

Organisation name	The Cambridge Centre for Languages (CCL)
Inspection date	14 July 2017

BACKGROUND
Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	2003
Last full inspection	August 2016
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	N/a
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	N/a

Current accreditation status and reason for spot check

Current accredited status	Accredited
Reason for spot check	Signalled: inspect new or additional premises

Premises profile

Address of main site	Cambridge Centre for Languages St Mary's School 47 Bateman Street Cambridge CB2 1LY
Details of any additional sites in use at the time of the inspection	School Administrative Block 4 Brooklands Avenue Cambridge CB2 8BB Chesterton Community College Gilbert Road Cambridge, CB4 3NY
Details of any additional sites not in use at the time of the inspection	Residential accommodation at: St Mary's School Mary Ward House 5 Brooklands Avenue Cambridge CB2 8BB
Sites inspected	Chesterton Community College (CCC) is a mixed state school for students aged 11-16. It is located in a suburban area in the north of Cambridge; the city centre is accessible on foot (a 20 minute walk) or by bus. CCL has exclusive use of two classrooms, an office/staffroom and a snack bar with seating, within the main building of the college.

Student and staff profile	At inspection	In peak week July
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	30	300
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	11	10
Typical age range	11–13	11–17
Typical length of stay	2 weeks	2–3 weeks
Predominant nationalities	Chinese	Chinese
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	6	10
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	22	42

INTRODUCTION

Background

The purpose of this spot check was to inspect the additional premises being used for the first time in 2017.

Cambridge Centre for Languages (CCL) summer school is based in St Mary's School, an independent day and boarding school for girls aged 4–18, located close to the centre of Cambridge. CCL offers English language and activity summer vacation courses for students aged ten to 17. The majority of students come in accompanied groups, often from schools in China.

During July and August, CCL has exclusive use of parts of St Mary's school. Students are accommodated in homestays, most of which are in the south of Cambridge. CCL also has use of some residential accommodation within St Mary's. In 2017, additional residential accommodation is being offered for one week in St Mary's School Mary Ward House, a short walk from the school.

CCL received a request to run a two-week course in early July for a closed group of Chinese students at a time before the premises at St Mary's were available. Arrangements were made to hire additional teaching premises at Chesterton Community College (CCC). It is planned to run courses at the college at times throughout the year with some integration taking place between the CCL students and those at CCC.

Preparation

The inspector contacted the centre director to check on dates when it would be possible to visit the premises at CCC and also to have a meeting with a representative of the host college.

Programme and persons present

The inspector arrived at CCC at 9.30 and left at 11.00. She had meetings with the CCL centre director, the CCL accommodation and welfare officer, and the director of finance and technology at CCC. She spoke to both teachers and to a group of students, and met briefly the principal of CCL who was visiting to see the end of course presentations being given by the students.

FINDINGS

CCL was using the premises during term time, when CCC was in full operation. The college site is very secure with all visitors having to be permitted entry at the gates to the campus whenever students are on site. Staff wear lanyards and visitors have to sign in at reception and provide photographic proof of identity. The area allocated to CCL is clearly defined and they have exclusive use of the classrooms and snack bar. Within their programme there is an opportunity to integrate with CCC pupils during certain lessons.

The closed group of 30 students was divided into two classes. Their programme consists of English lessons and a period each day when they attend a mainstream CCC class. In the afternoons they are taken off-site for activities: for example, visits to places of interest in Cambridge, punting, or sports in one of the parks. In the middle weekend there is a day-long excursion.

During the time of the inspection all students were being accommodated in homestays. Most homestays are in the south of the city, close to St Mary's school, so students have to travel to CCC by bus; passes are provided. The welfare and accommodation manager plans to recruit more homestays in north Cambridge for students attending lessons at CCC. It was not possible to see the new residential accommodation at Mary Ward House as it was not being used by CCL at the time of the inspection. However, it is considered to be equal to, if not higher than, the standard of the residential accommodation offered previously. Entry to the grounds and building is by keypad and CCTV is in operation.

The centre manager, who is also the academic manager, took up his post in February 2017; he was the senior teacher in 2016. The welfare and accommodation manager took up his post in March 2017. Both were based at CCC for the duration of the course; there were no courses being run at St Mary's during this period.

The inspection took place on the last day of the two-week course. CCL staff and the liaison person at CCC felt that the arrangements put in place had worked well. The students expressed satisfaction with their course; their only criticism was the length of the journey from their homestay to the teaching premises.

Premises and facilities

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

Comments

R1 CCL has the use of two classrooms along a short corridor, near the course office/staffroom. The premises are satisfactory in terms of size and number and provide a comfortable environment for staff and students. There are separate staff and student toilets.

R3 The classrooms are large and are furnished to allow flexibility of use. Both are equipped with overhead projectors for use with computers, with access to the internet.

R4 CCL students have exclusive use of a snack bar with seating where they can buy snacks and drinks during their break and eat their packed lunch.

R6 The office is also used by the teachers as a base and a place to store resources and personal belongings.

POINTS TO BE ADDRESSED

Points from the previous full inspection and/or subsequent spot checks or interim visits with comments (in bold) to indicate how far these have been addressed.

Management

M22 Publicity states that students have access to books and DVDs that they can borrow. This is not the case.

Addressed. This claim is no longer made.

M24 The website states that lessons may be in the morning or afternoon, but the brochure does not make this clear.

Not yet addressed. The brochure has not been reprinted.

M28 Staff are described as qualified and experienced. One teacher, at the time of the inspection, had no teaching experience and SAOs were unqualified and some had no previous experience.

Not yet addressed for teachers. No such claim is made for SAO (social activity organisers).

Teaching and learning

T12 The course is designed as a three-week course, but some students stay for a fourth week for which there is no specific guidance for teachers.

Addressed. There is now guidance for teachers.

T14 There was no evidence that students were made aware of the course outline or intended outcomes and only in a few cases were students given an outline of the day's lesson.

Addressed. Students are given a course outline with learning outcomes which are reviewed at the end of the course.

T15 There are no dividers in the folder for students' work and students are not guided in the best way to organise their work.

Addressed. Students' folders contain dividers and those sampled were well organised.

T25 In most cases learning outcomes were not made clear to students.

Addressed. Outcomes are now made clear and reviewed at the end of the course using a template containing 'can do' statements specific to each course.

Welfare and student services

W18 Group leaders sign a 'consent form' which states that more than two students may be accommodated in the same bedroom. The statement is not formulated as a specific request and does not indicate the maximum number of students permitted.

Partially addressed. The wording on the form has been changed but there is some confusion about the number of students permitted in a room (three) and permitted in a homestay (four).

W13 The average time of travel between the accommodation and the school is not included in information sent to students.

Addressed.

Care of under 18s

C8 Some emergency numbers are obtained when students arrive at the school rather than before they travel.
Partially addressed. It is the school policy to obtain this information in advance, and most agents supply the contact details before arrival. Information for individually booked students is always obtained.

Points to be addressed arising from this visit

M22 The website suggests that CCL students have greater access to the facilities of CCC than was the case at the time of the inspection.

CONCLUSIONS

The premises and resources at Chesterton Community College are suitable for the use made of them by Cambridge Centre for Languages. They provide a secure learning environment for students and an appropriate professional environment for staff. A number of points noted in the August 2016 inspection report have been addressed.

RECOMMENDATION

The next inspection falls due in 2020; there are no grounds for bringing this forward.

SUMMARY STATEMENT**Changes to summary statement**

No changes need to be made to the summary statement.

Summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited Cambridge Centre for languages in August 2016. 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 closed groups of under 18s and vacation courses for under 18s.

The inspection report noted a need for improvement in the area of accommodation.

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

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