

Organisation name	Language Studies International, Brighton
Inspection date	28 August 2019
Current accreditation status	Accredited
Reason for spot check	Signalled: check course not running at inspection

Recommendation

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

Changes to the summary statement

No changes need to be made to the summary statement, apart from adding the date of this inspection and updating the reference to adults 16+.

Courses for closed groups for adults (18+) can be added.

New summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited Language Studies International, Brighton in July 2016 and in August 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 courses in general and professional English for adults (18+) and young people (16+), for closed groups of adults (18+) and young people (16+) and vacation courses for under 18s.

The inspection report noted a need for improvement in publicity.

Strengths were noted in the areas of quality assurance, learning resources, academic management, course design, and teaching.

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

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	1988
Last full inspection	July 2016
Subsequent spot check(s) (if applicable)	August 2019
Subsequent supplementary check(s) (if applicable)	N/a
Subsequent interim visit(s) (if applicable)	N/a
Other related non-accredited activities (in brief) at this centre	N/a
Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates	Two English language schools in London, one in Cambridge
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	English language schools in USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Language schools for French in France and German in Switzerland.

Student and staff profile

	At inspection (closed group courses at Pilgrim Hall, Uckfield only)	In peak week: August (closed group courses at Pilgrim Hall, Uckfield only)
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	35	35
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	22	22
Typical age range	22–41	22–41

Typical length of stay	44 weeks	44 weeks
Predominant nationalities	Chinese	Chinese
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	2	2
Total number of managers including academic	2 (based at Brighton school)	2 (based at Brighton school)
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	0	0

Premises profile

Address of main site	Language Studies International, Brighton, 13 Ventnor Villas, Hove BN3 3DD
Additional sites in use	Language Studies International, Brighton, 55–61 Portland Road, Hove BN3 5DQ
Additional sites not in use	N/a
Sites inspected	Pilgrim Hall, Lewes Road, Easons Green, Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 5RE

Introduction

Background

The focus of this supplementary spot check was to assess the provision of closed group courses held off-site at premises in Uckfield, East Sussex. Pilgrim Hall was for some years a residential Christian conference centre. Since 2018 it has been owned by Olivet Assembly UK (Olivet), part of the World Olivet Assembly, a Christian charity based in USA, where it operates universities in New York and California. At Pilgrim Hall Olivet offers residential courses in closed groups to adult Chinese students. There are 35 students on the current course, which runs for 44 weeks. Some students arrived in January 2019, others in February 2019. They follow a programme consisting of 15 hours per week of general English and IELTS preparation, with religious studies in the afternoons. For the English lessons, students are taught in two groups, one of 17 students and one of 18 students. Accommodation is onsite in single or twin rooms. All meals are provided.

Language Studies International, Brighton (LSI) is responsible for the academic management, staffing and teaching of the English language courses. Olivet is responsible for the religious studies programme, the premises, the residential accommodation, meals and student welfare. A contract between the school and Olivet is in place. This sets out arrangements for fees, course development, quality standards, staffing, teaching facilities and student welfare.

Pilgrim Hall is a large Edwardian house set in its own grounds approximately four miles south-east of Uckfield in East Sussex. It has a large wood-panelled entrance hall, dining rooms, conference and teaching rooms, offices, and residential accommodation for up to 100 people. LSI uses two classrooms and a teachers' room/office, all on the ground floor. During breaks students have access to relaxation areas and to the gardens.

Preparation

The inspector received information and copy correspondence from the Accreditation Unit in advance. The LSI principal and the DoS provided information about the course structure and content. The inspector was informed that one of the teachers was likely to leave the course due to ill health. At the time of the inspection this teacher had been replaced for one week only by a temporary teacher. A longer-term replacement teacher was due to take over the following week. The school was not informed in advance of the exact date of the inspection.

Programme and persons present

One inspector carried out the inspection, arriving at 10.00 and leaving at 14.30. Meetings were held with the Olivet programme director and the DoS (who came from Brighton to meet the inspector). The principal was away on annual leave at the time of the inspection. Focus group meetings were held with students and with the two teachers. Both teachers were observed.

Findings

Findings are reported in the following section.

Management

The course is efficiently managed by the principal and the DoS. There are regular meetings with the Olivet programme director to provide feedback on the course and to ensure that the needs of the students are being met. Communication between the school and the teachers is good. A weekly report by one of the Pilgrim Hall teachers is sent to the DoS and action points are then followed up. Staff management and development policies established at the Brighton school are fully implemented at Pilgrim Hall. Copies of staff qualifications are on file. A staff handbook, adapted for teachers at Pilgrim Hall, is provided. The temporary teacher commented that his induction had been thorough. Teachers have had training in delivering IELTS preparation courses. Student administration is handled by Olivet, but LSI is consulted as necessary. For example, Olivet had an enquiry from two students from Kazakhstan

who wished to join the current course. LSI tested these students and found that their level of English was too low for them to be integrated into existing classes. It was agreed between Olivet and LSI that they would not be accepted. The publicity was not considered at this inspection.

Premises and resources

The Pilgrim Hall premises provide a comfortable and professional working environment for both students and staff. Olivet and external maintenance staff carry out repairs as necessary. Public areas are large and spacious and are furnished with sofas and armchairs. The dining area is similarly spacious with functional furniture and a pleasant view over the gardens. Both classrooms are large and well furnished. There are whiteboards, also computers with screens and speakers. Teachers' resources are adequate. Teachers are able to request extra supplementary materials and are encouraged to visit the main school to select further materials. An LSI photocopier is provided in the teachers' room.

Teaching and learning

The DoS is TEFLQ and has relevant experience. The two teachers both have a Level 6 qualification and are TEFLI. The DoS provides a good level of support for teachers and has managed effectively the absence due to ill-health of one of the regular teachers. The long-serving teacher had been observed at Pilgrim Hall in April 2019. The temporary teacher had been observed at the main school. In both cases there was a record of detailed and constructive written feedback. A course syllabus is in place; this was agreed with the Olivet programme director. The syllabus successfully combines general English with IELTS preparation, as many students wish to follow university courses in the UK. Weekly schemes of work are written by the teachers, checked by the DoS and made available to students. Learner management is of a good standard. Students took an IELTS mock examination in June, after which there were tutorials with agreed targets. Students also complete weekly learning journals to record their work and self-assess their progress. A further mock examination is planned for September. The teaching observed was satisfactory, with good points noted in both lessons. Language was on the whole well modelled. Detailed plans were available for the segments observed with clear links to the IELTS examination. Tasks were relevant and competently set up. There were, however, examples of poor monitoring of language during activities and correction techniques were limited. Overall there was a positive and purposeful atmosphere in both classes; students confirmed they were happy with the lessons, although the change of teachers was felt to be less than ideal.

Welfare and student services

A comprehensive range of safety and security measures is in place at Pilgrim Hall. The Olivet programme director provided evidence of risk assessments and satisfactory fire safety procedures. A first aid kit is available, but only one member of the Olivet staff has received first aid training. Olivet is responsible for student welfare; LSI teachers report any concerns to the Olivet programme director. One student had been identified as having learning difficulties and was being effectively managed in the class. Olivet is responsible for accommodation, any leisure activities and student welfare.

Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance

The items sampled were satisfactory.

Action taken on points to be addressed

Action points arising from the last full inspection were not investigated at this inspection as they related to the provision at the Brighton school.

Conclusions

The off-site courses run by LSI Brighton at Pilgrim Hall are well managed by the principal and DoS. Staff management and academic management procedures established at the main school are fully implemented at Pilgrim Hall. The premises provide a comfortable and professional working environment for both students and staff. Resources for teachers are adequate. Teachers are appropriately qualified. There have been some problems with ensuring continuity of the teaching team, but these have been successfully managed. The premises provide a comfortable and professional environment for both staff and students. Learning objectives have been carefully agreed with the client organisation and are well documented in the course syllabus. Learner management is of a good standard. Overall, the teaching was of a satisfactory standard and comfortably met Scheme requirements. The premises are reasonably safe and secure. The school has only a limited responsibility for student welfare, but takes these duties seriously.
