

Organisation name	British Study Centres Brighton
Inspection date	14 March 2016

BACKGROUND

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	2003
Last full inspection	August 2015
Subsequent spot check (if applicable)	N/a
Subsequent supplementary check (if applicable)	N/a
Subsequent interim visit (if applicable)	N/a
Other related non-accredited activities (in brief) at this centre	N/a
Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates	British Study Centres in Oxford and London
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	Junior vacation courses at five centres in southern England; courses in digital design, web design and e-business at Hove College (premises partly shared with BSC Brighton)

Current accreditation status and reason for spot check

Current accredited status	Accredited
Reason for spot check	Signalled: monitor effect of change of provision and director

Premises profile

Address of main site	47–48 Cromwell Road, Hove, East Sussex BN3 3ER
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
Sites inspected	<p>British Study Centres (BSC), Brighton, is based at 47 Cromwell Road in a large Victorian property close to the centre of Hove. On the ground floor there are offices, a study centre, a teachers' room, a classroom and a school shop, where the activities staff are based. At the rear there is a large café and student lounge leading out into a garden with additional seating and a covered smoking area. In the basement and on the first and second floors there are fourteen classrooms, two of which are equipped with computers.</p> <p>Hove College operates from the adjacent property, 48 Cromwell Road. There are offices and eight classrooms. Three of these classrooms are available to BSC year round and six are used by BSC in the summer when Hove College students are on vacation. The garden has a summer house with comfortable seating and is linked to the larger garden next door.</p>

Student and staff profile

	At inspection	In peak week July
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	94	280
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	12	16
Typical age range	21–25	18–25

Typical length of stay	6 weeks	4 weeks
Predominant nationalities	Japanese, Italian, Swiss	Italian, Swiss, Spanish
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	9	25
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	8	

INTRODUCTION

Background

British Study Centres, Brighton, belongs to the British Study Centres group, which also runs accredited schools in Oxford and London.

At the time of the last inspection, the school offered general English and examination preparation courses for adults (16+) on a full- and part-time basis, and development courses for overseas teachers. In February the school director notified the Accreditation Unit that a closed group of Spanish schoolchildren were enrolled for a week's course in March. The school was informed that the Unit reserved the right to spot check the new course. A brief schedule of the closed group course was forwarded to the Unit.

The school director at this time informed the Unit that he was leaving the school and a new director would be taking up the post at the beginning of March.

The focus of the spot check was to check the provision for the closed group of under 18s and the change of school director.

Preparation

The inspector was sent documentation, including the course schedule and the safeguarding policy. No contact was made with the school prior to the visit.

Programme and persons present

The inspector arrived on the second day of the closed-group course at 9.15 and left at 13.15. Meetings were held with the school director (SD), the academic director (AD), the operations manager, the accommodation and welfare manager, who is also the designated safeguarding person (DSP), the course manager who will be taking over the DSP role, the social programme organiser and the group leader. The closed-group class was taught by two teachers and the inspector spent 10 minutes observing each teacher. Documentation was checked.

FINDINGS

The closed group of 12 students accompanied by their teacher were aged from 12 to 15. The programme consisted of 20 x 50-minute lessons from Monday to Thursday. There were three planned afternoon activities accompanied by school staff. A full day London excursion had been arranged by the school with a tour company. This and one other afternoon activity were not accompanied by school staff. The students were accommodated in homestays arranged by the school.

Management

The new SD took up the post at the beginning of March and had two weeks' handover with the outgoing director. He started working with British Study Centres (BSC) ten years ago as a teacher and then became AD in the Brighton school. He subsequently moved to the Bournemouth school where he was responsible for developing e-learning and overseeing the student management system. He is therefore very familiar with both the academic and administrative systems and procedures both within the school and also within the BSC group. This and the handover period have ensured continuity in the management of the school. The SD receives ongoing support from the directors at the other schools.

Teaching and learning

The students had all completed a placement test before their arrival so that the two teachers were aware of the mixed levels and ages in the class. One of the teachers was diploma qualified and the other had a PGCE in primary education as well as an ELT qualification. The course focused on functional language and communication skills and was based on practical themes and also on the afternoon activities and excursions. The teachers chose and adapted resources and materials from the existing stock and the students were given photocopies and a learning diary. However, the learning diary is designed for adult students on longer courses and not for junior students on a short course. Students had nowhere to store the worksheets and photocopies handed out to them.

The lessons were planned before the students arrived and were adapted according to the needs of the class. The

teachers demonstrated a variety of appropriate techniques and good classroom management skills. Despite it being only the second day of lessons, rapport between the teachers and students was good. The students were engaged and enjoying a positive learning atmosphere.

Welfare and student services

Students attending these classes are required to sign in at reception and to wear lanyards. These students and FE students attending classes in the adjoining Hove College share the cafeteria with BSC students. The class for the closed group was located in a classroom with an adjoining toilet and additional study room and therefore students did not have to leave this self-contained facility during lesson time. Break times were staggered and the cafeteria was supervised whenever the closed group were there.

Staff have completed online Prevent training and there is a Prevent policy which has been made known to staff and homestays. Risk assessments are being drawn up.

Care of under 18s

There is one safeguarding policy for all the BSC schools. The DSPs are not named and there is no reference to specific schools and associated circumstances and risks. The DSP has received training at specialist level. He was leaving the school at the end of the week and the assistant DSP, who will take over the role, is currently undertaking appropriate training. All staff have completed basic awareness training. Safe recruitment procedures are in place for all staff. The main carers in homestay accommodation have had a suitability check and sign a declaration. The closed group was very closely supervised during lessons and activities and was given clear rules about curfew times which the homestays and group leader were fully aware of and the procedure to follow if students did not keep to it. Some of the activities and excursions were arranged and supervised by the group leader and the school ensured that he was aware of all local risks. The school had provided additional supervision for one of these activities when it was felt to be advisable.

POINTS TO BE ADDRESSED

Points to be addressed from the previous inspection report with comments (in bold) to indicate how far these have been addressed.

Points to be addressed

Management

M7 The induction checklist inaccurately states that a review meeting is held with each new employee after two months.

Addressed. A set time is no longer specified.

Resources and environment

None.

Teaching and learning

The adult classes were not observed during the spot check.

Welfare and student services

W12 Some hosts have not returned their fire risk assessments.

Addressed. All homestay providers are required to submit a fire risk assessment.

Points to be addressed arising from this visit

Resources and environment

R7 The learning diary is designed for adult students on longer courses and not for junior students on a short course. Students had nowhere to store the worksheets and photocopies handed out to them.

Care of under 18s

C1 There is one safeguarding policy for all the BSC schools. The DSPs are not named and there is no reference to specific schools and the associated circumstances and risks.

CONCLUSIONS

The handover to the new SD has been handled effectively and there has been no lack of continuity. The programme for the closed group of under 18s had been well organised and good safeguarding procedures were already in place for under 18s studying on adult courses. These have been reviewed and adapted to suit the needs of the closed group. Risks had been assessed and measures were in place to ensure the safety and well being of the group.

RECOMMENDATION

The next inspection falls due in 2019; there are no grounds for bringing this forward.

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Changes to summary statement

Courses for closed groups of under 18s can be added.

Summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited British Study Centres, Brighton in August 2015. 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 courses in general English for adults (16+).

Strengths were noted in the areas of staff management, quality assurance, premises and facilities, learning resources, academic staff profile, academic management, course design, care of students, leisure opportunities, accommodation, and care of under 18s.

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

Revised summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited British Study Centres, Brighton in August 2015. 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 courses in general English for adults (16+) and for closed groups of under 18s.

Strengths were noted in the areas of staff management, quality assurance, premises and facilities, learning resources, academic staff profile, academic management, course design, care of students, leisure opportunities, accommodation, and care of under 18s.

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