

Organisation name	MDA College, Leeds (formerly Leeds Language Academy)
Inspection date	4 June 2019
Current accreditation status	Accredited
Reason for spot check	Routine: newly accredited institution

Recommendation

We recommend continued accreditation with a supplementary inspection in October 2019 to assess the university foundation programme which starts in September.

Changes to the summary statement

An area of strength can be added for Premises and facilities.

New summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited MDA College in July 2018 (as Leeds Language Academy) and June 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 English for adults (18+).

Strengths were noted in the area of premises and facilities, and in academic management.

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 management and communication channels are good. Mechanisms for collecting student feedback are satisfactory and there are sound procedures for obtaining feedback from staff. Staff management and development, and induction and appraisals procedures are satisfactory. Student administration is carried out to a high standard and publicity is satisfactory.

Premises and resources

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. Premises and facilities provide students and staff with an extremely comfortable and professional environment for work and relaxation. Learning resources are appropriate and adequate in number to support effective learning and teaching. *Premises and facilities* is an area of strength.

Welfare and student services

The provision meets the section standard. The needs of the students for security, pastoral care, information and leisure activities are met. Students benefit from well-managed student services, including leisure opportunities, and appropriate accommodation.

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	2009 (as Leeds Language Academy)
Last full inspection	2018
Subsequent spot check(s) (if applicable)	N/a
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	N/a
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	N/a

Student and staff profile	At inspection	In peak week: July
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	14	50
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	18	18
Typical age range	20–25	18–25
Typical length of stay	12 weeks	12 weeks
Predominant nationalities	Saudi	Saudi, Turkish, Kuwaiti, Spanish
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	3	6
Total number of managers including academic	3	3
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	1	1

Premises profile

Address of main site	York House, St Andrews Court, Leeds LS3 1JY
Additional sites in use	N/a
Additional sites not in use	N/a
Sites inspected	<p>York House, St Andrews Court, Leeds LS3 1JY</p> <p>The school is located close to the centre of Leeds in a modern building (a former small office block) within a courtyard off a main road. The building has been refurbished and refitted to meet the requirements of the school. There are three storeys.</p> <p>On the ground floor: a reception and student relaxation area with tables and chairs and drinks machine; a small kitchen for staff and student use; the management office; a quiet study room with a small library of books, and computers for student use; a classroom; a large/disabled toilet.</p> <p>On the first floor: three classrooms; a meeting or one-to-one room; a toilet.</p> <p>On the second floor: two classrooms; a prayer room and bathroom with appropriate washing facilities.</p> <p>Access to the building is by pin code. Although there is no lift, students with mobility difficulties can be catered for on the ground floor. There are six parking spaces, some available for students. The premises are close to public transport links and retail outlets.</p>

Introduction

Background

This was the signalled routine spot check following a first full inspection of Leeds Language Academy, conducted in July 2018. However, in February 2019 the organisation changed its name from Leeds Language Academy to MDA College, and moved into new premises in May 2019. The focus of this inspection was on the area of Premises and facilities, in addition to the points to be addressed from the 2018 inspection.

Preparation

Before the visit, the inspector received relevant documentation and correspondence from the Accreditation Unit and scrutinised the website. A phone call was made to the school to check the availability of managers, although the precise date of the inspection was not given.

Programme and persons present

The inspector arrived at 10.00 and departed at 14.00. Meetings were held with the chief executive officer (CEO), the operations and academic director, and the business development manager; with a group of students; and with the three teachers. The new building and facilities were inspected, together with risk assessments for the premises; the website and academic documentation were scrutinised with those responsible for their design.

Findings

Management

Since the full inspection of 2018 two significant changes have taken place: in February 2019, the school changed its name from Leeds Language Academy to MDA College and it located to new premises in May 2019. The ownership, management structure and personnel are unchanged.

Publicity has been changed in line with the new provision and in response to points to be addressed from the 2018 inspection. At the time of the inspection visit there were some small points of wording or organisation to be changed but these changes were implemented immediately and there are now no outstanding points to be addressed.

Findings (for example on publicity) are also reported in the Action taken on points to be addressed, below.

Premises and resources

Findings are reported in the following section.

Teaching and learning

There is evidence that the continuing professional development (CPD) programme has been informed by points noted in the Lesson observation section of the 2018 inspection report.

A programme of classes (at three levels) for women only has been successfully introduced. There are plans to make a significant addition to the organisation's offering. From September 2019 an Ofqual-registered university foundation programme is to be offered, with modules in advanced language skills and English for academic purposes.

Findings are also reported in the Action taken on points to be addressed.

Welfare and student services

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

Premises and facilities	Area of strength
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.	Strength
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.	Strength
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 have been fitted out to a very high standard and are in an excellent state of repair, cleanliness and decoration, in line with the organisation's stated values and publicity.

P2 Classrooms and other areas provide a very attractive and comfortable study environment; rooms are spacious and light.

P3 Facilities for relaxation, the consumption of food, and the practice of religious faith are particularly well suited to the needs of the student body. Students have the use of two common rooms, both with kitchen facilities, a quiet study room and a dedicated prayer room.

P5 Throughout the building the standard of signage and display is very high. Boards are well organised, up to date, informative and attractive.

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. Only points reviewed during this spot check are included here. Any points outstanding will be checked at the next full inspection.

Management

M19 Punctuality problems were noted during the inspection and procedures for dealing with lateness were weak.

Addressed. Policies have been redrafted and are made clear to students at induction, in the student handbook and in notices on classroom doors. An improvement has been noted.

M21 Lack of clarity and Inaccuracies were noted in the complaints procedure communicated to students.

Addressed. The complaints procedure, appropriately worded, is made clear to students at induction, in the student handbook, and via posters.

M23 There is an over reliance in publicity on internet-based translation tools for translation.

Addressed. The information is now given in accessible English.

M27 Publicity describes private homes with more than four students as homestay accommodation.

Addressed. The accommodation information on the website has been revised and now accurately reflects the offering.

Teaching and learning

T15 Tighter specification is needed to ensure that study and learning strategies are covered systematically.

Addressed. Study and learning strategies have been included in syllabuses and have been the focus of CPD sessions.

T21 There are no descriptors on the end-of-course report to indicate what the band level means.

Addressed. Descriptors have been added to progress-tracking documentation used with students and to end-of-course reports.

Welfare and student services

W12 The information that students receive about their accommodation does not always include the approximate time and the cost of travel between the accommodation and the school premises. The description of the type of accommodation is not always accurate, for example, private home accommodation was described as homestay.

Addressed. Accurate information is available on the website and in information packs given before arrival.

W16 The homestay visited was accommodating seven students at the time of the inspection.

Addressed. All accommodation has been reclassified and will be clearly labelled on the website and in packs.

Legal and regulatory compliance

D1 Staff were not fully informed of the copying limits on published materials.

Addressed.

Conclusions

The organisation has successfully managed a change of name and of location. Students and staff compared the new building and facilities very favourably with the former premises. Teachers are very pleased with the up-to-date technological resources and the support available in their use.

The 'women only' courses were not running at the time of the inspection because of Ramadan, but managers and teachers reported that they had been successful in providing for a group of students who would not normally be able to access the learning opportunities on offer. Plans are well under way for a university foundation programme, to be offered from September. It is recommended that a further spot check inspection be arranged to check on the provision of the English for academic purposes module.

Most of the points from the 2018 inspection have been addressed. Those outstanding relate to the observed lessons; the teaching was not observed at the time of this spot check report. However, evidence was provided to demonstrate that CPD with a focus on the reported weak areas has been conducted.
