited since 2009 as part of the Ardmore seasonal multicentres accreditation. However, in recent years the level of activity has increased to the extent that it now runs courses for over 26 weeks a year, and is thus no longer considered to be a seasonal operation. This inspection was to establish whether the centre was able to be accredited as a year-round operation.

The courses run outside the summer season are identical to those run during the summer, except that they are all group based, with no individual enrolments accepted. They are run at the Berkshire College of Agriculture (BCA), where the head office (HO) of the Ardmore group is also located. There is a very close working relationship between Ardmore and BCA, which enables the Ardmore operation to run alongside the normal work of the College during the academic year. The Ardmore BCA centre operates year round in exactly the same way as during the summer, with specific courses being organised for specific groups on the basis of a programme agreed with the sponsoring agent. The HO team are more closely involved with the direct operation of the programmes than they are in the summer, but day-to-day running of the courses is in the hands of staff recruited and employed according to demand.

At the time of the inspection, the BCA course had a centre director (CD), a director of studies (DoS), a head of pastoral care (HPC), and a head of sports/activities manager (HSA), as well as a centre administrator. The HPC was supported by senior welfare leaders and the HSA worked with a team of activity leaders.

At the centre, meetings were held with the CD, DoS, HPC, HSA and with representatives of the host institution. Meetings were also held with groups of students, teachers, activity and welfare leaders, and international group leaders.

The set-up and execution of the on-site activity programmes were seen. All teachers were observed in class. The residential and homestay accommodation was inspected by one inspector, who held a meeting with the homestay local organiser (LO). At the end of the centre visit, a briefing was given to the centre director. At head office, meetings were held with all available staff responsible for the Ardmore course centres, and relevant documents were examined. A full round-up was given to the commercial director, the operations manager, and the assistant operations manager.

Management

Legal and statutory regulations

Criteria	See comments
M1 Declaration of compliance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Comments

M1 The items sampled were satisfactory.

Staff management

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
M2 Management structure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
M3 Duties specified	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/a	<input type="checkbox"/>	
M4 Communication channels	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
M5 Human resources policies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
M6 Qualifications verified	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/a	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
M7 Induction procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
M8 Monitoring staff performance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
M9 Professional development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

Comments

M2 The management structure is clear and transparent at both head office (HO) and at the centre. It is clearly documented in an organogram included in the role-specific staff handbooks, and is covered during induction as relevant. All members of the teams at the centre were clear about lines of responsibility and reporting.

M4 Communication is excellent across the organisation. The CD is immediately responsible for maintaining effective channels of communication at the centre; meetings are minuted and social media groups are used effectively. The close proximity of HO means that communication is easy and effective.

M5 Human resources policies are set out in staff handbooks and addressed at annual management training; managers introduce applicable policies to their centre teams. External consultants advise on human resources policies and ensure they are up to date. There are comprehensive procedures, checklists and templates for each stage in the process of the central recruitment of managers and staff to work at the course centre; a full and thorough interviewing process is followed; there are good records demonstrating consistent implementation. However, see C4 in relation to the recruitment of homestay hosts by the local organiser.

M6 Originals of qualifications are verified at the centre, and scanned copies are uploaded to the central information management system.

M7 Staff receive the core staff handbook and role specific handbooks in advance of their employment. An online training platform is also used to introduce prospective employees to the work of the company through a tested learning module, and it is compulsory for them to complete this before they begin work. Centre staff arrive 24–48 hours before a course starts. On-site inductions are carried out by the centre management team, using materials and resources supplied by HO.

M8 A minimum of two appraisals are conducted over the course of employment, with a confidential reference also submitted by line managers at the end. Appraisals form part of the initial stages of dealing with underperformance or minor concerns with staff. There was evidence of appraisals taking place – and being appreciated.

M9 Teachers are required to attend weekly CPD sessions led by their DoS. This year CPD sessions for all staff are being trialed, and a bank of modules has been developed to be delivered by the CD/HSA/HPC where possible. An important aspect of CPD is internal promotion and progression. All the members of the management team in place at the centre had started work with the organisation at relatively junior levels, and had been trained to take on additional responsibilities in following years.

Student administration

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
M10 Administrative staff and resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
M11 Information on course choice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
M12 Enrolment procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
M13 Contact details	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
M14 Student attendance policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
M15 Students asked to leave course	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Comments

M10 Staff were seen to be friendly and approachable, and willing to help students and group leaders with any problems or queries. This was confirmed in focus group meetings. Record-keeping, both on-site and at HO, was immaculate, aided by sophisticated and effective use of technology. At centre level, a lot of routine administrative work was carried out by the centre administrator.

M11 All student recruitment is handled by agents, and they are provided with a wealth of information on every aspect of the courses, in order to enable them to advise clients.

M12 Student enrolments, and handling cancellations and refunds are carried out by the agents. There is a clear 'agent agreement' setting out their roles and responsibilities.

M13 Emergency contact details for parents/next of kin are collected by agents. Parents' numbers are not always sent to Ardmore as some parents do not speak English. Therefore, the agent is the intermediary, which ensures that all contact can take place in the client's first language. A member of HO staff is available round the clock with regularly checked emergency contact details for all agents. As a back-up, names and contact details of parents are collected on arrival and kept on the centre masterlist.

M14 Attendance is compulsory at lessons and activities; there are checks at the beginning of all lessons and activities. A welfare leader visits classes five minutes after lessons begin. Any absences are immediately followed up.

Quality assurance

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
M16 Action plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/a	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
M17 Continuing improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
M18 Student feedback and action	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
M19 Staff feedback and action	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
M20 Complaints and action	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments

M16 An action plan was submitted, based on the points to be addressed from the 2013 inspection of the multicentre operation. A small number of points from the 2013 report were not included.

M17 There is constant review of processes and procedures by the operations team, informed by feedback from students, group leaders and centre staff (see M18, M19). There was evidence of developments in the last few years in a wide range of areas, ranging from the development of CPD modules for non-tutorial staff (M9) to the development of new procedures for handling staff recruitment (M5).

M18 Student feedback forms are issued in class. Early feedback is collected following the first excursion, and final feedback before departure. This is then analysed, logged and added to the group's archive records. Group leader feedback has open questions; it is followed up by the CD and action taken is recorded if necessary. HO staff review feedback through digital archiving to assist in identifying areas for improvement at individual centres.

M19 All staff who have worked during the year are invited to complete an online survey at the end of summer to provide anonymous feedback. The management team at the centre provide extensive reports and feedback on the centre, teams and programmes. In addition, senior centre staff are invited to attend an annual debriefing at HO.

Publicity

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
M21 Accessible accurate language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
M22 Realistic expectations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
M23 Course descriptions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
M24 Course information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/a	<input type="checkbox"/>	
M25 Costs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
M26 Accommodation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
M27 Leisure programme	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
M28 Staff qualifications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/a	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
M29 Accreditation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/a	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments

Publicity consists of a website, a brochure, and individual factsheets on each centre. These are in English only, but most agents use their own translations of this material for recruitment. Where possible, the international sales team check these for accuracy.

M21 In general the language used in all types of publicity is clear, accessible, and accurate. Very few typos or inaccuracies were noted.

M22 A lot of information is provided about the courses and the course centre. In many respects this creates a fair and realistic impression of what is provided. However, a significant claim made by the publicity is: 'Students are grouped according to their English ability and not their age or nationality. This creates the need to communicate in English as a common language, and allows students to develop new international friendships'. In reality, a major issue at the centre was the limited number of student nationalities, and the fact that a number of classes were virtually, or actually, monolingual.

M25 Costs are available through an agent, or by contacting the sales office.

M26 In general, the description of the accommodation provided is accurate. However, the number of toilets/showers per student in residential accommodation was lower than advertised.

M28 It is claimed that 'all teachers are CELTA or Trinity TESOL qualified'. This was not true of all teachers working at the time of the inspection.

M29 The Accreditation Scheme marque in use on the website and the brochure does not contain the rider 'in the

UK'. As a result, its use on pages which include references to courses taking place outside the UK is potentially misleading.

Management summary

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. Staff are well managed and student administration is carried out very effectively at both HO and centre level. Quality assurance procedures are thorough and well administered. Publicity is attractively presented and clear, but needs attention to ensure that all claims made about the courses and the centre reflect the actual situation accurately, and that the correct version of the Accreditation Scheme marque is used. There is a need for improvement in *Publicity*. *Staff management*, *Student administration* and *Quality assurance* are areas of strength.

Resources and environment

Premises and facilities

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
R1 Adequate space	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
R2 Condition of premises	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
R3 Classrooms and learning areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
R4 Student relaxation areas and food	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
R5 Signage and display	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
R6 Staffroom(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments

R1 The course centre is based in very attractive and comfortable premises, in a spacious, rural setting.

R2 The premises were clean and in very good decorative order.

R3 Classroom facilities were excellent, with all classes being held in a purpose-built teaching block.

R4 There were good facilities for student relaxation, with a spacious common room and safe and secure outside spaces.

R5 There was a noticeable difference in quality between the professional-looking centrally produced notices and signage, and the sometimes rather scrappy material produced locally. Very few classrooms had any ELT-related posters or material on display.

Learning resources

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
R7 Learning materials for students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
R8 Resources for teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
R9 Educational technology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
R10 Self-access facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
R11 Library/self-access guidance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
R12 Review and development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

Comments

R7 Language work is based on a set of in-house coursebooks at six levels, designed to deliver one unit per day, for ten full teaching sessions of 90 minutes. Students are given a copy of the coursebook for their level. The material is appropriate for all but the very youngest of the students, though in view of the wide potential age-range in classes and the different cultural backgrounds from which students may come, teachers have to be creative and flexible in its use.

R8 A range of supplementary resources is available to teachers, including a set of 'Toolkit' supplementary resources for the coursebooks.

R9 Multimedia educational technology was available in all classes visited, and was seen in regular use. On-site technical support was available.

R12 Review and development of learning resources is on-going, based on feedback from teachers and the DoS.

The coursebooks have been considerably developed since the last inspection of the seasonal multicentres, and are

due to be extended in terms of the number of units available. It is also planned to produce specific materials for the younger students.

Resources and environment summary

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The centre provides students with good facilities for study and relaxation, and staff with appropriate teaching resources and a professional working environment. *Premises and facilities* is an area of strength.

Teaching and learning

Academic staff profile

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
T1 General education (and rationales)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/a	<input type="checkbox"/>	
T2 ELT/TESOL teacher qualifications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
T3 Rationales for teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/a	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T4 Profile of academic manager(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T5 Rationale for academic manager(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/a	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Comments

T2 One teacher had a teaching award which does not meet Scheme requirements.

T3 The rationale for the teacher in T2 was accepted because she had had some training in ELT, and was closely supported by colleagues and the DoS.

T4 Academic management across the Ardmore group is overseen by two TEFLQ academic directors based at HO. The DoS in post at the centre at the time of the inspection was TEFLQ and had appropriate experience.

Academic management

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
T6 Deployment of teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T7 Timetabling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
T8 Cover for absent teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
T9 Continuous enrolment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T10 Formalised support for teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T11 Observation and monitoring	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments

T7 Timetabling can be complex, involving at the time of the inspection, a zig-zag structure (lessons and activities alternating between morning and afternoon on different days) and groups sometimes arriving and leaving on different days during the week. However, the DoS (and the HSA) had organised their programmes effectively to ensure a minimum of disruption to the students.

T8 In the event of unsignalled absence, the DoS covers in the short term. For lengthier absences HO is called to help find a replacement or temporary agency cover.

T9 As noted in T7, groups may arrive and leave on almost any day of the week. This places strain on the DoS in terms of arranging placement tests and inductions, and in terms of re-grouping, but this had been well handled. The coursebooks for the general English classes are designed so that units do not necessarily need to be sequential in terms of ability, and so midweek arrivals can pick up at the unit of the day. Teachers are supported in dealing with changing group compositions in their inductions, and in CPD sessions.

T10 CPD sessions are organised every week by the DOS, focusing on areas which have been identified as being weak from previous years' end-of-course reports and from teacher appraisals. As well as this formal support, there was evidence of a very close working relationship between teachers and their DoS, and among the teachers themselves.

T11 A programme of observation is drawn up and is carried out by an academic director, or the local TEFLQ DoS. In addition, each teacher is appraised twice during the course of their employment.

Course design and implementation

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
T12 Principled course structure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
T13 Review of course design	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
T14 Course outlines and outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
T15 Study and learning strategies	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
T16 Linguistic benefit from UK	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

Comments

T12 The in-house coursebooks are based on themes/topics selected to be of interest to the students. The table of contents in each level describes the breakdown of units and language targets.

T13 As noted in M17 above, there is constant review of processes and procedures by the operations team, informed by feedback from students, group leaders and centre staff. The in-house materials, and the overall structure of the teaching programme, are an integral part of this.

T15 Individual teachers may pass on tips and advice about ways to improve language learning, but there is no specific focus on study and learning strategies in the in-house material.

T16 Excursions task sheets have been revised and updated to encourage the students to use English more. All staff are encouraged to facilitate and promote spoken English. However, as noted in M22, a major issue was the limited number of student nationalities, and the fact that a number of classes were virtually, or actually, monolingual.

Learner management

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
T17 Placement for level and age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T18 Monitoring students' progress	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
T19 Examination guidance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T20 Assessment criteria	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T21 Academic reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
T22 Information on UK education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Comments

T18 Level changes are possible if requested by the student or group leader, and approved by the teacher. An exit test is designed to show what has been learned throughout the course and pinpoint improvement in any of the four skills.

T19 An externally validated graded spoken English examination is available, if requested by an agent.

T20 Students entering for the examination are given full information about the format of the exam and the assessment criteria.

Classroom observation record

Number of teachers seen	6
Number of observations	6
Parts of programme(s) observed	General English; projects

Comments

None.

Classroom observation

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
T23 Models and awareness of English in use	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
T24 Appropriate content	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
T25 Learning outcomes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

T26 Teaching techniques	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
T27 Classroom management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
T28 Feedback to students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
T29 Evaluating student learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
T30 Student engagement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

Comments

T23 In general teachers had a sound awareness of the use of English and provided appropriate models of the spoken and written language.

T24 The content of the language classes was based on the workbook topics. In general, this was appropriate, but some teachers were not able to adjust the topic to the age range and background of their students.

T25 There was very little evidence of a focus on learner outcomes. In general, the approach was to go through the coursebook activities in sequence, without identifying outcomes.

T26 Teachers made use of a range of techniques. Nomination of students was used effectively to make sure that all contributed, and there was some good use of elicitation. Questioning was generally effective, but was sometimes too unfocused to allow the students to make a meaningful response.

T27 There were some instances of re-arrangement of the classroom furniture to facilitate groupwork, and multimedia technology was generally used effectively. In some instances, use of the whiteboard was poor, with spidery writing, little attempt to organise the board – and very faint pens being used.

T28 The best teachers collected student answers on the board, and gave useful feedback; some picked up student errors and invited the student to self-correct; some used concept checking effectively. However, there were a number of missed opportunities for students to be helped to correct or extend their contributions.

T29 Teachers who followed the coursebook structure were often able to use one activity to evaluate the learning that had taken place in the previous one.

T30 Teachers generally adapted their language well to the level of the students in the class, and many made efforts to interest the students in the activities, leading to positive student engagement. The project classes were particularly successful in this respect, but, given the limited range of nationalities in most classes, these were characterised by a lot of L1 discussion among the students.

Classroom observation summary

The teaching observed met the requirements of the Scheme; a few segments observed were good, and the majority were satisfactory. Teachers generally had enough knowledge of the systems and structures of English to plan relevant classes around the material in the in-house coursebooks, but the specified topic was difficult to tackle for the younger students, and there was little focus on learner outcomes. A range of techniques was seen in the delivery of the classes. Classroom management was variable. There were instances of good feedback to students, but some teachers missed opportunities to support the students in this way. In many classes, the teachers made successful efforts to involve and engage the students. In project classes, there was a lot of L1 discussion among the students.

Teaching and learning summary

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. Teachers have appropriate qualifications and are given sufficient support to ensure that their teaching meets the needs of their students. Programmes of learning are well managed for the benefit of students. The teaching observed met the requirements of the Scheme. *Academic management* is an area of strength.

Welfare and student services

Care of students

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
W1 Safety and security onsite	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
W2 Pastoral care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
W3 Personal problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
W4 Dealing with abusive behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
W5 Emergency contact number	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/a	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
W6 Transport and transfers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

W7 Advice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
W8 Medical and dental treatment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/a	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Comments

W1 The school has robust systems which are effectively implemented to ensure the safety and security of its students. There are clear, documented procedures for monitoring and supervising students. Students' room keys give access to the residential block. Areas that are out of bounds are made known to students and careful supervision ensures that students do not wander. Ardmore staff conduct late night patrols. Appropriate premises risk assessments are up to date and reviewed every two weeks. Fire lists are available in residential blocks with details of all students, staff and group leaders housed in the block. Fire drills are held within 48 hours of any new arrivals.

W2 A dedicated welfare team, headed by a head of pastoral care (HPC), ensures that all students receive excellent care. Pastoral care is also seen as the duty of every member of Ardmore staff. Individual students, who do not have the support of group leaders, are the responsibility of the HPC who appoints a member of the welfare team to hold a daily meeting with each individual. A record of each meeting is kept. Provision for religious observance is available on request.

W3 The school has a clearly labelled photograph of all staff, including the HPC and welfare staff. These staff are identified at induction and wear white T-shirts – the Ardmore welfare colour. This colour theme is echoed in the school's prominent *Welfare in White* posters, which provide clear details of the welfare provision. Students are given welcome packs while individual students and group leaders receive a welcome letter, all giving details of the staff who provide pastoral support.

W4 Policies and procedures are made known to staff, students and group leaders through clearly written handbooks. Rules and regulations for students are written in accessible language, while an additional section on 'what is expected of you' gives guidelines on acceptable behaviour. Ardmore has engaged well with the issues related to the Prevent strategy. A clear strategy is in place and key staff have received appropriate training. The online training which all staff complete includes a section on Prevent and each centre displays *Core British Values* posters.

W5 The Ardmore emergency number is on the wristbands and student identity cards carried in lanyards which all students wear. In addition, at induction, students are told to write the school's emergency number on their ID card.

W6 Effective and appropriate arrangements are made for the arrivals and departures of both groups and individuals. These arrangements are the responsibility of the Ardmore transport team. The team members are present at airports and train stations on arrival and departure days.

W7 The student handbook gives appropriate information with additional information provided at induction.

Accommodation profile

Comments on the accommodation seen by the inspectors

Most students stay in eight residential blocks, four of which are used year round by Ardmore students. The other blocks are only used by Ardmore in the summer. One inspector visited one of the year-round blocks and one of the summer-only blocks. A number of students stay in homestays. At the time of the inspection, 24 students were in homestays. At peak, earlier in the year, there were 75 students in homestays. The homestays are organised by a local organiser (LO) and her two assistants. One inspector interviewed the LO then visited two homestays with her.

Accommodation: all types

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
W9 Services and facilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
W10 Accommodation inspected first	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
W11 Accommodation re-inspected	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
W12 Accommodation registers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
W13 Information in advance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
W14 Student feedback	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
W15 Meals in homestay/residences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments

W9 The two homestays visited offered an acceptable standard of accommodation. The residences in use at the time of the inspection had multi-occupancy rooms, with between two and five students to a room. Towels are not provided but this is clearly stated in publicity. Group leaders and staff have bedrooms in each block. A number of bedrooms were overcrowded, with single rooms having been converted into triples by the addition of a double bunk bed. As a result of this, bathroom and toilet provision was barely sufficient for the number of students in some

blocks.

W10 Ardmore head office provides a comprehensive pro-forma for the LO to use to record information, but this is not used by the LO and her assistants on a regular basis. Hosts were unaware of the need to have fire risk assessments.

W11 Regular re-inspections take place but there is no record of fire risk assessments (see W10).

W12 There is no record that fire risk assessments are in place.

W14 Students know that they should contact the HPC, their group leader (or the individual student's welfare contact) with any problems with their accommodation. They complete an initial feedback form, which includes questions about accommodation. Feedback on accommodation is dealt with promptly but this feedback is not automatically passed on to the LO.

W15 The inspectors had lunch at the centre and found both the quality of food and the choice offered to be reasonable. Homestay students commented positively on the food they received in their homestays.

Accommodation: homestay

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
W16 No more than four students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/a	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
W17 Rules, terms and conditions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
W18 Shared bedrooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/a	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
W19 Students' first language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/a	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
W20 Language of communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/a	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
W21 Adult to welcome	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/a	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments

W17 One homestay host did not have a copy of the terms and conditions relating to hosting.

W18 The group in homestays at the time of the inspection had specifically asked for there to be up to four students in a room.

W19 The group had provided written consent for students with the same first language to be lodged in the same home.

Accommodation: residential

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
W22 Cleaning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
W23 Health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments

W22 Good arrangements for cleaning bedrooms and public spaces are in place, with daily clearing of rubbish and cleaning of public spaces and regular cleaning of rooms. However, one shower inspected had mould round its tray.

Accommodation: other

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
W24 Information and support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
W25 Other accommodation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/a	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Comments

None.

Leisure opportunities

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
W26 Information and access	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
W27 Leisure programmes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
W28 Health and safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

W29 Responsible person	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments					
W26 Students have access to a range of social, sporting and cultural events through the three-choice afternoon activities programme, the evening entertainments and the weekly half-day and full-day excursions.					
W27 Activities, evening entertainments and the half-day and full-day excursions are well organised and carefully planned. The head of sports and activities (HSA) helps activity leaders (ALs) to plan sessions, with the support of a very useful activities handbook. The handbook includes session plans. The HSA checks ALs' plans daily and observes each AL at least once during their employment.					
W28 Risk assessments are drawn up for all activities. Some of these are generic and some specific. They are reviewed every two weeks and occasionally modified. There is a risk assessment for unsupervised time and very clear guidelines about what students may do in free time on excursions. No student aged 12 or under is allowed free time on excursions without a member of Ardmore staff or a group leader.					
W29 All academy sports – tennis, horse-riding and golf – are led by appropriately qualified coaches. Risk assessments for all of these activities are written by Ardmore staff.					

Welfare and student services summary

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The needs of students for pastoral care and security are very well met, with excellent provision for students' personal welfare. Students are given useful information about the excursions they go on. The leisure programme is generally very well organised and staffed. Accommodation is usually appropriate, but, in some cases, bedrooms are overcrowded with a resulting shortage of bathroom facilities. Homestay accommodation systems are not always effective but the homestays visited were of an acceptable standard. There is a need for improvement in *Accommodation*. *Care of students* and *Leisure opportunities* are areas of strength.

Care of under 18s

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
C1 Safeguarding policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C2 Guidance and training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C3 Publicity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C4 Recruitment procedures	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/a	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C5 Safety and supervision during scheduled lessons and activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C6 Safety and supervision outside scheduled lessons and activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C7 Accommodation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C8 Contact arrangements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/a	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments

Nearly all students attending courses at BCA are under 18. When two 18 year-old students arrived as part of a group, they were accommodated separately and were both taught and took part in activities only within their group.

C1 The school's safeguarding policy has been written with the help of expert guidance and is comprehensive, appropriate and accessible. The job descriptions for named safeguarding leads include their safeguarding roles. The policy includes clear safer recruitment guidelines, with guidance on dealing with delayed DBS clearance, and relevant practical documents such as codes of conduct and incident reporting documentation.

C2 The policy – sometimes in a simplified form – is available to all staff, group leaders and homestay hosts through handbooks or staff portals. Staff also encounter the policy at induction, in the excellent online training that all new staff complete and at senior management training events. All staff complete basic awareness training; senior centre managers (course directors, HPCs and HSAs) complete advanced training; and the three safeguarding leads have completed advanced training. A clear, informative poster detailing key safeguarding points is on display.

C3 Although publicity makes reference to different aspects of the level of care and support given to students under 18, the information is scattered and incomplete. The safeguarding policy is available on the Ardmore website.

C4 Homestay hosts are recruited by a local organiser. Although recruitment procedures are mostly in line with safer recruitment best practice and with the school's safeguarding policy, checks that all adults in homestays who are over 18 have DBS clearance are inadequate. Two members of a homestay visited did not have DBS clearance. Ardmore's safeguarding policy states that newly appointed staff awaiting DBS clearance must be paired with a

member of staff with clearance, and must always teach with the classroom door open. No evidence was seen that these measures were being taken.

C5 Nearly all aspects of this criterion are met. There is a clear and appropriate supervision policy. Staff are well trained to provide appropriate supervision during scheduled lessons and activities, with suitable staff to student ratios maintained at all times, and good systems in place to monitor students at breaks and during mealtimes. Group leaders usually take responsibility only for their own students but, in one case, a group leader was given responsibility for supervising an individual student as well as his own group as they travelled to and from the school from their homestays. Registers and head counts are carried out at regular intervals throughout the day. When over 18s were present, appropriate measures were taken to keep them apart from other students, including teaching them and providing activities and excursions for them only with other students from the group they travelled with. All students have a programme that occupies them at nearly all times of day.

C6 Rules about what students may and may not do in unsupervised free time are made very clear, both at induction and throughout their stay. These rules are made known to group leaders and students but the school does not ensure that all homestay hosts know the rules.

C7 The school is responsible for providing all accommodation, whether residential or homestay, and all meals. A responsible adult is always present overnight and, on the rare occasion that students aged 18 or over were present, these students were not lodged in accommodation with under 18s. The ratio of supervising staff to students was always appropriate.

C8 Parents, agents, group leaders and students all have the Ardmore emergency number. Group leaders and agents hold details of parents' and guardians' contact details which head office can access at any time. These details are also collected from students as part of the placement procedure.

Care of under 18s summary

The provision meets the section standard. There is appropriate provision for the safeguarding of students under 18, with a comprehensive and accessible policy and good provision for the care and safety of students during activities and on excursions, as well as in accommodation. However, measures to ensure staff who are awaiting DBS clearance are not put in positions of risk are not always strictly adhered to, and not all adult members of homestay households have DBS clearance.
