

Organisation name	Language Studies International, Cambridge
Inspection date	30 July 2019
Current accreditation status	Accredited
Reason for spot check	Signalled: additional premises

Recommendation

We recommend continued accreditation. The next inspection falls due in 2021; 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.

New summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited LSI Cambridge in November 2017, July 2018 and July 2019. 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 and professional English for adults (18+) and young people (16+) and closed group and vacation courses for under 18s.

Strengths were noted in the areas of student administration, quality assurance, learner management, and care of students.

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

New summary inspection findings

Premises and resources

The provision meets the section standard. The learning resources and the premises support and enhance the studies of students and offer an appropriate professional environment for staff. The Abbey College campus, in use from June 2019, offers appropriate resources and facilities for the under 18s vacation programme.

Welfare and student services

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The safety and welfare of students is well provided for with considerable personal attention being offered by all staff. The varied accommodation offers students choice and is of at least a satisfactory standard. The accommodation systems are generally well managed by the school. However, there is a need to ensure that all fire risk assessments are up to date, and that the agency used follows these same procedures. The new under 18s residence in use for the summer of 2019 offers very comfortable accommodation for students following the junior programme. However, there is no premises risk assessment for the teaching or accommodation block. The leisure programme is satisfactory. *Care of students* is an area of strength.

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	1994
Last full inspection	2017
Subsequent spot check(s) (if applicable)	N/a
Subsequent supplementary check(s) (if applicable)	2018
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	LSI UK schools in Brighton, Hampstead, and London Central

Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	LSI centres in Australia, Canada, France, New Zealand, Switzerland and the USA.	
Student and staff profile	At inspection	In peak week: <i>July</i>
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	129	159
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	9	9
Typical age range	12–15	12–15
Typical length of stay	1 week	2 weeks
Predominant nationalities	Chinese, Japanese	Italian, Spanish
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	5	7
Total number of managers including academic	2	2
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	7	7

Premises profile	
Address of main site	41 Tenison Road, Cambridge CB1 2DG
Additional sites in use	Abbey College, Homerton Gardens, Purbeck Road, Cambridge CB2 8EB
Additional sites not in use	N/a
Sites inspected	Abbey College, Homerton Gardens, Purbeck Road, Cambridge CB2 8EB

Main school Tenison Road.

The school is located in a converted Victorian town house in a largely residential area of Cambridge, close to shops, cafés and restaurants. There is easy access to the railway station and to the city centre. The ground floor contains a reception area, an office and two classrooms. At the back of the building is a coffee room with drinks facilities, a room normally used as a student social area, occasionally used as a classroom, and behind this is the students' room conservatory. There is a basement with one classroom and the teachers' room. The first floor has three classrooms (plus one for small groups), and there are another three classrooms on the second floor (one of which is also used as a self-study centre). On the top floor of the building is the computer room in a converted loft. Behind the school there is a paved garden, a decking area with a number of benches and chairs, a table tennis table and a bicycle storage area. At the bottom of the garden is another classroom and an office. The King's Church premises are a two-minute walk away from the main building and are used for English for Juniors' courses. The school uses the ground floor area that includes two classrooms, a common room area, a cafeteria and a kitchen.

Abbey College Under 18s Campus.

The campus is a 20-minute walk from the main school, train station and town centre. Language Studies International (LSI) has sole use of four residence blocks one of which contains: laundry facilities, the shared common room and a small courtyard used for social and evening activities. Across the road is the canteen used for all meals and a playground area. These spaces are shared with another language school provider but a staggered timetable ensures that the students do not mix. LSI has sole use of the main school building which has a large common room meeting area, a course office, staffroom and separate staff and student toilet facilities on the ground floor. On the first floor there are eight classrooms, student toilet facilities and a computer suite. Additional classrooms are available on the second floor if required.

Introduction

Background

Following the full inspection in November 2017, the school was required to submit documentation within six months to demonstrate that weaknesses in M1, publicity and C4 had been addressed and undergo a supplementary inspection in the summer of 2018 to assess the junior course provision, including the accuracy of publicity, course design and the teaching and learning resources available. The supplementary inspection in July 2018 assessed these areas and the evidence provided was satisfactory and no further action was recommended.

An unsignalled spot check was scheduled for summer 2019 to check the new premises used for the residential under 18s course at Abbey College.

The main school offers general and intensive courses in English to adults (16+). LSI Cambridge also offers examination preparation courses, an afternoon business course and combination courses. Some students take group courses combined with one-to-one lessons. The school offers closed group courses to young learners (12 to 17 year-olds) throughout the year and open enrolment classes to young learners of the same age range in January and February and in the summer.

In the summer LSI offers vacation courses for 9–17 year-olds at Abbey College, a 20-minute walk from the main school. Students can stay in the student residences on the campus or in homestay.

Preparation

The spot check inspector was sent relevant documents by the Accreditation Unit and looked at the school's website. The inspector contacted the school directly in advance to check if there were any dates when all staff and students would be off site but, apart from that, did not indicate to the school when the spot check would take place.

Programme and persons present

In the week of the spot check, there were five teachers working on a zig-zag timetable of language classes and activities. A number of closed groups were following a lessons only programme where they were integrated with other groups and individuals for language lessons in the morning but had their own social and activity programme in the afternoon and evening. In one instance the non-language component was led by the accompanying group leader with no input from LSI and in another the group had the support of a dedicated LSI activity leader. Some of the groups were accommodated in homestay and some in the Abbey College campus residences.

The inspector arrived at the Abbey College campus at 08.30 and left at 13.15. She held meetings with key personnel, toured the campus, viewed the four residence blocks, the main teaching building and the adjacent canteen and playground. She did not visit the main school. The inspector met the centre manager who is also the deputy academic manager from the main school during the academic year, and the main school academic manager who is the designated safeguarding lead for both centres. The inspector had meetings with a group of junior students, five group leaders and the teachers. A variety of course and academic documents were scrutinised, but no teaching was observed.

Findings

Management

The summer junior vacation courses started in the new premises at Abbey College campus in July 2019. The junior programme operates as a standalone independent course managed by a centre manager with a team of teachers, activity leaders and an administrative assistant. The centre manager is also the deputy academic manager during the academic year. Communication with the main school is effective and additional support is easily available if needed. The principal and academic manager visit regularly. Staff have remote access to the main school electronic administration systems and information is easily accessed and shared. Attendance is closely monitored, and registers are taken at regular intervals throughout the day.

Welfare and student services

Entry to different parts of the campus is controlled by timed key cards. Students can only access the school teaching building, canteen and playground area at designated times. Staff or group leaders accompany students from the accommodation to other areas of the campus and students are closely supervised throughout the day. Important pastoral information is available via the student handbook. Some students are accommodated in homestay and travel independently to school on foot or by bus. Homestay providers are given guidance on curfew times and any special dietary needs of their students. The residential accommodation provided, in single ensuite rooms and six twin ensuite rooms, is very spacious and comfortable. Girls and boys are accommodated in different blocks or on segregated floors with LSI staff and group leaders spread throughout the building. The leisure programme activities mirror the zig-zag language class timetable and students have access to a varied programme. Activities include college walking tours, treasure hunts with sports activities in a local public park. Risk assessments are thorough and completed for each activity.

Safeguarding

There is a detailed safeguarding policy and all adults are suitably trained. Recruitment follows safer recruitment good practice. Students are appropriately supervised during and outside class and activity time and the accommodation provision is suitable. The school has the necessary parental consent forms and emergency contact details.

Premises and resources

Premises and facilities	Met
P1 Premises, including any external areas, are in a good state of repair, cleanliness and decoration, and provide a comfortable environment for students and staff.	Strength
P2 Classrooms and other learning areas provide a suitable study environment.	Strength
P3 Students have adequate room and suitable facilities for relaxation and the consumption of food.	Met
P4 Free drinking water is available. A choice of appropriate food at affordable prices is available to students on site, if not available locally.	Met

P5 There is adequate signage to buildings, routes, rooms and exits, and there are facilities for the display of general information.	Met
P6 There is sufficient space for all staff, for meetings, relaxation and the storage of personal possessions, and for teachers to carry out their preparation and marking.	Met

Comments

P1 The premises are in very good order and spotlessly clean throughout.
P2 The classrooms at Abbey College are very comfortable and flexible. For example, in addition to electronic boards, two whole walls in each classroom are made of white board material offering teachers and students a versatile class resource.

Learning resources	Met
P7 There are sufficient learning resources for the number of students enrolled, appropriate to their age and the level, length and type of courses offered.	Met
P8 There are appropriate resources for teachers, which are adequate in number, accessible, and well maintained and organised.	Met
P9 Any educational technology inside the classroom and elsewhere is well maintained with adequate technical support. Staff receive appropriate training in using the available technology to support learning.	Met
P10 Any facilities provided for additional or independent learning are appropriately equipped and organised.	N/a
P11 Students receive guidance on the use of any resources provided for independent learning.	N/a
P12 There is a policy for the continuing review and development of teaching and learning resources, and evidence of its implementation.	Met

Comments

P8 This criterion is just met but the reference materials available to teachers and appropriate to young learners are limited.

Action taken on points to be addressed

Management

M4 There are no formal minuted meetings of the school's management team or of the administrative team.

Addressed. Minutes are kept and circulated to all staff on the junior course programme.

M6 (2019:M10) Two references for many staff were missing from files, as were some degree certificates

Partially addressed. The teacher files for the junior programme contained references but teacher qualifications and certificates were not checked.

M16 (2019:M7) Nearly all points from the previous report have been addressed. However, the concern that 'students acquire a large number of handouts' has not been satisfactorily addressed. Between November 2017 and July 2018 several measures were taken to reduce the use of handouts. Other points from the full report have also been addressed.

Addressed. The volume of photocopies is monitored and class sets of the coursebook are available for student use.

Care of under 18s (2019: Safeguarding under 18s)

C3 (2019: M26) There is minimal information available on the website or in the brochure about the level of supervision offered to under 18s.

Partially addressed. Details of safeguarding procedures and the code of conduct are highlighted and parents are advised that a curfew is in place. However, there is no information on supervision outside class time other than that 'students in homestay accommodation are not supervised on journeys to and from school'.

Conclusions

Premises and resources

The Abbey College campus provides a comfortable and professional environment for work and relaxation. Classrooms are well appointed. An adequate range of learning resources appropriate to the young learner programme is available.

Welfare and student services

Overall the students are well cared for and systems are in place to ensure pastoral support for individual students and those attending with a group leader. Residential accommodation is of a high standard and the leisure

programme is tailored to the needs of the students. Although comprehensive risk assessments are in place for sports and social activities and excursions there are no risk assessments in place for the teaching premises, accommodation blocks or the canteen and playground area.
