

Organisation name	Mill Hill Summer School
Inspection date	24 July 2018
Current accreditation status	Accredited
Reason for spot check	Routine: newly accredited institution

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.

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	August 2017
Last full inspection	August 2017
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	Mill Hill School
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
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	47	69
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	12	12
Typical age range	12–17	12–17
Typical length of stay	2	2
Predominant nationalities	Ukrainian, Chinese, Kazakh, Turkish	Chinese, Kazakh, Turkish, Ukrainian
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	5	7
Total number of managers including academic	1	1
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	8	10

Premises profile

Address of main site	The Mount, Mill Hill International School, Milesplit Hill, Mill Hill, London NW7 2RX
Additional sites in use	N/a
Additional sites not in use	N/a
Sites inspected	The Mount, Mill Hill International School, Milesplit Hill, Mill Hill, London NW7 2RX

Introduction
Background

Mill Hill Summer School first ran in summer 2016. Part of The Mount, Mill Hill International School, the summer school is intended for students who will be joining British boarding schools and for those who wish to sample British education in the summer. The summer school was first accredited in August 2017.

A routine spot check was arranged the following year in July 2018.

Preparation

The spot check was carried out by one inspector, who had not previously inspected the school. He contacted the provider to find out whether there were any days which would not be suitable in the summer of 2018. The school was not informed when the inspection would take place. The Accreditation Unit sent the inspector the previous report and other relevant documents. The inspector checked the provider's website before the inspection.

Programme and persons present

The inspector arrived at 08.45 and departed at 14.15. The school administrator showed him around the site, including one of the two residences currently in use and the dining hall, which is located in Mill Hill School. Meetings were held with the director of the summer school (DOSS) and with groups of students and teachers. Documents were inspected, both electronically and on paper. The inspector sampled the food in the dining hall.

Findings

Management

The management of the school is the sole responsibility of the DOSS, who reports to the principal of Mill Hill International School. The DOSS is supported by an administrator and an activities manager, who has two activities leaders working to him. The structure is clear and duties are spelt out in job descriptions. Communication is effective with a full staff meeting and a school assembly held at the start of each day. There is a weekly works meeting with maintenance, catering and housekeeping staff.

Feedback is sought regularly from students and staff. This is monitored in real time and improvements made quickly where possible. It is collated at the end of the summer and this feeds into a review process which involves the principal of the international school and the registrar of the main school.

Recruitment of summer school staff is managed by the DOSS with support on interview panels from another trained member of staff. There is a two-day induction period for staff, which includes safeguarding training. There are effective procedures for monitoring staff and handling unsatisfactory performance. A realistic fortnightly programme of continuing professional development (CPD) activities has for content drawn successfully on data from the previous inspection, from analysis of feedback and teachers' interests.

Student attendance is monitored at the morning meeting and by the administrator going round classes. Teachers record attendance in their files and there is a messaging group which alerts the administrator as soon as anyone is missing.

Publicity is in the form of a website and printed brochures. It is accurate both in terms of the expectations it gives rise to and the English it is written in. All the required information is available, accurate and easy to find.

Premises and resources

The premises are spacious both in terms of internal and external areas. The buildings are well maintained, clean and in a satisfactory state of décor. The classrooms are sufficiently large, suitably and flexibly furnished and well provided with educational technology, which is backed up by responsive technical support. Although the grounds are large, there is sufficient clear signage to make navigation straightforward.

There are sufficient, up-to-date and age-appropriate learning resources for students and appropriate, well-organised resources for teachers.

Teaching and learning

The academic staff have an appropriate profile. Academic management is the responsibility of the DOSS and this is handled skilfully and efficiently. Although the operation is small, there is considerable depth in the cover arrangements. Teachers are generally quite experienced and they are given both sufficient freedom to use their initiative and creativity and light-touch support, as appropriate. Teachers are observed annually.

The course syllabus is linked to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) and there is helpful guidance for teachers on how to use this to identify suitable materials and produce schemes of work (SOW). A student-friendly SOW is shared with the students on the whiteboard. The integration of the excursions with the teaching programme through appropriate preparation enables students to benefit linguistically from their stay in the UK. There are also activities which are designed to promote language learning.

Students receive a certificate at the end of the course with a detailed report written by each of their teachers with grades based on the CEFR.

Welfare and student services

There are sound policies and procedures to ensure students' safety and security on site. Most of these were developed for the main school or the year-round international school and have been adapted as appropriate to the needs of the summer school. This ensures robust arrangements for fire safety and a good provision of first-aid trained staff across the site. Pastoral care provision is the responsibility of the DOSS but is recognised to be shared among all staff.

There is a good student welcome pack which covers all the guidance and rules that are appropriate to students on this type of course. This is backed up by a thorough induction. Because of the relatively small numbers and high residential staff to student ratios (5:20 for girls and 6:27 for boys), staff are able to keep close track of each student's welfare and pick up any issues quickly.

The accommodation is all residential and comprises single, twin or triple rooms with shared bathrooms. There are separate buildings for boys and girls, although as the programme shrinks later in the summer, it is planned that boys and girls will share the same building, with separate floors for staff, boys and girls. The girls' floor will have a code lock. The rooms are sufficiently spacious and include the requirements for a comfortable stay. Cleaning and laundry arrangements are satisfactory.

Students take three cooked meals a day in the dining room in the main school, which is a five-minute walk from the international school. The food provided is tasty and comprises a well-balanced diet. Free drinking water is provided.

There is a well-resourced, well-organised and varied programme of leisure activities, including sports, fun activities and excursions. Students spoke highly of these activities, in particular the excursions. Risks have been thoroughly assessed and specific assessments produced for different activities.

Safeguarding under 18s

The school gives all staff an induction which covers safeguarding, with training at appropriate levels for different staff. Parents/guardians are informed in the terms and conditions and in the confirmation letter about the level of care and are required to sign that they agree to this. Safer recruitment good practice is followed with respect to the taking of references. Students are made well aware of rules. The residential nature and integrated design of the programme mean that students have very little time unsupervised. Students aged 15–17 have one and a half hours' free time on excursions in central London, when they must always stay in groups of three. Students younger than 15 are always accompanied.

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

M22 The statement that 'Classes are divided between Juniors aged 12 to 14 and Seniors aged 15 to 17...' was not accurate in all cases during the inspection.

Addressed. This statement has been withdrawn from the current publicity.

M23 Objectives for the courses at different levels are not given and there is no outline description of the courses.

Partially addressed. A new section has been added to the website and brochure describing the courses appropriately. However, the description of the range of levels is not sufficiently explicit.

Teaching and learning

T15 Keeping records of new vocabulary is not always done systematically.

Partially addressed. There has been a recent CPD session on the teaching and recording of vocabulary, which teachers spoke highly of. It is planned that a more systematic approach will result from this.

Welfare and student services

W4 There are a few words in the welcome pack and on the poster which cannot be easily understood by students with a lower level of English.

Addressed. The welcome pack and poster have been rewritten in more accessible English.

W28 The risk assessments for excursions are generic rather than venue-specific.

Addressed. Venue-specific sections (in yellow) have been added to the generic risk assessments.

Conclusions

All points that were checked have been either addressed or partially addressed. The school has clearly taken the previous report seriously and has taken appropriate actions.
