Organisation name
Moorland Hall, Tavistock

Inspection date
31 May 2018

Current accreditation status
Accredited

Reason for spot check
Routine: newly accredited institution

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 the addition of the date of this spot check.

New summary statement
The British Council inspected and accredited Moorland Hall in October 2016 and May 2018. 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 boarding school offers residential courses in general English for closed groups of under 18s and vacation courses for under 18s.

The inspection report noted a need for improvement in the area of quality assurance.

Strengths were noted in the area of leisure opportunities.

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

Organisation profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inspection history</th>
<th>Dates/details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First inspection</td>
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<td>Last full inspection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subsequent spot check(s) (if applicable)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subsequent supplementary check(s) (if applicable)</td>
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<td>Subsequent interim visit(s) (if applicable)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other related non-accredited activities (in brief) at this centre</td>
<td>Activity weeks for English students</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Student and staff profile</th>
<th>At inspection</th>
<th>In peak week: May</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)</td>
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<td>65</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Typical age range</td>
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<td>Typical length of stay</td>
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### Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses

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### Total number of managers including academic

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### Total number of administrative/ancillary staff

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### Premises profile

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<th>Moorland Hall, Brentor Road, Mary Tavy, Devon PL19 9PY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address of main site</td>
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<tr>
<td>Additional sites in use</td>
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<tr>
<td>Additional sites not in use</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sites inspected</td>
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### Introduction

#### Background

Moorland Hall is a family-run business located on the edge of Dartmoor National Park in Devon. It has been running an outdoor activity programme for schools and individuals (normally nine to 15 year-olds) for over 20 years. Outdoor pursuits offered include (among many others) kayaking, abseiling, surfing, coasteering, archery, climbing and gorge walking. Cultural trips are also offered as part of the programme. About 30 per cent of school groups are from the UK and 70 per cent from overseas. Students from overseas are offered 12 hours of language tuition per week. Group sizes vary, usually with between 20 and 30 students staying at any one time. Capacity is 65. In the summer, courses are for individuals, mainly from overseas. Students stay in dormitory accommodation on site in rooms which can accommodate from six to 12 children. Visiting teachers are provided with individual ensuite rooms.

A feature of the school is that guests (students and visiting teachers) live as part of the family in the family home. Course aims for overseas students include building confidence in speaking English and providing the opportunity to be immersed in the culture of the area.

At the time of the spot check, there were 65 students from a Spanish school, accompanied by six teachers. The age range was 11 to 12 years old. Students were divided into four groups for teaching and activities, two groups were taught in the morning and two in the afternoon.

#### Preparation

The inspector who conducted the spot check had been the co-inspector at the first inspection. Contact was made with the school to discuss when courses for overseas students were taking place and to request certain documentation. The actual date of the visit was not known by the school.

#### Programme and persons present

The inspector arrived at the school at 09.50 and departed at 14.30. Meetings were held with the director of operations/owner, the manager of outdoor activities, the ELT course director and the administration manager. A focus group meeting was held with the visiting teachers. Due to the fact that most of the staff were only available at lunchtime, it was not possible to meet with the ELT teacher or any of the students. The welfare manager was absent at the time of the inspection. The two classes were observed briefly and documentation was studied.

### Findings

#### Significant changes since the last inspection

There have been two changes in management roles since the first inspection. A new administration manager and a director of ELT (director of studies) were recruited in early March. The previous administration manager is still working one morning a week to ensure a smooth handover.

#### Management

The management structure is clear and the organogram includes an outline of the responsibilities of each position. There are simple job descriptions in place but as these are still not signed and dated it is not possible to ascertain when they are reviewed. Communication within the school is largely informal, as staff work in close proximity to each other. Meetings are held before and after busy periods and are minuted. There is occasional reference in the minutes to action taken as a result of course reviews. The ELT director has plans to formalise the course feedback system and the recording of action taken.

The handover to the new administration manager has been well handled, with the current post holder reporting that she has received excellent support. For the director of ELT the handover has been less smooth as she had very limited time with the previous director. However, one of the long-serving teachers has provided useful support.

All instructors are required to adhere to a code of conduct. Activity staff are employed for the season, and their...
performance is very well monitored through quick observations and longer formal observations. There is a formal disciplinary procedure detailed in the operations manual. An appraisal system has been implemented for all year-round staff since the first inspection, and this is an opportunity for staff to provide feedback. The appraisal forms focus on obtaining staff feedback and do not include comments from the line manager on the performance of the staff member. There was no evidence of procedures for obtaining feedback from seasonal staff.

Since the first inspection, a number of ways have been introduced to obtain feedback from students, both from school groups and from summer camp students. These include younger students completing a diagram of the school shield with points they liked, and students writing a brief description of their time at Moorland Hall under given headings. These do not cover systematically all the services offered. The school is currently looking at a possible feedback form that would be appropriate for all groups and would enable comparison and analysis across the provision.

Most aspects of student administration are effectively handled. The school makes clear what is expected of students, and there is a clear, staged disciplinary procedure for unacceptable behaviour. The discipline of school groups is largely managed by the visiting teachers. Although there is information on the student noticeboard explaining who to talk to in the event of a problem and providing the option to go to an outside body, the need for a clear complaints policy for students remains outstanding.

Premises and resources
Moorland Hall is located on the edge of the Dartmoor National Park in five acres of grounds and gardens and offers a very pleasant and comfortable environment for students and staff. It comprises the main house and the coach house, which retain a homely atmosphere and provide basic but appropriate dormitory accommodation for students, office space and catering areas. Two classrooms, which are of adequate size for the maximum number of students, are located in a recently constructed lodge. The grounds are well maintained and offer facilities for leisure activities and sports, including an outdoor swimming pool for summer use. There is a large sitting room area with comfortable seating in which students can relax, and two dining rooms. The catering provided by the school is of a very good standard. Signage is adequate for the context. There is a display board for general information in the sitting room.

There is a very well-organised set of custom-made materials suitable for the students currently enrolled. The ELT director retains a range of supplementary and photocopiable materials in her office area.

Teaching and learning
The ELT director is responsible for academic management and teaches full-time when there are overseas groups in the school. She is TEFLQ and has the relevant experience. There are appropriate cover arrangements in place and this enables her to carry out observations as necessary. Both the ELT director and the teacher have been observed by the previous ELT director, but feedback did not include action planning to improve and develop teaching.

Course principles are clear to visiting teachers and their students. The syllabus is divided into three-hour blocks and has been constructed to meet the needs of the school groups who typically enrol at the school. The syllabus is topic and skills based, and elements include daily journal writing and project work followed by a presentation. Projects focus on ‘the British’, Dartmoor and the south west. They combine language work and outdoor activities. Excursions include questionnaires with follow-up in class the following day.

Since the last inspection the syllabus for advanced learners, which is the profile of a number of the school groups, has been reviewed. The summer camp syllabus is to be reviewed to allow for longer-stay students, but this is a work in progress.

Weekly plans are provided to students orally, with the daily aims being put on the board. However, there are no written plans available.

Summer camp students are tested at the beginning of their course. School groups are not tested. There is still no formalised system for assessing progress of school group and summer camp students. End-of-course reports are available when required.

Two classes were observed for ten minutes each and the teaching was appropriate to the needs of the students. Techniques observed included elicitation, individual pronunciation drilling and monitoring. The teachers demonstrated a sound knowledge of the linguistic systems and provided feedback on an individual and a group basis. In both classes students were focused and teachers nominated well.

Welfare and student services
The school provides a safe environment for students and its rural location contributes to site security. All aspects of safety and security are addressed, and, since the first inspection, fire drills are carried out two to three times a year. The pastoral care provided is of very high standard and the overseas teachers spoke very favourably about the
The students are accommodated in the main house, the coach house and the lodge in rooms with six to 12 beds. Boys and girls are housed on separate floors or in separate buildings, depending on the time of year. The majority of the rooms have bunk beds. The accommodation is appropriate and bathroom facilities are adequate.

The school offers a wide range of adventure activities, which are very well organised and resourced and include high ropes, Jacob’s ladder, leap of faith and team challenges. Students are encouraged to develop their language skills on all activities and the activity staff foster teamwork. Activities are held on five days and there are two excursions a week, including Plymouth, the Eden project and surfing on the north Cornish coast. There is a full and varied programme of evening activities. The activity staff are very responsive to student interests and requests, and there is a high degree of flexibility as many of the activities are carried out on site or in the countryside surrounding the premises. There is a detailed activities manual with risk assessments for each activity, which have been produced by trained staff. The activity staff are highly trained and hold specialist qualifications. Outside professional staff are brought in as necessary.

Safeguarding under 18s
There is an appropriate policy in place for safeguarding children and this is made known to staff. The welfare officer has received appropriate training since the first inspection. Checks are in place for all staff, and evidence of police checks is now sought for overseas teachers accompanying groups. Recruitment procedures now include a reference to the need to check all gaps in CVs. Students are very well supervised during lessons and activities, and there are clear rules in place for unsupervised time. Since the first inspection, parental consent forms have been amended to include reference to unsupervised time on excursions.

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
M3 (2018: M9) Job descriptions are minimal. They are not dated or signed. Not yet addressed.
M8 (2018: M12) There is no formal appraisal system by the director of his managers. Not yet addressed.
Partially addressed. An appraisal system has been introduced for year-round staff, but the form does not include comments from the director on the individual’s performance
M17 (2018: M7) Action taken after end-of-course reviews is not recorded. Partially addressed. Some reference to action taken after end-of-course reviews is stated in the minutes of managers’ meetings.
M18 (2018: M5) There is insufficient written feedback from students on summer camps. Partially addressed. Though written feedback is now sought from students, it does not cover all the services offered.
M19 (2018: M6) There is no formal system of getting staff views on the services offered. Partially addressed. There was no evidence of procedures for obtaining feedback from seasonal staff.
M20 (2018: M21) There is no clear written procedure for complaints for the individuals who enrol on the summer camps. Not yet addressed.

Teaching and learning
T9 (2018: T8) Programmes of study for students who stay for three weeks on summer camps are inadequate. Not yet addressed.
T11 (2018: T10) To date there have been no formal observations of the director of studies (DoS). Partially addressed. The current director of ELT has been observed by the previous director of ELT (DoS), but feedback did not include action planning to improve and develop teaching.
T14 (2018: T13) Written weekly plans are not made available to the students. Not yet addressed.
T18 (2018: T18) No students are formally assessed. Not yet addressed.

Welfare and student services
W1 (2018: W1) No fire drills are carried out. Addressed. Fire drills are carried out two or three times a year.
**Care of under 18s**

C2 (2018: S2) The responsible officer has not received appropriate training.  
**Addressed. The responsible officer has completed appropriate training.**

C4 (2018: S4) The policy does not refer to the need to check any gaps in CVs. No checks are requested for the overseas teachers who accompany groups.  
**Addressed. The policy now includes reference to checking gaps in CVs. Evidence that police checks are in place for the overseas teachers was seen.**

**Addressed. Parental consent forms now make reference to unsupervised time on excursions.**

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**Conclusions**

The management is generally effective though quality assurance procedures continue to require further development. The premises provide a very pleasant environment and resources are well organised. The new director of ELT is appropriately qualified and has begun a process of revising syllabuses for school groups. There is currently no formal system in place to assess students’ progress, and written course outlines for students are still not available. The school provides a secure environment and the pastoral care is of a high standard. Safeguarding is handled in a responsible manner.

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**New points to be addressed arising from this visit**

None.