

Organisation name	NCG Liverpool
Inspection date	21–22 November 2021

Section standards	
Management The management of the provision operates to the benefit of the students, and in accordance with the provider's stated goals, values, and publicity.	Met
Premises and resources The premises provide students and staff with a comfortable and professional environment for work and relaxation. A range of learning resources is available, appropriate to the age and needs of the students. Guidance on the use of these resources is provided for staff and students where needed.	Met
Teaching and learning The academic staff team has a professional profile (qualifications, experience and continuing professional development) appropriate to the context. Teachers receive sufficient guidance to ensure that they support students effectively in their learning. Courses are structured and managed to provide the maximum possible benefit to students. The teaching observed meets the requirements of the Scheme.	Met
Welfare and student services The provision meets the needs of the students for security, pastoral care, information and leisure activities. Students benefit from well-managed student services, including, where offered, out-of-class activities and suitable accommodation.	Met
Safeguarding under 18s There is appropriate provision for the safeguarding of students under the age of 18 within the organisation and in any leisure activities or accommodation provided.	Met

Recommendation

We recommend continued accreditation. However, evidence must be submitted within three months to demonstrate that S4 has been addressed. The required evidence was subsequently submitted.

Summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited NCG Liverpool in November 2021. 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+) and young people (16+) and for closed groups of adults (18+) and under 18s.

Strengths were noted in the areas of strategic and quality management, staff management, student administration, premises and facilities, learning resources, academic management, course design, learner management, care of students, and leisure opportunities.

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

Introduction

New College Group, Liverpool is part of the New College Group (NCG) of schools which include schools in Manchester and Dublin. Head office and the senior management team are based at the Manchester site and are responsible for admissions, finance, publicity, and sales and marketing. There are group-wide HR policies but the Liverpool school principal is responsible for much of the HR at the school. In all other areas, the Liverpool school has autonomy. The school offers open enrolment courses all year round, as well as closed group courses on demand.

The inspection took the equivalent of one day and a half over two days. Due to the global pandemic, the inspection was conducted remotely. The inspectors held meetings with the principal, student support manager (SSM), the student support officer (SSO) and the group admissions manager (AM).

Focus group meetings were held with a selection of students, and another with a group of teachers. There were nine teachers teaching during the inspection and each was observed once by one inspector. All lessons were face to face. One inspector visited two homestays virtually and spoke to representatives of two residences that were in use during the inspection period.

Address of main site/head office

Graeme House, Derby Square, Liverpool, Merseyside L2 7ZH

Description of sites observed

The school occupies part of the ground floor of a large office building in a central area of the city. It has its own separate entrance at the side of the building which leads directly into a lobby area with a reception desk, seating and breakout area with a plasma screen display. The school extends to either side of the central lobby, with five classrooms on one side. Beyond this, accessed with a swipe card, a kitchen for staff, a multi-faith room and toilets are shared with other occupants of the building. On the other side of the lobby, a corridor leads to two further classrooms, a teachers' room, the principal's office, a multi-purpose room used for additional teacher preparation and an overflow classroom during busy periods, and a meeting room which is also used as a female-only classroom should this be necessary. In the area behind the central lobby, there is another classroom, a games room and learning resource centre with computers for student use and a small collection of self-study materials.

Course profile	Year round		Vacation only	
	Run	Seen	Run	Seen
General ELT for adults (18+)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General ELT for adults (18+) and young people (16+)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General ELT for juniors (under 18)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
English for academic purposes (excludes IELTS preparation)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
English for specific purposes (includes English for Executives)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher development (excludes award-bearing courses)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ESOL skills for life/for citizenship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments

Year round the school offers General English courses for adults and young people (16- and 17-year-olds) as well as closed group courses, one-to-one lessons, and examination preparation courses.

Management profile

The overall management of the school is the responsibility of the principal who reports to the CEO. The SSM and the DoS report to the principal. The principal is currently covering the DoS role until a suitable replacement can be found for the recently departed DoS. The SSM manages the SSO and the DoS and senior teacher manage the teaching team.

Accommodation profile

NCG Liverpool offers both homestay and residential accommodation. Homestays are managed by the school and are offered on a full or half-board basis. The school also uses two local residences which are managed externally. Both residences offer clusters of six rooms, all ensuite, on a self-catering basis. The rooms share an open plan kitchen and lounge. Kitchens contain a fridge, cooker, kettle, toaster and microwave, and there are sofas with a TV in the lounge. The residences also offer a 'hub' area with a pool table, seating areas, and TV where students can relax and socialise. A self-service laundry is available in both residences. NCG books rooms on an ad hoc basis, and students may be sharing a cluster with students from other organisations.

Summary of inspection findings

Management

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The management of the provision operates to the benefit of the students and in accordance with the provider's stated goals and values. Communication channels are very clear across the organisation, feedback procedures are robust, and student administration is carried out very efficiently and effectively. Publicity is clear and well presented. *Strategic and quality management*, *Staff management* and *Student administration* are areas of strength.

Premises and resources

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The premises provide students with a very comfortable environment for study and relaxation, appropriate to their age and needs. Classrooms are bright and well equipped with technology, for which effective support is provided. A range of suitable learning resources is available. *Premises and facilities* and *Learning resources* are areas of strength.

Teaching and learning

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The teaching team has a professional profile (qualifications, experience and continuing professional development) appropriate to the programmes being run. Teachers receive guidance to ensure that they support students in their learning. Courses are structured and managed to provide the maximum possible benefit to students, including opportunities to practise language outside the classroom. The teaching observed met the requirements of the Scheme. *Academic management*, *Course design*, and *Learner management* are areas of strength.

Welfare and student services

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. Provision for the health and safety of students is very good with detailed risk assessments and emergency plans. Accommodation is suitable with detailed confirmation documents sent to students in advance. Although homestays viewed provided a comfortable and welcoming environment to students, in one home there were three students sharing the same linguistic background. The leisure programme is varied and student input is central to its planning. *Care of students* and *Leisure opportunities* are areas of strength.

Safeguarding under 18s

The provision meets the section standard. Robust safeguarding policies and procedures are in place with useful supporting documents. Recruitment procedures for staff are suitable, but not all documents were in place for homestay hosts. Systems for supervision and support of students on site are very effective.

Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance

The items sampled were satisfactory.

Evidence

Management

Strategic and quality management	Area of strength
M1 There is a clear statement describing the goals and values of the organisation, which is made known to all staff.	Met
M2 The management has clear objectives for the future of the organisation and has realistic plans to achieve them.	Strength
M3 There is a documented and clearly understood structure for the ELT operation. There are sufficient staff to manage and deliver the provision, and to ensure continuity at all times.	Met
M4 There are effective channels of communication between all involved in the ELT operation, and between the ELT operation and any wider organisation of which it is a part.	Strength

M5 The provider regularly obtains and records feedback from students on all the services offered. Feedback is circulated to relevant staff and appropriate action is taken and recorded.	Strength
M6 The provider regularly seeks and records feedback from all staff on the services offered. Appropriate action is taken and recorded.	Strength
M7 The provider reviews systems, processes and practices with a view to continuing improvement. Appropriate action is taken and recorded in an annual self-evaluation.	Met

Comments

M2 The school has very clear plans for the future which include SMART objectives. Plans are reviewed every six months at departmental improvement boards.

M4 Communication channels are very good at both local and group levels. Effective formal and informal communication takes place regularly, and the accessibility of management and their level of engagement with staff was appreciated by all members of the team spoken to.

M5 A very comprehensive approach to feedback is in place with detailed questionnaires administered on arrival and on completion of a course that are collated and used to inform future development. The student council and bi-weekly Independent Learning Plan (ILP) meetings provide further opportunities for feedback.

M6 An annual employee satisfaction survey is conducted in addition to regular teacher and departmental meetings. Annual appraisals are also carried out and all staff spoken to felt that their views were valued.

Staff management and development	Area of strength
M8 The provider implements appropriate human resources policies, which are made known to staff.	Met
M9 The provider specifies the duties of all staff working with ELT students, and regularly reviews these.	Met
M10 There are effective procedures for the recruitment and selection of all staff.	Strength
M11 There are effective induction procedures for all staff.	Strength
M12 There are effective procedures for monitoring and appraising all staff, and for handling unsatisfactory performance or conduct. These procedures are made known to all staff.	Strength
M13 There are effective procedures to ensure the continuing professional development of all staff to meet the needs of the individual, the students and the organisation.	Strength

Comments

M10 Comprehensive recruitment policies and procedures are in place, including a thorough interview process for all prospective staff. Staff files are well organised and include all necessary documentation.

M11 Induction procedures for all staff are robust and well documented. Checklists include meetings with relevant department heads and new teachers are mentored by a more experienced member of staff. Checks are in place to ensure important policies, such as safeguarding, have been read and understood.

M12 There are comprehensive appraisal procedures, differentiated according to the role. Targets are set and areas of improvement identified with clear links to continuing professional development (CPD).

M13 There is a structured, well-established and inclusive approach to CPD, linked to annual appraisals. Good use is made of existing expertise within the team and funding is available for further training for all staff.

Student administration	Area of strength
M14 Staff are helpful and courteous to students and their representatives, and provide satisfactory levels of customer service.	Strength
M15 Students or their representatives receive sufficient information and advice on their course choices before arrival and during their stay.	Met
M16 Staff carry out enrolment, cancellation and refund procedures efficiently, fairly, and with appropriate sensitivity.	Met
M17 There are effective systems in place to maintain accurate and up-to-date records of student enrolment, payment and course details. These records are accessible at all times to authorised staff.	Met
M18 There are effective systems to maintain up-to-date and accessible records of local contact details for students, and their designated emergency contacts.	Met
M19 There is a clear and effective policy on student attendance and punctuality that is known to all staff and students and is applied consistently.	Strength

M20 All staff and students are made aware of conditions and procedures under which a student may be asked to leave the course.	Met
M21 All students and, where appropriate, group leaders and parents/legal guardians, receive information in writing about how to make a complaint.	Strength

Comments

M14 Feedback records and comments from the student focus group reveal that customer service is of a high standard at the school. It is clear that staff are sensitive to the cultural needs and expectations of the school's largest student demographic in particular, and go out of their way to provide assistance where necessary.

M19 There are very good procedures in place for monitoring attendance. Students are reminded of the importance of good attendance through a wide range of documents produced by the school, including a "Why attendance matters" leaflet. Record keeping is good and follow up is systematic.

M21 Records of complaints reveal that they are followed up swiftly and sensitively, and the overall policy is comprehensive. Simplified versions are available on poster displays and in handbooks and include the ultimate recourse to an external body.

Publicity	Met
M22 All publicity and information is accurate, and gives rise to realistic expectations about the premises, location, and the extent and availability of the services and resources.	Strength
M23 All publicity and information about the provider and the services it offers is in clear, accurate and accessible English.	Met
M24 Publicity gives clear, accurate and easy-to-find information on the courses.	Not met
M25 Publicity includes clear, accurate and easy-to-find information on costs.	Met
M26 Publicity or other information made available before enrolment gives an accurate description of the level of care and support given to any students under 18.	Met
M27 Publicity gives an accurate description of any accommodation offered.	Met
M28 Descriptions of staff qualifications are accurate.	Met
M29 Claims to accreditation are in line with Scheme requirements.	Met

Comments

The group website is the main source of publicity, supplemented by a group brochure and various social media platforms.

M23 The website and brochure offer an accurate representation of the school. A virtual tour, location map, photographs and descriptions of facilities give rise to realistic expectations.

M24 Most of the information on courses is accurate. However, maximum class sizes for the IELTS course are not clear. This was addressed during the inspection and is no longer a point to be addressed.

M26 Detailed information on safeguarding provision is available on the website, including reference to limits to supervision for 16–17-year-olds on adult courses. However, the brochure does not contain any specific information on the level of care given to students under 18.

Premises and resources

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.	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.	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.	Strength

Comments

P1 The premises provide a very comfortable and professional environment for staff and students. They are in an excellent state of repair and commissioned artwork on feature walls adds to the strong branding of the organisation. Provision is made for students with disabilities, communal areas are spacious and toilets are very well maintained.

P2 Most classrooms comfortably accommodate the maximum class size and feature flexible furniture. Most rooms have natural light as well as glass partition walls, and due to the location of the school, there is no extraneous noise from outside. All rooms have air conditioning which can be controlled from within.

P5 There is clear and attractive signage throughout the building, much of which is custom designed and features local maps and landmarks. Noticeboards are visually attractive, clearly labelled and organised, and supplemented by a school information presentation on a continuous loop played in the reception area.

P6 Staff benefit from a comfortable and well-stocked teachers' room, in addition to an overspill room for tasks requiring a greater degree of concentration. A staff kitchen is well equipped and offers further space for relaxation. Staff have their own lockers and access to a range of resources and technological equipment.

Learning resources	Area of strength
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.	Strength
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.	Strength
P10 Any facilities provided for additional or independent learning are appropriately equipped and organised.	Met
P11 Students receive guidance on the use of any resources provided for independent learning.	Met
P12 There is a policy for the continuing review and development of teaching and learning resources, and evidence of its implementation.	Strength

Comments

P8 A wide selection of materials is available to teachers, including digital resources. Subscriptions to further online materials are paid for by the school and teachers in the focus group were very satisfied with the range of materials available to them.

P9 All classrooms have interactive whiteboards and are well maintained. On-going training is provided for teachers in the use of classroom technology, as evidenced during observed lessons. Examination classes are often held in the learning resource centre to provide training for mainstream online testing, for example.

P12 Teaching and learning resources are regularly reviewed and teachers are actively encouraged to suggest additional materials for the school to purchase. Evidence was seen of the trialling of new resources and teachers appreciated the opportunity to be involved in the selection of materials for each course.

Teaching and learning

Academic staff profile	Met
T1 All academic staff have a level of education normally represented by a Level 6 qualification on the Ofqual register of regulated qualifications.	Met
T2 The teaching team has ELT/TESOL qualifications relevant to the courses they are teaching.	Met
T3 The teaching team has a range of experience, knowledge and skills appropriate to the courses offered and the needs of the learners.	Met
T4 The academic manager/academic management team has an appropriate professional profile to provide academic leadership.	Met

Comments

All criteria in this area are fully met.

Academic management	Area of strength
T5 Teachers are matched appropriately to courses.	Strength
T6 There are effective procedures for the appropriate timetabling of students, teachers, courses and classrooms.	Met
T7 There are formalised arrangements, satisfactory to students and staff, for covering for absent teachers.	Met
T8 Where enrolment is continuous, explicit attention is paid to all aspects of academic management affected.	Met

T9 There are effective arrangements, led by an academic manager, to ensure appropriate day-to-day guidance and support for all teachers.	Strength
T10 There are effective arrangements for the observation and monitoring of teachers' performance by a TEFLQ academic manager.	Strength

Comments

T5 The principal has a very good knowledge of the skills and experience of the current teaching team. Teacher preferences are considered when timetabling but teachers are also encouraged to further develop by being deployed on previously untried levels or course types, paired with an experienced mentor. CPD further enhances teacher experience.

T9 Despite there being no DoS in place during the inspection, teachers commented on how well supported they felt by the principal (TEFLQ). The principal takes an active role in the academic programme and his considerable experience ensures that teachers on all courses receive appropriate guidance. Peer observations also take place as a further means of support.

T10 There is a comprehensive observation policy in place and evidence to support that it is followed. New teachers are observed in their first week, and long-term teachers are observed twice a year. Observations also form part of the annual appraisal process and drop-in observations are also conducted. Examples of good practice and weaknesses from observed lessons inform CPD sessions.

Course design and implementation	Area of strength
T11 Course design is based on stated principles. There is a coherent and appropriate course structure described in writing for teachers' guidance.	Met
T12 Course design is regularly reviewed in light of the different and changing needs of students and feedback from teachers and students.	Strength
T13 Written course outlines and intended learning outcomes, appropriate to the course length and type, are available to students.	Met
T14 Any activities additional to English classes, and which form part of the language curriculum, encourage the acquisition of language and the development of relevant language skills.	Strength
T15 Courses include study and learning strategies that support independent learning and enable students to benefit from their programmes and continue their learning after the course.	Met
T16 Courses include strategies which help students to develop their language skills outside the classroom and benefit linguistically from their stay in the UK.	Strength

Comments

T12 A curriculum manager for the group is in place to ensure that all courses are regularly reviewed with feedback from both students and academic staff taken into consideration.

T14 A number of additional classes are organised as part of the weekly leisure programme in response to teacher recommendations and student requests. These target problems identified in ILPs and regularly comprise conversation, homework and writing clubs, for example. Classes are well attended and appreciated by students.

T15 ILPs provide guidance in learner training in addition to the classes offered as part of the leisure programme; however insufficient guidance is offered in teacher handbooks and course planning documents.

T16 There are clear attempts to expose students to the local environment. Projects and fact-finding off-site lessons are designed to encourage communication with members of the local community and enhance students' understanding of British culture.

Learner management	Area of strength
T17 There are effective procedures for the correct placement of students, appropriate to their level and age.	Strength
T18 There are effective procedures for evaluating, monitoring and recording students' progress.	Met
T19 Students are provided with learning support and enabled to change courses or classes where necessary.	Met
T20 Where relevant, students are guided to select the examinations and examination training best suited to their needs and interests.	Strength
T21 Academic reports are made available to students on request and, in the case of under 18s, to their parents/guardians.	Strength
T22 Students wishing to progress to mainstream UK education have access to relevant information and advice.	Strength

Comments

T17 Procedures for placement testing are very effective and the useful data gained is made available to teachers in digital format. The identification of any special educational needs is factored into this process.

T20 Information and guidance on examinations is comprehensive. Placement tests ask if students are interested in or intending to take an examination in the future and they are then given support towards this. The principal is an examiner for a major examination board and provides regular training for teachers in the interpretation and use of assessment criteria. Additional classes targeting exam skills are arranged as part of the leisure programme.

T21 Academic reports are given to all students studying for four weeks or more, and others on request. The reports are evidence based and professionally presented.

T22 NCG's sister company provides a university placement service to international students. The organisation is based at the Manchester site but representatives visit the Liverpool school to provide students with professional advice and information.

Classroom observation record

Number of teachers seen	9
Number of observations	9
Parts of programme(s) observed	All

Comments

All classes were face to face.

Teaching: classroom observation	Met
T23 Teachers demonstrate sound knowledge and awareness of the use of English and the linguistic systems underlying it, and provide appropriate models of both spoken and written English.	Strength
T24 The content of the lessons shows that the course objectives, the learning needs and cultural backgrounds of the students have been taken into account.	Strength
T25 Lessons lead to relevant learning outcomes, made known to students and achieved through a coherent sequence of activities.	Met
T26 Teaching techniques are appropriate to the focus of the lesson and to the needs of the group and individual learners.	Met
T27 Teachers promote learning by the effective management of the classroom environment and resources.	Met
T28 Students receive appropriate and timely feedback on their performance during the lesson.	Met
T29 Lessons include activities to evaluate whether learning is taking place.	Met
T30 Teachers demonstrate the ability to engage students and create a positive learning atmosphere.	Strength

Comments

T23 Teachers produced accurate models of spoken and written form and generally provided good explanations of grammar and vocabulary. In better segments models included parts of speech, phonetic script and attention was paid to syllabus stress and contracted forms.

T24 Lessons were well planned and included detailed student profiles. Lesson content was appropriate to student needs and this was further facilitated in the majority of segments by adapting materials to ensure maximum interest. Anticipated problems and solutions identified in lesson plans showed further evidence of teachers responding to students' learning needs.

T25 Lessons followed a logical and coherent sequence of activities leading to clearly identified outcomes which were made known to students in most lessons.

T26 A range of appropriate teaching techniques was observed. Teachers elicited target language confidently, and gesture and mime were employed to good effect. There were examples of nomination, prompting and concept checking, and controlled oral practice at both single word and sentence level was observed in several lessons. However, in isolated examples teacher explanations dominated so there were missed opportunities for students to experiment with the target language.

T27 Interactive whiteboards were used confidently in all classes. Coursebooks were suitably exploited and a range of professionally presented and personalised materials were used, in response to student needs and their preferred style of learning. Student interactions varied in most lessons but occasionally teacher talking time dominated at the expense of meaningful student interaction.

T28 Teachers employed a range of correction techniques effectively, including self and peer correction. Student activities were monitored efficiently and led to on-the-spot correction as well as delayed feedback, and praise and encouragement were given appropriately and consistently.

T29 Lesson plans were appropriately staged and activities to check that learning was taking place included reviewing language taught in previous lessons and using productive tasks to check students' use of new language in a number of contexts.

T30 Teachers created a very positive learning atmosphere on the whole. Students were clearly motivated and engaged, working well in pairs and small groups. In most lessons, the pace of the lesson was good and delivered with energy and enthusiasm. Activities were often personalised to ensure maximum engagement. Teachers were encouraging, calm and supportive and had developed a very good rapport with their students.

Classroom observation summary

The teaching observed met the requirements of the Scheme and ranged from unsatisfactory to very good against the criteria, with the majority being satisfactory or good. Teachers demonstrated sound knowledge and awareness of the use of English, and lesson content was relevant to students' needs based on some very good class profiles. A range of teaching techniques was seen and teachers managed the classroom environment and resources well. However teacher talking time occasionally dominated, limiting student opportunity. In most cases, feedback was consistent and appropriate. Rapport between teachers and students was excellent and there was a purposeful environment in all classes.

Welfare and student services

Care of students	Area of strength
W1 Providers ensure the safety and security of students on their premises by measures appropriate to their age and background, and the location.	Strength
W2 There is a comprehensive plan to respond to any emergency. This plan is known to all staff, and relevant elements are known to students.	Strength
W3 Students receive pastoral care appropriate to their age, background and circumstances. All staff and students know the name(s) of the person or people who deal with students' personal problems.	Strength
W4 There are policies to promote tolerance and respect, and procedures for dealing with any abusive behaviour. All staff and students are aware of these.	Strength
W5 Where relevant, students receive a 24-hour emergency contact number for the provider, in writing.	Met
W6 Students receive in advance information on the most appropriate forms of transport between the point of entry to the UK and the provider or accommodation, including approximate costs.	Met
W7 Students receive advice on relevant aspects of life in the UK.	Strength
W8 Students have access to adequate health care provision.	Met

Comments

W1 Systems to ensure the safety and security of students are very well managed. Appropriate risk assessments are in place and daily checks for fire safety are carried out as well as quarterly checks of classrooms and offices for general safety. Responsibility for safety and security is specified in the job description of the AWM, and training has been provided for five fire marshals.

W2 There is a comprehensive plan in place for emergencies on the premises and off-site that includes staff roles and responsibilities. The plan is covered in teacher inductions and relevant information given to students during their welcome meetings and prior to social programme activities.

W3 Provision for pastoral care is very good. As well as dedicated staff members, students can access support through tutorial meetings with their teachers or through the student council meetings. In addition, all under 18s are invited to an individual meeting with the DDSL every two weeks.

W4 There is a carefully considered anti-bullying and harassment policy for students, and clear guidance is also available in the student handbook. Prevent and examples of behaviour that may lead to expulsion are also covered in the student behaviour policy which is made available to students at induction. Student-produced posters are displayed around the school and further support the policy.

W7 New starters receive a welcome email with a link to the student handbook which includes detailed information on aspects of life in the UK, as well as the British Council's *Safety First* booklet. Attractive posters featuring, for example, information on staying safe and local places of worship are displayed throughout the school.

Accommodation (W9–W22 as applicable)	Met
<i>All accommodation</i>	
W9 Students have a comfortable living environment throughout their stay.	Met
W10 Arrangements for cleaning and laundry are satisfactory.	Met

W11 A responsible representative inspects all accommodation (for safety and suitability) before students are placed, and at least every two years after that.	Met
W12 Students receive written confirmation of accommodation booked, giving clear and accurate information.	Strength
W13 There are effective procedures for identifying and resolving any problems students have with their accommodation.	Met
W14 Accommodation providers receive written confirmation of the rules, terms and conditions applied by the provider with respect to the provision of accommodation services.	Strength
W15 Students receive meals as agreed; these offer a well-balanced diet, taking into account any reasonable dietary requirements students may have.	Met

Comments

W12 Very good information is provided to students in advance of their stay including a homestay pen portrait, information on the local area, and transport links with costs. All confirmations include reminders of cancellation and changes to accommodation rules, and a very useful factsheet on staying with a homestay is also provided. W14 In addition to a useful handbook for homestay hosts, they also receive additional guides on hosting students from specific demographics. Both homestay hosts and residences managers spoke highly of communication between themselves and the school.

Accommodation: homestay only

W16 Homestay hosts accommodate no more than four students at one time.	Met
W17 Homestay hosts do not accommodate more than one student with the same language, unless the students, their agents, parents or legal guardians specifically request this in writing.	Not met
W18 No more than two students share the same bedroom, unless the students, their agents, parents or legal guardians specifically request this in writing.	Met
W19 English is the language of communication within the homestay home.	Met
W20 Hosts ensure that there is an adult available to receive students on first arrival.	Met

Comments

W17 One homestay was hosting three students from the same linguistic background.

Accommodation: other

W21 Students receive information about the implications of their living in private rented accommodation and advice in case of difficulties.	Met
W22 The provider monitors any other accommodation recommended, and booking and payment arrangements are clear.	N/a

Comments

The relevant criterion in this section was met.

Leisure opportunities

	Area of strength
W23 Students have appropriate information about and access to social, cultural and sporting events and activities which enhance their experience of studying in the UK.	Strength
W24 The content of any leisure programme is appropriate to the age and interests of the students.	Strength
W25 Any leisure programmes are well organised and sufficiently resourced.	Strength
W26 There are effective systems to ensure the health and safety of students on all on-site and off-site activities.	Met
W27 Staff supervising sporting and leisure activities on or off-site have appropriate experience and training.	Met

Comments

W23 Students' awareness of information about local social and cultural opportunities is maintained by information in the handbook, specific guides on their area of the UK, as well as a recommendation section on the social programme poster. A representative from the student council also visits classes each week to promote engagement.

W24 A wide variety of activities is available and consideration is given to ensure sufficient variety for long-term students as well as catering to the ages and cultural backgrounds of all students.

W25 Students can request activities through the student council whose members are also proactive in encouraging student engagement with the programme. Students in the focus group gave examples of activities they had requested being run.

Safeguarding under 18s

Safeguarding under 18s	Met
S1 There is a safeguarding policy which specifies procedures to ensure the safety and well-being of all students under the age of 18. A named member of staff is responsible for implementing this policy and responding to child protection allegations.	Strength
S2 The provider makes the policy known to all adults in contact with under 18s through their role with the organisation, and provides guidance or training relevant to its effective implementation.	Met
S3 The provider has written parental/guardian consent reflecting the level of care and support given to students under 18, including medical consent.	Met
S4 Recruitment procedures for all roles involving responsibility for or substantial access to under 18s are in line with safer recruitment good practice and the organisation's safeguarding policy.	Not met
S5 There are suitable arrangements for the supervision and safety of students during scheduled lessons and activities.	Strength
S6 There are suitable arrangements for the supervision and safety of students outside the scheduled programme.	Met
S7 There are suitable arrangements for the accommodation of students.	Met
S8 There are suitable arrangements to ensure contact between the provider and parents, legal guardians or their nominated representatives concerning the welfare of students.	Met

Comments

At the time of the inspection, there were four students aged under 18 at the school. They were all 17 years old. This number is representative of the average across most of the year except in the summer when closed groups of around 30 students are on site. Occasionally, students under the age of 16 are included in these groups.

S1 The school has a comprehensive and well-expressed safeguarding policy that is linked to other policies and supported by relevant practical documents such as rules for under 18s as well as an advice sheet for homestay hosts on accommodating this demographic.

S4 Although recruitment procedures for school staff are suitable, references for all homestay hosts recruited since 2016 were not in place. In addition, the homestay host application process does not enquire about medical fitness for the role, nor does it ask whether they or their family have had involvement with children's services.

S5 Very good systems are in place to ensure the safety of students in the school. Under 18s are identified by a coloured lanyard as well as a code in the register. Staff follow strict procedures in the event of a student absence.

Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance

D1 The organisation certifies that it operates at all times in accordance with the declarations in the *Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance*.

The Accreditation Scheme requires accredited providers to comply with all applicable laws and regulations. Providers must take steps to ensure that they are aware of, and comply with, all existing and new legal requirements.

On initial application and annual renewal of accreditation, providers are required to confirm that they are complying with all applicable laws and regulations.

Inspectors will check a random sample of items during inspection, in relation to criterion D1; if they find evidence of a breach of statutory or other legal requirements, the provider will be required to submit evidence of compliance confirmed by the appropriate regulatory body.

Any breach of the law or regulations will be viewed seriously by the Scheme and may result in the withdrawal or withholding of accreditation.

Any sustained breach of the law or regulations which an accredited provider fails upon reasonable notice to remedy will result in accreditation being withdrawn.

Comments

D1 The items sampled were satisfactory.

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	October 2015
Last full inspection	October 2016
Subsequent spot check (if applicable)	September 2017
Subsequent supplementary check (if applicable)	N/a
Subsequent interim visit (if applicable)	N/a
Current accreditation status	Accredited
Other related non-accredited activities (in brief) at this centre	N/a
Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates	NCG Manchester, NCG Summer Schools
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	NCG Dublin, Edvoy – university placement service for international students

Private sector

Date of foundation	2/6/2015
Ownership	Name of company: NCG (Liverpool) Ltd Company number: 09617974
Other accreditation/inspection	N/a

Premises profile

Details of any additional sites in use at the time of the inspection but not /observed	N/a
Details of any additional sites not in use at the time of the inspection	N/a

Student profile	At inspection	In peak week: July (organisation's estimate)
	At inspection	In peak week
ELT/ESOL students (eligible courses)		
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) 18 years and over	96	190
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) aged 16–17 years	4	20
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) aged under 16	0	0
Part-time ELT aged 18 years and over	0	0
Part-time ELT aged 16–17 years	0	0
Part-time ELT aged under 16 years	0	0
Overall total ELT/ESOL students shown above	100	210
Junior programmes: advertised minimum age	12	12
Junior programmes: advertised maximum age	17	17
Junior programmes: predominant nationalities	N/a	N/a
Adult programmes: advertised minimum age	16	16
Adult programmes: typical age range	16–40	16–40
Adult programmes: typical length of stay	3 months	3 months
Adult programmes: predominant nationalities	Saudi Arabian, Kuwaiti	Spanish, Saudi Arabian, Thai, Turkish, Omani

Staff profile	At inspection	In peak week (organisation's estimate)
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	9	11
Number teaching ELT 20 hours and over a week	4	
Number teaching ELT under 19 hours a week	5	
Number of academic managers for eligible ELT courses	1	2
Number of management (non-academic) and administrative staff working on eligible ELT courses	2	
Total number of support staff	0	

Academic manager qualifications profile

Profile at inspection	
Professional qualifications	Number of academic managers
TEFLQ qualification	1
Academic managers without TEFLQ qualification or three years relevant experience	0
Total	1
Comments	
The principal was not teaching during the week of the inspection.	

Teacher qualifications profile

Profile in week of inspection	
Professional qualifications	Number of teachers
TEFLQ qualification	2
TEFLI qualification	7
Holding specialist qualifications only (specify)	0
Qualified teacher status only (QTS)	0
Teachers without appropriate ELT/TESOL qualification	0
Total	9
Comments	
None.	

Accommodation profile

Number of students in each at the time of inspection (all students on eligible courses)		
Types of accommodation	Adults	Under 18s
<i>Arranged by provider/agency</i>		
Homestay	18	2
Private home	0	0
Home tuition	0	0
Residential	27	0
Hotel/guesthouse	0	0
Independent self-catering e.g. flats, bedsits, student houses	0	0
<i>Arranged by student/family/guardian</i>		
Staying with own family	0	1
Staying in privately rented rooms/flats	51	1
Overall totals adults/under 18s	96	4
Overall total adults + under 18s	100	