## Background

### Organisation profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inspection history</th>
<th>Dates/details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First inspection</td>
<td>BOSS - 2012 (Buckswood School 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last full inspection</td>
<td>30 - 31 July 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsequent spot check (if applicable)</td>
<td>N/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsequent supplementary check (if applicable)</td>
<td>N/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsequent interim visit (if applicable)</td>
<td>N/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Other related schools / centres / affiliates

- Buckswood School

### Other related non-accredited activities (in brief) at this centre

- Buckswood St Georges, Hastings
- Buckswood International School, Georgia
- Buckswood School Nigeria
- Buckswood School Hong Kong

## Current accreditation status and reason for spot check

- **Current accredited status**: Accredited
- **Reason for spot check**: Routine: newly accredited institution

## Premises profile

- **Address of main site**: Rye Road, Guestling, East Sussex TN35 4LT
- **Details of any additional sites in use at the time of the inspection**: None
- **Details of any additional sites not in use at the time of the inspection**: None
- **Sites inspected**: Rye Road, Guestling, East Sussex TN35 4LT

## Student and staff profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>At inspection</th>
<th>In peak week (please give month)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typical age range</td>
<td>9 to 17</td>
<td>9 to 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typical length of stay</td>
<td>3 weeks</td>
<td>3 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predominant nationalities</td>
<td>French, Italian, Spanish, Russian</td>
<td>French, Italian, Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of administrative/ancillary staff</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

Background

BOSS is under the same ownership as Buckswood School, an independent school situated in an attractive rural location about five miles from Hastings. It occupies a 40-acre site centred around the original school house. A large number of additional buildings have been constructed since the school moved to this site in 2001, including classroom blocks and residential houses. BOSS operates on a separate basis with its own staff, management and administration, although a small number of Buckswood School staff may work on the summer course.

The main school was first accredited in 2000 for its EFL programme, (approximately half its students are international), and was last re-inspected in 2011. It has a number of overseas affiliates and links and this was instrumental in facilitating the recruitment of students for the summer school. BOSS was established in 2011 and a summer school director was appointed in September of that year with the remit of setting up and running vacation courses in the Easter and summer periods. The first courses were run in 2012 at Easter, and in July and August. BOSS applied for accreditation as an extension organisation with the related spot check taking place in July 2012. Subsequently separate accreditation was applied for and a full inspection took place in July 2013.

The July 2014 spot check was part of the routine follow-up to full accreditation being granted in 2013.

Preparation

An inspector, who had not been part of the original 2013 inspection team, was sent relevant reports and documentation by the Accreditation Unit to prepare for the spot check. The summer school director was contacted in June to establish if there would be any dates during the summer when key staff or students would not be on site. Based on this information, a date was selected for the visit.

Programme and persons present

The inspector arrived at 0945 and departed at 1400. He was already familiar with the site having been part of the 2011 inspection of the main school. There were meetings with the summer school director and the director of studies (DoS). There were focus groups with the teachers, the students and a recently arrived group leader. Two teaching segments were observed and staff documentation and other files were examined. The inspector provided a short summary of his findings before departing.

FINDINGS

All three focus groups reported very positively about their experience of being at the school. The teaching observed was satisfactory with some good elements. Since 2013 two significant staffing changes had also improved the quality of the course being offered. All boarding houses now have a permanent house tutor who takes on the main pastoral and welfare role within each house. Teachers reported that this had taken some pressure off them and the new system appeared to be working well. In addition, the appointment of a non-teaching senior teacher had provided the DoS with additional administrative help. This had released more time to provide appropriate support to the teachers. Finally another new initiative in 2014 was that all staff received first aid training.
POINTS TO BE ADDRESSED

Points which must be addressed within 12 months
M15 One student was in consistent breach of the rules and arrangements for following up his absence were ineffective. 

Rules and procedures for students who are persistently absent are now being followed more strictly. (The BOSS director had reported the exceptional circumstances and special needs of this particular student to the Accreditation Unit in some detail after receiving the 2013 inspection report.)

Other points to be addressed

Management
M1 The appropriate CLA notice was not on display by the photocopier used by the teachers; sources of photocopies were not always acknowledged; the weekly fire drills are not recorded in sufficient detail, the number of students present and the evacuation times are not recorded.

These points have now been fully addressed.
M2 The role of the operations manager was not described in the revised organogram sent to the inspectors and the role of the BS academic director, who gave academic support to the BOSS DoS at the start of the courses was not documented.

The role of the operations manager is now described in the organogram. It was explained that the Buckswood School academic director had in fact not provided any academic support to the BOSS director of studies in 2013 and for this reason, nothing had been documented.

M3 Job descriptions were provided for the summer school staff, with the exception of the summer school director, although an organogram, specifying individual roles, was drawn up before the inspection. The summer school director is responsible for the overall management of the school, recruiting summer school staff and for marketing and PR. The job description of the centre manager states that he, too, has overall management of the centre whereas this responsibility was not noted on the organogram. Whilst it was clear that both post-holders were fulfilling this role responsibly and effectively, there is a need for the duties of staff to be specified more clearly.

The post of centre manager no longer exists and the former centre manager has a new job title as the activities director. The summer school director now operates as the manager overall in charge of the provision and the DoS and activities director report directly to him. This is reflected in the new job descriptions.

M6 Documentation in relation to this criterion states, inaccurately, that ‘All senior staff CRB disclosures will be sent to the British Council for processing on behalf of Buckswood Overseas Summer School’.

References to such a procedure have now been removed from all documentation.
M23 Publicity states that there is ‘access to a fully-stocked library’, which was locked and unavailable to BOSS students during the course; ‘British students attend some activities’, which was not the case; the ‘Slice of Britain’ classes include ‘involvement and interaction with British people from the local area’, which did not happen. The agent’s manual states incorrectly, and misleadingly, that the school is ‘a stone’s throw from London’.

All these inaccuracies have now been removed from publicity.
M25 Publicity states that the minimum enrolment age is 10. Some students aged eight and nine were enrolled on courses. The publicised maximum class size is 15. Two of the lessons observed had 16 students, with an age range from nine to 16.

The age range in the publicity is now described as between eight and 17. No exceptions to these age limits were seen during the spot check.

M28 Publicity describes seven lodges that provide ‘beautiful views of the surrounding countryside’. This description was inaccurate in relation to Kipling and Milne House.

This description has been removed from all publicity.
M29 The ‘BOSS jamboree with invites to the local community’ did not take place.

This event no longer takes place because of a poor local response to invitations.
M30 The statement on the website that ‘all our teachers are CELTA or Trinity…no other teacher qualifications are better than these’ is inaccurate. The statement that the academy classes are taught by ‘fully qualified teachers’ is not true of all teaching staff.

There were still some inaccuracies which were noted on the school’s website concerning the description of teachers. They were removed immediately after the spot check.

Resources and environment
R6 Teachers have the use of a teachers’ room, with work space which is only just adequate. Teaching resources are also stored in this room and teachers at the focus group said that the space they had been allocated was cramped, particularly during the peak weeks when 12 teachers are employed.

A new teachers’ room has been created and teachers reported that it was very satisfactory. The teachers’
focus group meeting took place in the staff room and it provides a comfortable and professional environment.  
R11 The well-stocked BS library, described in publicity, is locked for the duration of the summer courses. The library is no longer described in the publicity.

Teaching and learning  
T6 Teachers' original qualifications had not been signed or dated by the SSD. The photocopies of all teacher qualifications sampled had been signed and dated by the summer school director. However, one teacher had been employed with a TEFL qualification that does not meet the Scheme requirements.  
T15 Written course descriptions have not been made available to students. Students' are informed that the written scheme of work for each week is fixed to the classroom door. This was noted during lesson observations.  
T25 Lesson templates did not include any reference to learner outcomes.  
No lesson plans were seen. However, the overall assessment grid on front of the lesson observation template had reference to 'learner outcomes' as one of the criteria which would be evaluated. Several completed lesson observations from July 2014 were seen on file.  
T27 In most lesson segments there was insufficient focus on pronunciation work and in some of the weaker segments nomination was poor.  
Pronunciation work is also a criterion which is evaluated during lesson observations. Some appropriate nomination was seen during lesson observations.  
T28 Some teachers would benefit from training in the use of different areas of the board for different purposes, for example vocabulary.  
This was still the case in the two segments observed. However, the academic management is planning to include a policy on white board use for the teachers' handbook.  
T29 There were one or two examples of incorrect explanation of meaning and very fast spoken delivery in one low level class.  
This was not seen during the two segments observed.  
T30 Opportunities for correction were often missed, especially in terms of pronunciation.  
Pronunciation errors were still sometimes being inappropriately overlooked.  
T31 In a few classes early finishers were not catered for and there was too much use of students’ L1 without sufficient challenge from the teacher.  
These aspects of classroom management and differentiated teaching featured in the teachers’ induction and in the weekly in-service training sessions.

CONCLUSIONS  
Based on the evidence gathered during the spot check it is clear that BOSS has made a considerable number of improvements to address many of the points noted in the 2013 inspection. In addition, the introduction of the posts of senior teacher and house tutor shows that the school continues to review its staffing structure with the aim of improving the services that it offers.

RECOMMENDATION  
The next inspection falls due in 2017; there are no grounds for bringing this forward.

PUBLISHABLE STATEMENT  
Changes to publishable statement  
No changes need to be made to the publishable statement.
Publishable statement

The British Council inspected and accredited Buckswood Overseas Summer Schools in July 2013. 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/accreditation for details).

This small private language school offers residential vacation courses in general English for under-18s.

Strengths were noted in the areas of care of students and leisure opportunities.

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

Points to be addressed outstanding from the previous inspection(s) or arising from this visit

None.