Organisation name | Echo Language School, Hove
---|---
Inspection date | 8 July 2019
Current accreditation status | Accredited
Reason for spot check | Routine: newly accredited institution

**Recommendation**

We recommend continued accreditation. The next inspection falls due in 2022; there are no grounds for bringing this forward. However, evidence must be submitted within three months to demonstrate that weaknesses in S1 have been addressed.

**Changes to the summary statement**

No changes need to be made to the summary statement, apart from adding the date of this inspection.

**New summary statement**

The British Council inspected and accredited Echo Language School, Hove in August 2018 and July 2019. The Accreditation Scheme assesses the standards of management, resources and premises, teaching, welfare, and safeguarding 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 vacation courses in general English for under 18s (12–17). Strengths were noted in the areas of premises and facilities, care of students and leisure opportunities.

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

**New summary inspection findings**

**Management**

The provision meets the section standard. Strategic and quality management is generally effective. The management structure is clear and there are very effective lines of communication. Quality assurance systems ensure that student and staff feedback inform decisions about future provision. Staff monitoring is carried out efficiently and in-house continuing professional development opportunities are available for all staff. Student administration is carried out sensitively and efficiently. Overall, publicity material is clear and accurate.

**Premises and resources**

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The premises are well maintained and provide a very pleasant and comfortable environment for staff and students. The meals provided are of a very high standard. Teaching and learning resources are adequate and appropriate for the number of students. Premises and facilities is an area of strength.

**Teaching and learning**

The provision meets the section standard. The academic staff profile is satisfactory. Academic management is carried out efficiently and course design takes into account the needs of students. Teachers are very well supported and their performance is carefully monitored. Overall, programmes of learning are well managed to the benefit of students. The teaching observed met the requirements of the Scheme.

**Welfare and student services**

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The needs of students for security, pastoral care, information and leisure opportunities are met. Students are offered a very good level of care from staff who are sensitive to and able to respond quickly to their needs both inside and outside the school environment. The accommodation is of a good standard. The leisure programme offers a good range of activities and the programme is well organised and resourced. Care of students and Leisure opportunities are areas of strength.

**Safeguarding under 18s**

The provision meets the section standard. Care of the young students is given high priority in the school. Systems
and procedures are in place to ensure the safeguarding of the students throughout their stay. Staff are appropriately trained. Suitability checks are carried out and all aspects of safer recruitment are carried out with diligence. However, regular review of the safeguarding policy is needed.

Organisation profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inspection history</th>
<th>Dates/details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First inspection</td>
<td>August 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last full inspection</td>
<td>August 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsequent spot check(s) (if applicable)</td>
<td>N/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsequent supplementary check(s) (if applicable)</td>
<td>N/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsequent interim visit(s) (if applicable)</td>
<td>N/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other related non-accredited activities (in brief) at this centre</td>
<td>N/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates</td>
<td>N/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates</td>
<td>N/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student and staff profile</th>
<th>At inspection</th>
<th>In peak week: July</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typical age range</td>
<td>14–16</td>
<td>14–16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typical length of stay</td>
<td>2–3 weeks</td>
<td>2–3 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predominant nationalities</td>
<td>German, Italian</td>
<td>German, Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of managers including academic</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of administrative/ancillary staff</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Premises profile</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address of main site</td>
<td>168 Church Road, Hove BN3 2DL (correspondence only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional sites in use</td>
<td>Sefton Place, Warningcamp, Arundel, Sussex BN18 8QY (teaching site)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional sites not in use</td>
<td>N/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sites inspected</td>
<td>The summer school is held in Sefton Place, a Victorian country house with a garden. On the ground floor, there are three rooms/areas where lessons take place, a teachers’ resource area, a dining room, a kitchen, two toilets, and two bedrooms. At the time of the spot check, one of these bedrooms was occupied by the director of studies (DoS), and the other was being used as an office. The academic manager/centre manager has an office area on the first floor, where there are nine further bedrooms. The premises have been rented annually for the last few years on a rolling contract.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Introduction

Background
This was a routine spot check following accreditation.

Preparation
The inspector was sent Stage 1 documents well in advance of the spot check. These included the full report from the previous inspection and the provider’s action plan based on the points to be addressed from the last inspection. The provider’s website was viewed immediately before the spot check visit.

Programme and persons present
The inspector arrived at 9.00 and left at 14.30. He had meetings with the two directors, one of whom is the academic manager/centre manager and the other the catering/housekeeping manager, and the DoS, observed both teachers teaching on the morning of the spot check, and held a focus group meeting with a small group of students. He also examined a number of documents, including the organisation plan, student and teacher handbooks, student feedback, minutes of meetings, and the action plan.
Findings

Management: publicity
M28 A video recording on the website describes teachers as qualified and experienced. This is not an accurate description of all teachers employed at the time of the inspection.

Welfare and student services: care of students
W1 The Gas Safe certificate for the premises was out of date. A valid certificate was supplied by the owner shortly after the spot check, and this is no longer a point to be addressed.

Safeguarding under 18s
S1 The safeguarding policy on the website has not been reviewed in the last year. Although a later version exists, it has also not been reviewed in the last year.

Other findings are reported in the Action taken on points to be addressed.

Action taken on 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 Some pictures are not captioned and the use of ‘mansion’ and ‘magnificent veranda’ to describe the premises is misleading.
Addressed. The language has been amended and the uncaptioned pictures removed.

Premises and resources
P12 There is no formal policy for the review of resources.
Partly addressed. The action plan sets out the basis for a policy, but this has not yet been formulated as a policy.

Teaching and learning
T12 There is no evidence of formal planning and review with regard to course design.
Partly addressed. The action plan indicates the approach to be adopted to course review, but the review itself will take place at the end of the summer season. Some work has been undertaken on course design, and this is reflected in amendments to the teacher handbook; however, this work is still in progress.
T15 The syllabus does not systematically include study and learning strategies.
Addressed.
T25 Some lesson plans failed to focus on learner outcomes.
Partly addressed. The lesson plans seen included statements of ‘learning outcomes’, but these were sometimes student activities rather than outcomes.
T26 Insufficient attention was paid to practising the target language and teachers did not always have useful strategies for presenting new vocabulary.
Addressed. Language practice was a focus of the lessons seen, and teachers used varied and appropriate techniques for presenting and clarifying the meaning of new vocabulary.
T28 There was little correction of pronunciation or grammar when it would have been appropriate.
Partly addressed. Although there was some corrective feedback, opportunities for feedback on pronunciation and grammar were also missed.

Conclusions
The provision continues to meet the standards of the Scheme. There is evidence of effort to deal with the points to be addressed, but further work is needed to address all of these fully.