Inspection report

Organisation name	Hilderstone College, Broadstairs
Inspection date	18–20 April 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 *Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance*.	☒	☐
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.	☒	☐
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.	☒	☐
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.	☒	☐

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.	☐	☒	☐

Recommendation

We recommend continued accreditation. However, documentary evidence must be submitted within three months to demonstrate that weaknesses in C6 have been addressed.

Summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited Hilderstone College in April 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 specialist college of further education offers courses in general/academic/professional English for adults (16+) and for closed groups of adults (16+).

Strengths were noted in the areas of student administration, quality assurance, learning resources, academic staff profile, course design, learner management, teaching, care of students, accommodation, and leisure opportunities.

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

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	1989
Last full inspection	October 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	Kent County Council Adult Education classes
Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates	N/a
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	N/a

State sector

Type of institution	FE EFL College
Other accreditation/inspection	N/a

Premises profile

Address of main site	14–16 St Peter's Road, Broadstairs CT10 2JW
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	10 St Peter's Road, Broadstairs CT10 2JW (four classrooms).
Profile of sites visited	The college is located in a residential area of Broadstairs, close to the railway station and 15 minutes' walk from the town centre and seafront. Its premises, all of which are owned by the college, consist of four detached three-storey Victorian houses. Three of these are linked, with the fourth, known as House 10, separated from the main site by a privately owned house.

The main premises comprise a reception area, a common room with a snack bar which provides meals as well as snacks, a lower common room in the basement, 14 classrooms, the multimedia resources and learning centre (MMLC), a staffroom, a staff workroom, the academic managers' office, the principal's office, and further offices for student services, marketing and accommodation. There is also a small room which can be used for private interviews or as a rest room for students who feel unwell. To the rear of the premises is a garden with seating and a fully equipped community theatre. Regular use is made of the theatre. Students also have access to a pottery.

Broadstairs Adult Education Centre is also located in 14–16 St Peter's Road. The centre has a reception area on the ground floor of the college and shares communal areas and facilities, as well as a number of classrooms.

House 10, which is used at peak times and normally only for groups, has been recently refurbished. It contains a prayer room and six further rooms over three floors. Four of the rooms are equipped as classrooms, with the other two rooms serving as relaxation areas for students. The garden to the rear of the property is sometimes used for outdoor events, such as summer barbecues. |

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	53	99
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) aged 16–17 years	7	11
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) aged under 16	N/a	N/a
Part-time ELT aged 18 years and over	N/a	N/a
Part-time ELT aged 16–17 years	N/a	N/a
Part-time ELT aged under 16 years	N/a	N/a
Overall total ELT/ESOL students shown above	**60**	**110**
Advertised minimum age	16	16
Actual minimum age	17	16
Advertised maximum age	N/a	N/a
Actual maximum age	18+	18+
Typical age range	18–22	16–45
Typical length of stay	5 weeks	3 weeks
Predominant nationalities	Swiss, Emirati, Thai, Turkish	German, Emirati, Italian
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	27	50

Staff profile	At inspection	In peak week (organisation's estimate)
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	12	18
Number teaching ELT 20 hours and over a week	10	
Number teaching ELT 10–19 hours a week	2	
Number teaching ELT under 10 hours a week	0	
Number of academic managers for eligible ELT courses	2	2
Number of management (non-academic) and administrative staff working on eligible ELT courses	10	
Total number of support staff	3	

Academic manager qualifications profile

Profile at inspection	
Professional qualifications	Number of academic managers
TEFLQ qualification	2
Academic managers without TEFLQ qualification or 3 years relevant experience (NB Rationales need to be prepared for academic managers in this category)	N/a
Total	2
Comments	

The academic managers - the director of studies (DoS) and deputy director of studies (DDoS) - cover teacher absences but do not have a regular class teaching timetable. However, in the week of the inspection, the DDoS taught a class on one afternoon (three hours) and on the same afternoon the DoS was one of two teachers supervising and advising students from two classes who were working in the MMLC. The principal, who is not included here as an academic manager, is a former DoS of the college and also TEFLQ.

Teacher qualifications profile

Profile in week of inspection	
Professional qualifications	Number of teachers
TEFLQ qualification	10
TEFLI qualification	2
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)	0
Total	12
Comments	
Several teachers hold relevant postgraduate qualifications.	

Course profile

Eligible activities	Year round		Vacation		Other - N/a	
	Run	Seen	Run	Seen	Run	Seen
General ELT for adults	☒	☒	☒	☐	☐	☐
General ELT for juniors (under 18)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
English for academic purposes (excludes IELTS preparation)	☒	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
English for specific purposes (includes English for Executives)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Teacher development (excludes award-bearing courses)	☒	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
ESOL skills for life/for citizenship	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Comments
(a) 16–17 year-olds are enrolled on adult courses. (b) General ELT courses account for 75 per cent of courses, University Students and Teacher Development courses 20 per cent. (c) One-to-one and combination courses approximately ten student weeks per year. (d) Junior courses for the age range 14–16 years (minimum age 13 if in same year group as 14 year-olds) are being promoted but have not yet run; the student profile above, therefore, reflects the current situation.

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	51	7
Private home	N/a	N/a
Home tuition	N/a	N/a
Residential	N/a	N/a
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	2	0
Overall totals adults/under 18s	53	7
Overall total adults + under 18s	60	

Introduction

Hilderstone College was established in 1970 as part of the Kent County Council adult education service in Broadstairs with a brief to run cost-recoverable English language courses for overseas students. Teacher training courses were added in 1972, and pre-university induction courses in 1976. In 1993 Hilderstone College separated from Kent County Council and was incorporated as a specialist independent further education college. It has statutory charitable status and continues to run non-profit English language and teacher development courses. As the college receives no public funding, it is not required to undergo inspection by a public agency. However, it has its own board of governors and is regulated by the Department for Education.

The college offers year-round courses in general English and general English with business English, courses leading to general English external examinations, pre-university courses, bespoke English courses for closed groups, one-to-one teaching, and teacher development courses (bespoke and open), which focus on both language development and classroom methodology.

Courses of all these types other than teacher development were running in the week of the inspection. A two-week closed-group course for vocational students from Switzerland was in its final week.

There are plans to offer courses for teenagers aged 14–17 and for over 50s.

The inspection took place over three days. Inspectors held meetings with the principal, the DoS and DDoS, the head of finance and administration, the head of marketing, the academic administrator and staff who will replace her during maternity leave, the accommodation and welfare officer, and the social activities organiser. Focus groups were held with students and teachers, and 16 observations were carried out. One inspector visited three homestays.

Management

Legal and statutory regulations

Criteria	See comments
M1 Declaration of compliance	☒

Comments
M1 The items sampled were satisfactory.

Staff management

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
M2 Management structure	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐
M3 Duties specified	☐	☒	N/a	☐	
M4 Communication channels	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐
M5 Human resources policies	☒	☐	☐	☒	
M6 Qualifications verified	☒	☐	N/a	☒	☐
M7 Induction procedures	☐	☒	☒	☒	
M8 Monitoring staff performance	☒	☐	☐	☒	
M9 Professional development	☐	☒	☒	☒	

Comments

M2 The management structure, which has been streamlined under the current principal to combine certain management functions, is very clear. The principal carries out the day-to-day executive duties and leads the college's management team, which has four members: the principal, the DoS, the head of finance and administration, and a staff representative who is appointed for six months. Responsibility for all matters relating to the wellbeing of the college lies ultimately with the board of governors, which is made up of volunteer members of the local community, the principal and a staff representative. The board meets at least four times per year. Copies of the college's management structure and lines of accountability are displayed around the college. Many of the staff have been in post for a number of years or have had previous service with the college, and this ensures effective continuity.

M4 Communication systems are good. The college management team meets at least once monthly and separate departmental meetings (marketing, administration and teaching) are held regularly. Student council meetings, which are chaired by an academic manager, take place twice a term during the academic year and are attended by the social organiser and/or other members of staff. Minutes from all college meetings are accessible in the staff workroom. Informal communication among academic staff is facilitated by the fact that the DoS and DDoS occupy an office adjacent to the staffroom and staff relaxation area. Social events are held for homestay hosts.

M5 The staff handbook is very detailed on most aspects of recruitment and employment including disciplinary procedures, but makes no reference to a capability policy or procedures to address unsatisfactory performance.

M6 A number of certificates were not on file. However, copies of these or confirmation of the award from the appropriate authority were supplied in the course of the inspection. The situation is now satisfactory.

M7 All staff receive an appropriate staged induction and a checklist is used to ensure that this is completed. The induction includes health and safety awareness, fire and emergency procedures and safeguarding awareness. Evidence was seen of shadowing for key roles.

M8 College policy is that individual staff development interviews (SDIs) should be conducted by the principal, head of finance and administration and DoS every 18 months but only after a member of staff has been employed continuously for two years. There is thus no formal system for monitoring and addressing the development needs of staff who are on permanent contracts during the first two years of their employment or of staff on other contracts. Moreover, records show that some long-term staff had not had an SDI within the 18 months preceding the inspection.

M9 The co-ordinator for continuing professional development (CPD) has responsibility for all staff, and the CPD programme has included opportunities for administrative staff to talk about their roles with academic staff, thus bridging a potential gap between the two. Financial support is available for all categories of staff to undertake external training, and individual CPD records are kept.

Student administration

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
M10 Administrative staff and resources	☐	☒	☒	☒	
M11 Information on course choice	☐	☒	☐	☐	
M12 Enrolment procedures	☐	☒	☐	☐	
M13 Contact details	☐	☒	☒	☒	
M14 Student attendance policy	☐	☒	☒	☒	
M15 Students asked to leave course	☐	☒	☐	☒	

Comments

M10 Under normal circumstances, there are sufficient staff to meet needs, but additional support can be made available if required. Students in the focus group were very positive about the helpfulness and friendliness of support staff.

M13 All student records checked contained emergency contact details, the relationship of the contact to the student, and the contact's knowledge of English. Local contact details are recorded on arrival and confirmed monthly. Records can be accessed remotely.

M14 The college's policy on attendance is clear and there are good systems for recording attendance and ensuring follow-up when necessary. The examples of follow-up letters seen struck an admirable balance between personalised encouragement and firmness.

M15 Expectations in relation to attendance and behaviour are made clear as part of the first-day induction. Ultimately, the decision to ask a student to leave rests with the principal, but procedures leading up to this need to be more fully outlined.

Quality assurance

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
M16 Action plan	☐	☒	N/a	☐	☐
M17 Continuing improvement	☐	☒	☒	☒	
M18 Student feedback and action	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐
M19 Staff feedback and action	☐	☒	☒	☒	
M20 Complaints and action	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐

Comments

M17 The twice-yearly report which was previously sent to the board of governors has been replaced by a more frequent and rigorous reporting mechanism. All departments now contribute to a monthly review which is considered by the management team, and reports on activity and development are submitted to the governors on a quarterly basis.

M18 Student feedback is taken seriously. Students complete initial, mid-course, end-of-stay and, if appropriate, end-of-term feedback, summaries of which are collated graphically. Evidence was seen of close attention to individual comments and appropriate action taken. Students also elect representatives to the student council, which meets twice per term. The meetings are minuted and copies are posted in classrooms; 'You said/we did' posters are also displayed.

M19 The regular meetings for administrative staff and the teaching course meetings offer opportunities for staff to provide feedback, as do individual SDIs and exit interviews. Evidence of action taken was seen in minutes of meetings. Actions to be taken which are noted on SDI forms are followed up by the principal.

Publicity

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
M21 Accessible accurate language	☐	☒	☐	☒	
M22 Realistic expectations	☐	☒	☐	☐	
M23 Course descriptions	☐	☒	☐	☒	
M24 Course information	☐	☒	N/a	☒	
M25 Costs	☐	☒	☐	☒	
M26 Accommodation	☐	☒	☐	☒	☐
M27 Leisure programme	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
M28 Staff qualifications	☐	☒	N/a	☒	☐
M29 Accreditation	☐	☒	N/a	☒	☐

Comments

Publicity consists of a brochure, several leaflets, and the website, the website being the main medium of publicity. One of the leaflets is in Spanish. The introductory section on the website is available in nine languages.

M21 In general, publicity is clear and accurate, although there are a small number of proofreading errors which do not affect communication.

M23 Descriptions of most courses are satisfactory, but fuller description is needed of the objectives and content of different levels within the intensive English course.

M24 All the information required is available, but a small number of inconsistencies need to be corrected. For instance, there is one reference on the website to a minimum age of 17 (now 16) and the maximum class size given is 12, whereas this is 15 for closed groups. A note in Terms and Conditions states that class size 'may be exceeded by 1 for a limited period only', which would not be acceptable under the Scheme. At the time of the inspection no class exceeded the advertised maximum.

M25 All required costs are given. However, greater clarity is needed in relation to teaching materials for students staying less than three weeks, which are lent to students, and the rather complicated policy on refunds for those whose visa applications are rejected.

M26 The information provided is clear, but the use of 'family' in respect of homestay accommodation may lead to unrealistic expectations, as might the statement in the brochure that 'sometimes you will have an opportunity to go out with your family in the evenings or at weekends', an apparent promise that is not part of the college's agreement with homestay providers.

M28 Descriptions of staff qualifications focus on permanent teachers (e.g. 'fully qualified and experienced permanent teachers' and 'large permanent staff of qualified and experienced teachers who do most of the teaching'). While 'fully qualified and experienced' is accurate as a description of the permanent teachers and the overwhelming majority of the teachers employed on other types of contract at the time of the inspection, it leaves open the possibility that students may be taught by other teachers who are not qualified or experienced.

M29 Reference to the college being a centre of excellence in a paragraph about British Council accreditation may be taken to imply that this is judgement made by the British Council.

Management summary

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The management of the provision is noticeably student focused and operates in accordance with its publicity. Some weaknesses were identified in the implementation of staff management systems, but these may in part be attributable to the transitional period during which the new management team has been settling down. Administrative systems are very sound and quality assurance procedures are conscientious and clearly related to accountability. *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	☐	☒	☐	☒	
R2 Condition of premises	☐	☒	☐	☐	
R3 Classrooms and learning areas	☐	☒	☐	☒	
R4 Student relaxation areas and food	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐
R5 Signage and display	☐	☒	☐	☒	☐
R6 Staffroom(s)	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐

Comments

R1 The premises provide a comfortable environment for students and staff.

R3 Classrooms vary in size, but this factor is taken into account when timetabling. All are suitably quiet, heated, ventilated and furnished.

R4 There is good provision for student relaxation. The common room on the ground floor, which is shared with adult education students, has seating areas with easy chairs, a TV, a snack bar which serves lunch as well as hot and cold drinks, and an area with tables where students can eat. In good weather, students also have access to the garden area, where there is more seating. There is also a basement common room with a TV and pool table. Groups taught in House 10 have a separate common room on the ground floor of that building.

R5 In general, signage is clear. An additional sign to the MMLC is needed from inside the common room.

R6 There is a spacious area for teaching staff, which includes an area for relaxation, reprographics, a suitably equipped workroom for teachers and an office for the DoS and DDoS. There is also a sizeable resources store room off the teachers' workroom.

Learning resources

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
R7 Learning materials for students	☐	☒	☐	☒	
R8 Resources for teachers	☐	☒	☒	☒	
R9 Educational technology	☐	☒	☐	☒	
R10 Self-access facilities	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐
R11 Library/self-access guidance	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐
R12 Review and development	☐	☒	☒	☒	

Comments

R7 Most courses are based on a coursebook, but teachers supplement the coursebook to match learners' needs and wishes. Additional materials are available on the college portal.

R8 The resource rooms contains a wide variety of materials which can be used to supplement coursebooks. These include materials for skills and systems practice and for teaching English for academic purposes, as well as teacher resource books. There are separate boxes of supplementary materials, which change each term to avoid duplication, for teachers of exam-preparation and pre-university courses.

R9 All classrooms are equipped with a CD player and some form of visual display (interactive whiteboard, TV monitor, data projector). An in-house technician provides technical support.

R10 The MMLC offers a well resourced, thoughtfully designed and well maintained facility for self-access practice which is overseen by the academic administrator. Additional computers with pre-loaded practice software are available outside class hours in a classroom.

R11 Students are introduced to the MMLC during their induction; they also have regular supervised timetabled sessions in the centre. Information sheets describe the facilities and opening times, procedures, rules, and direct students to practice materials on the college portal. Outside timetabled hours, guidance is available from a TEFL-qualified MMLC assistant.

R12 Coursebooks are reviewed by teaching teams and requests for alternative books or supplementary materials are channelled through the DoS. A record is kept of the categories of material used in the MMLC and this informs acquisitions for the centre.

Resources and environment summary

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The learning resources and environment support and enhance the studies of students enrolled with the provider, and offer an appropriate professional environment for staff. The MMLC is an excellent resource which is well managed and appropriately exploited. *Learning resources* 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)	☐	☒	N/a	☐	
T2 ELT/TESOL teacher qualifications	☐	☒	☒	☒	
T3 Rationales for teachers	☐	☐	N/a	☐	☒
T4 Profile of academic manager(s)	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐
T5 Rationale for academic manager(s)	☐	☐	N/a	☐	☒

Comments

T2 The majority of the teachers in the week of the inspection (and throughout the year) were TEFLQ. Several also hold relevant postgraduate qualifications.

T4 The academic management team consists of the DoS and DDoS. Both are TEFLQ and well experienced.

Academic management

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
T6 Deployment of teachers	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
T7 Timetabling	☐	☒	☐	☐	
T8 Cover for absent teachers	☐	☒	☒	☒	
T9 Continuous enrolment	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
T10 Formalised support for teachers	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐
T11 Observation and monitoring	☒	☐	☐	☒	☐

Comments

T8 Cover procedures, which include handover notes, are very clear. Several staff, including qualified support staff, are able to cover.

T10 The DDoS took over the role of professional development co-ordinator for all staff in autumn 2016, and sought the views of staff, who are in the main experienced and well qualified, on the frequency and length of meetings. Since then, two minuted meetings have been held per term, varied in format but all offering opportunities for exchange on aspects of classroom practice. Beyond this, teachers are expected to pursue their own self-directed

CPD objectives. Self-video recording and self-evaluation is encouraged, as is peer observation; the college subscribes to a number of professional journals; and cover is available for teachers who wish to participate in webinars.

T11 Records of observations, some of which had been carried out by TEFLQ members of staff other than academic managers, did not always lead to clear action points for development.

Course design and implementation

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
T12 Principled course structure	☐	☒	☒	☒	
T13 Review of course design	☐	☒	☐	☐	
T14 Course outlines and outcomes	☐	☒	☐	☐	
T15 Study and learning strategies	☐	☒	☒	☒	
T16 Linguistic benefit from UK	☐	☒	☒	☒	

Comments

T12 Underlying all courses is the key principle that courses should take learners' wishes into account. This is reflected in initial needs analysis, the fact that the course profile includes space for learner requests, and mid-term evaluations which allow learners to influence course content. On bespoke courses, the syllabus may be designed around students' own prioritised needs.

T15 Class profiles include learner training foci. On an individual level, students are expected to keep a learning log related to their work in the MMLC, which is then discussed in their individual tutorials. Students are also given suggestions on how to maintain their English after their departure.

T16 A first-day quiz is designed to help students integrate with their homestay hosts, a process further encouraged by sheets of homestay 'conversation starters' in the MMLC. Students are encouraged to join local clubs and attend performances at the community theatre. There is a weekly evening lecture on some aspect of life in the UK, and an 'Out and about' option between May and September focuses on the local environment.

Learner management

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
T17 Placement for level and age	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐
T18 Monitoring students' progress	☐	☒	☒	☒	
T19 Examination guidance	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐
T20 Assessment criteria	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
T21 Academic reports	☐	☒	☒	☒	
T22 Information on UK education	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐

Comments

T17 Almost all students complete a pre-arrival placement test. On arrival, they do a further test, and receive individual feedback on their level and advice on how to make progress.

T18 A pre-course questionnaire is used to assess students' initial needs and monthly progress tests or mock exams assess their progress. Tutorials, during which progress is discussed and targets set, take place every six weeks, with records being kept in the class file.

T19 Students are only admitted to examination classes if pre-course assessments indicate that they are of the right level. However, the DoS provides additional practice for those who are not in such classes but nevertheless wish to take an examination. Materials and help from qualified staff are also available in the MMLC

T21 All students receive a report. For those on shorter courses of three weeks or less the certificate gives details of the course and the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) level achieved; for longer-stay students, the report also includes comments on progress and individualised advice for further study. In the case of students on pre-university courses, the exit level is related to IELTS band descriptors.

Classroom observation record

Number of teachers seen	13
Number of observations	16
Parts of programme(s) observed	All

In order to sample course types and course components as widely as possible, three teachers were observed twice. Two of the observations were of one-to-one lessons.

Classroom observation

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
T23 Models and awareness of English in use	☐	☒	☒	☒	
T24 Appropriate content	☐	☒	☒	☒	
T25 Learning outcomes	☐	☒	☐	☒	
T26 Teaching techniques	☐	☒	☐	☒	
T27 Classroom management	☐	☒	☒	☒	
T28 Feedback to students	☐	☒	☒	☒	
T29 Evaluating student learning	☐	☒	☐	☒	
T30 Student engagement	☐	☒	☒	☒	

Comments

T23 Teachers presented appropriate models of language use through their own speech and writing and the materials used. They also demonstrated a very sound understanding of linguistic systems through the information provided for or elicited from students (use of phonemic script, syllable stress marking, indicating part of speech) and through contextualised vocabulary explanations. In the best segments, teachers were alert to opportunities for extending learner awareness of linguistic relationships and patterns.

T24 In almost all cases content had clearly been selected with students' linguistic needs, cultural backgrounds and interests in mind. Where appropriate, teachers focused on phonological features known to be problematic for speakers of a specific first language. Evidence was also seen of negotiation of content with students.

T25 Lessons had been conscientiously planned to provide for variety of activity, intake and practice opportunities, and a development from receptive to productive activities. Review was also incorporated. In many cases, however, lesson objectives, although made known to students, were expressed as teacher aims or lesson content, rendering it difficult to evaluate learning (see T29).

T26 A range of techniques was seen across lessons, which included one-to-one teaching. These included prompting, concept checking, the use of both nomination and open questions, and choral repetition (not always followed by individual checking). In general, the techniques seen were appropriate, but in a small number of cases there was too much teacher talk.

T27 Resources and the classroom environment were managed effectively. Teachers exploited coursebooks appropriately and supplemented these with authentic materials or their own carefully produced materials. Data projectors were handled competently. Boardwork was generally well organised and teachers' handwriting clear.

T28 Approaches to feedback on learner performance took a number of forms and were generally very effective. Teachers monitored students closely, encouraged self- and peer-correction, made use of delayed feedback when appropriate, addressed errors of pronunciation and use as well as grammar, were selective in what they chose to focus on, and balanced correction with praise.

T29 Most lessons involved checks on homework, as well as production activities which enabled teachers to evaluate performance. However, it was not always apparent that consideration of how to evaluate specific learning outcomes had formed a conscious part of lesson planning.

T30 Teachers were generally successful in creating an atmosphere which was appropriately relaxed but purposeful. They adjusted their language to students' level, varied activities and interaction patterns, and in some segments set challenges which clearly stimulated student engagement.

Classroom observation summary

The teaching observed met the requirements of the Scheme, ranging from very good to satisfactory, the majority being good. Teachers showed a good understanding of the language and provided appropriate models. Lessons had been conscientiously planned to take account of students' needs, wishes and interests, and the teaching techniques used were generally appropriate. Resources were handled very competently and approaches to feedback on student performance very effective. Although some attention is needed to the relationship between the specification and evaluation of learning outcomes, the teaching as a whole was purposeful and successful in stimulating student engagement.

Teaching and learning summary

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. There is a very strong academic profile, with academic managers and most teachers being TEFLQ. College systems support the continuing professional development of an experienced staff, although there is a need to ensure that formal observations are standardised in leading to agreed action points. Course design pays attention not only to learners' own perceptions of their needs but also to the further development of independent learning strategies, and this concern for the individual is also reflected in such aspects of learner management as monitoring of progress and reports which give individualised advice for further progress. The teaching observed met the requirements of the Scheme. *Academic staff profile, Learner management, Course design*, and *Teaching* are areas of strength.

Welfare and student services

Care of students

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
W1 Safety and security onsite	☐	☒	☒	☒	
W2 Pastoral care	☐	☒	☒	☒	
W3 Personal problems	☐	☒	☒	☒	
W4 Dealing with abusive behaviour	☐	☒	☐	☒	
W5 Emergency contact number	☐	☒	N/a	☐	☐
W6 Transport and transfers	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
W7 Advice	☐	☒	☒	☒	
W8 Medical and dental treatment	☐	☒	N/a	☐	

Comments

W1 The head of finance and administration is also responsible for health and safety. He is in overall charge of the very good measures in place to ensure the safety and security of students on college premises. Risk assessments of the premises are up to date and reviewed regularly, fire drills take place twice a year and are logged, and first aid provision is good. There is CCTV surveillance at the front and back entrances to the college and in the car park and doors have coded entry systems. The main reception area, the common room, is always staffed, and visitors sign in and out and wear lanyards.

W2 Pastoral care is taken very seriously by the college. There is a whole-school ethos with all staff, both support and academic, seeing their role as partly pastoral. Students are made aware of the availability of pastoral care and who to contact for specific needs or requirements. Students aged under 18 receive a separate induction where the support is made explicit. Homestay hosts are given very good advice and information about caring for their students, with additional guidelines if they host students under 18. Attention is paid to special needs around religious observation; a room in House 10 has been made available for prayer.

W3 Information about who to go to with any personal problems is displayed on the electronic display board in the main common room and on posters throughout the college. Students are introduced to the members of staff with responsibility for student welfare at induction. Students feel well looked after and know who to go to for advice and help with any problems.

W4 A culture of diversity and tolerance is evident throughout the college and responsibilities relating to the Prevent strategy are taken very seriously. The college has clear policies on anti-bullying and harassment in place for students, displayed on noticeboards and in classrooms. These policies are reinforced at induction and in the student handbook, though in places the language used will not be accessible to lower level learners.

W7 Students receive full and useful information both pre-arrival and on arrival, during inductions and in their student handbook. The information in the handbook is presented clearly and there are also posters with key information and reminders throughout the college, on well maintained and up-to-date noticeboards and on the electronic display board in the main common room. Information is also found on the college website.

Accommodation profile

Comments on the accommodation seen by the inspectors

The college offers homestay accommodation only. The majority of the accommodation is within walking distance (30 minutes maximum). On the rare occasions students are placed further away, the college gives them a free bus pass. Students in homestay are provided with breakfast and dinner on weekdays and full board at weekends. Homestay is the most popular option for students at Hilderstone College and, at the time of the inspection, the majority of students were in homestay accommodation. One inspector visited three homestays.

Accommodation: all types

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
W9 Services and facilities	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐
W10 Accommodation inspected first	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐
W11 Accommodation re-inspected	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐
W12 Accommodation registers	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐
W13 Information in advance	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
W14 Student feedback	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐
W15 Meals in homestay/residences	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐

Comments

W9 All homestays inspected were of a good standard and provided a comfortable environment for students. All three providers had worked with the school for a number of years and commented favourably on their very positive working relationship. It was evident that all the hosts took their duties seriously and had a good understanding of the needs of international students.

W10 The accommodation and welfare officer and deputy accommodation officer carry out first inspections and provide prospective hosts with comprehensive information about being a homestay accommodation provider for Hilderstone College. Both members of staff are very experienced and one had been a homestay provider in the past. When students are placed with a new homestay, their feedback is very carefully monitored.

W11 The accommodation officer and deputy accommodation officer re-inspect homestays every 18 months. Hosts are required to undertake fire risk assessments and provide copies of Gas Safe certificates every year and records seen were up to date and comprehensive. The college organises host family evenings where hosts have the opportunity to meet socially, ask questions and get to know college staff.

W12 Record keeping is exemplary. The records sampled contained up-to-date information about hosts, records of visits and checks of safety measures. Systems are in place to signal when re-visits are due. The accommodation officer checks whether there are any students from other schools in the homestay before confirming booking.

W14 Feedback is collected from students at the end of their first week, and at the end of their course and in academic tutorials. There was evidence that any issues are followed up promptly by the accommodation team, and action taken recorded. Feedback, both positive and any negative, is passed on to hosts. The hosts visited commented on the efficiency and responsiveness to issues of the accommodation team.

Accommodation: homestay

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
W16 No more than four students	☐	☒	N/a	☐	☐
W17 Rules, terms and conditions	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
W18 Shared bedrooms	☐	☒	N/a	☐	☐
W19 Students' first language	☐	☒	N/a	☒	☐
W20 Language of communication	☐	☒	N/a	☐	☐
W21 Adult to welcome	☐	☒	N/a	☐	☐

Comments

W19 Records sampled identified one occasion where two students of the same language had been lodged together for a week. The specific emergency circumstances that led to this were explained and accepted. It was clear from the records that this was a rare occurrence. Hosts visited were very clear about not accepting students who spoke the same language.

Accommodation: residential

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
W22 Cleaning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
W23 Health	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒

Comments
No residential accommodation is offered.

Accommodation: other

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
W24 Information and support	☐	☒	☐	☒	☐
W25 Other accommodation	☐	☒	N/a	☒	☐

Comments
W24 Students who wish to arrange their own accommodation are given help and guidance from the accommodation team and information is on the college website. W25 The college provides students with a link to local hotels and guest houses but it is not made sufficiently clear that these are neither recommended nor monitored by the college.

Leisure opportunities

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
W26 Information and access	☐	☒	☒	☒	
W27 Leisure programmes	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐
W28 Health and safety	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐
W29 Responsible person	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐

Comments
W26 The social activities' organiser is available in the student services office to promote interest in leisure activities and assist students with bookings and information. The electronic display board in the common room and noticeboards throughout the college are kept up to date with current leisure activities, local events and suggestions of things to do in Broadstairs. The college shares premises with adult education and students can join adult education leisure classes in a wide range of subjects, including dance, yoga, pottery, art, and buy tickets for productions at the community theatre at a reduced cost. W27 The full time social activities' organiser has well established systems and procedures for organising and leading the leisure programme for both year-round students and the closed groups. The activities are well organised, varied and popular with students and planned in consultation with student representatives. The closed group programmes are planned in consultation with the group leaders and agents in advance of their arrival. W28 There are comprehensive and regularly updated written risk assessments for the various types of activity offered, which include necessary guidelines and procedures to follow in an emergency. The names of students under 18 or vulnerable adults are highlighted and their photographs displayed on registers to ensure all staff can identify them. They are accompanied at all times. W29 The social activities' organiser is a trained youth worker with experience in working with vulnerable adults. She and her team of social assistants (four of whom are qualified teachers) are exceptionally well qualified.

Welfare and student services summary

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The needs of students for security, pastoral care and information are well met. The accommodation systems are managed very well by experienced staff and the homestay provision offers students a welcoming and comfortable home environment. The college's leisure programme is well run, offers a wide-ranging programme and risk assessments are thorough. *Care of students*, *Accommodation* and *Leisure opportunities* are areas of strength.

Care of under 18s

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
C1 Safeguarding policy	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐
C2 Guidance and training	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
C3 Publicity	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐

C4 Recruitment procedures	☐	☒	N/a	☒	☐
C5 Safety and supervision during scheduled lessons and activities	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐
C6 Safety and supervision outside scheduled lessons and activities	☒	☐	☐	☒	☐
C7 Accommodation	☐	☒	☐	☒	☐
C8 Contact arrangements	☐	☒	N/a	☐	☐

Comments

Students aged 16–17 are enrolled on adult courses. At the time of the inspection seven of the 60 students were aged under 18; three of these students were from a closed group.

C1 The school has a clear and comprehensive policy covering all aspects of safeguarding, including safer recruitment procedures and e-safety, and codes of conduct for staff and hosts. Named members of staff are identified as being responsible for the implementation of the policy, and for responding to any allegations of child abuse.

C2 The policy is made known to staff at induction and in their handbook, and to hosts and group leaders. There is very good provision of safeguarding training in the college. Twelve members of staff have received advanced training relevant to their roles and the two designated safeguarding leads have had specialist training.

C4 All staff in the college are DBS checked. The safeguarding policy states that appointments are not confirmed until enhanced DBS checks are received and records examined confirmed that all DBS checks were in place. Police checks were seen for group leaders.

C5 Students aged under 18 are clearly identified in class registers and on activity and excursion registers. Any absence is reported and followed up very promptly.

C6 There are rules outlined for under 18s in the student handbook and in the parental consent forms. Curfew times are clear and made known to students, hosts and parents. No risk assessment was in place for an excursion organised by a group leader which included under 18s and the college was unaware that such an excursion had taken place. The curfew time for the closed group was later than the college's curfew time for under 18s.

C7 Under 18s are all in homestay, normally on a half-board basis. A great deal of useful information about the approximate cost of food in the college cafeteria and in Broadstairs is provided on the website and in the student handbook. However, the fact that lunch is not provided for under 18s is not explicitly stated in the information provided to parents.

Care of under 18s summary

The provision just meets the section standard. There is appropriate provision for the safeguarding of students under the age of 18 within the organisation and in the leisure activities. The rules about risk assessments for excursions and curfew times need to be made explicit to group leaders.