

Organisation name	New College Group Liverpool
Inspection date	20 September 2017

BACKGROUND
Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	October 2015 (spot check for extension of Manchester school accreditation)
Last full inspection	October 2016
Subsequent spot check (if applicable)	N/a
Subsequent supplementary check (if applicable)	N/a
Subsequent interim visit (if applicable)	N/a
Other related non-accredited activities (in brief) at this centre	N/a
Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates	NCG Manchester
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	N/a

Current accreditation status and reason for spot check

Current accredited status	Accredited
Reason for spot check	Routine: newly accredited institution

Premises profile

Address of main site	Graeme House, Derby Square, Liverpool, Merseyside L2 7ZH
Details of any additional sites in use at the time of the inspection	N/a
Details of any additional sites not in use at the time of the inspection	N/a
Sites inspected	Graeme House

Student and staff profile

	At inspection	In peak week July
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	102	179
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	14	13
Typical age range	14–45	13–50
Typical length of stay	1–30 weeks	2–6 weeks
Predominant nationalities	Italian, Kuwaiti, Saudi Arabian	Saudi Arabian, Omani, Spanish
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	6	12
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	3	4

INTRODUCTION

Background

New College Group (NCG) Liverpool was accredited by extension of NCG Manchester in October 2015 and a full inspection leading to accreditation of NCG Liverpool in its own right was carried out in 2016. The Liverpool school has always enrolled 16 and 17 year-olds as adults on adult courses, but also began accepting under 16s from June 2017, lowering its advertised minimum age to 12. This spot check was, therefore, a routine spot check for a newly accredited provider, but its purpose was also to monitor the effect of new provision to under 16s.

Preparation

The inspector telephoned the school in advance of the inspection to check on availability of key staff and on the presence of under 16s in the school. The Accreditation Unit provided the necessary paperwork.

Programme and persons present

The inspector arrived at 10.55 and left at 14.25. Meetings were held with the principal, the operations manager, the senior accommodation and welfare officer, and the director of studies. Brief focus group meetings were held with four teachers and a group of students aged under 16. A range of documents was viewed and a brief tour of the premises carried out.

FINDINGS

There have been few changes to the provision since the last inspection. Premises remain the same, as well as management and administrative staffing. A former student has been working on an internship to assist with busier periods. There have been one or two changes in the teaching staff, who are all on zero-hour contracts, with the exception of two, including the senior teacher.

Similarly, the course offer remains the same. A new task- and project- based syllabus has been written to accommodate junior groups, covering relevant topics and linking to the local environment.

Teachers and students in the focus group meetings all spoke positively of their experience within the school.

Care of under 18s

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
C1 Safeguarding policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C2 Guidance and training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C3 Publicity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C4 Recruitment procedures	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/a	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C5 Safety and supervision during scheduled lessons and activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C6 Safety and supervision outside scheduled lessons and activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C7 Accommodation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C8 Contact arrangements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/a	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments

16 and 17 year-olds are enrolled as adults on adult courses throughout the year. Since the end of June, the school has been receiving groups of students from 12 years of age upwards. These students come for short courses, with group leaders. All under 16s are taught in closed groups, while 16 and 17 year-olds join existing classes. At inspection there were 43 under 18s, of whom 27 were under 16.

C1 The comprehensive safeguarding policy, which is effectively linked to a range of other policy documents, is regularly reviewed by the NCG safeguarding improvement board and has recently been updated to include additional age-appropriate arrangements for supervision outside class time. A premises risk assessment has been carried out for under 18s, and a weekly safeguarding quality assurance record is produced by the operations manager, reporting on daily checks on a range of practical safeguarding measures, including absences, concerns, class profiles, record keeping, medical problems, new staff inductions and suitability checks.

C2 All staff receive basic awareness training, and staff who remain with the school for longer than a year undertake

intermediate level training. The principal, operations manager and DoS have specialist level training. Homestay hosts receive a copy of the safeguarding policy together with guidelines on hosting under 18s. Group leaders receive a safeguarding leaflet. The principal also completes group questionnaires with students on aspects of safeguarding.

C4 The principal, operations manager and DoS are all trained in safer recruitment, and recruitment procedures and documentation are generally of a very high standard. However, the school has not carried out suitability checks for all adults in homestays.

C5 Under 18s appear on special registers with photographs and classes are checked daily within the first 30 minutes, so that any absences or lateness can be followed up immediately. Although the building is not ideal for younger students, with toilets outside the main school area, steps are taken to identify and minimise risk. Under 18s are guided to use specific toilets, which other users of the building are excluded from by the use of notices, and under 16s cannot access the toilets with their swipe cards and have to be accompanied by group leaders or staff members. Closed groups have their own leisure programme, all activities are carefully risk assessed, and supervision arrangements are age appropriate. Group leaders are not counted in staff numbers.

C6 Rules are clearly presented to students and staff, including group leaders and homestay hosts.

C7 All under 18s are assigned to homestay accommodation unless parents or guardians decide otherwise and provide the appropriate consent. The students in the closed group attending at the time of the inspection were all in homestay accommodation. All accommodation is checked for any safeguarding issues, and records are kept of this. However, although specific checks are made for ages of other students being accommodated by the homestay provider, and languages spoken, records only mention safeguarding in general, and are not broken down into specific areas.

Care of under 18s summary

There is very good provision for the safeguarding of students under the age of 18 both during and outside class time. Policies and procedures are extremely thorough and regularly reviewed, and leisure arrangements and accommodation systems are appropriate. Accommodation systems are generally thorough, but the school has not carried out suitability checks for all adults in the household of homestay providers.

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.

Resources and environment

R3 Heating and air-conditioning are centrally controlled for the whole office block and this can lead to delays in changing the temperature of classrooms.

Addressed. Air-conditioning units and fans have been purchased for classrooms and a selection of staff have been trained in their operation.

R7 There are not always enough spare copies of coursebooks for short-term students to borrow.

Addressed. There is now a greater stock of spare books. The majority of students buy a book as part of their package and junior groups follow a special syllabus.

Teaching and Learning

T12 The skills classes lack a coherent, written course structure to help less experienced teachers plan their lessons.

Not yet addressed. This is being developed by the DoS and one of the teaching team.

T14 No written course outlines for the skills classes are provided for students. The coursebook provides the course outline for the morning classes but not all students have the book, particularly short-stay students.

Addressed. Course outlines with weekly topics and aims are posted in classrooms.

Welfare and student services

W4 The language used on posters is not accessible to students with a lower level of English.

Addressed. The relevant poster has been replaced by one created by a class of students at A2 level. The language of some other posters has also been simplified.

Points to be addressed arising from this visit

C4 The school has not carried out suitability checks for all adults in the household of homestay providers.

CONCLUSIONS

The school continues to operate in accordance with Scheme requirements, and the introduction of younger students has been supported with appropriate systems and procedures.

RECOMMENDATION

Standard spot check of newly accredited organisation

The next inspection falls due in 2020; there are no grounds for bringing this forward. However, evidence must be presented within three months to show that suitability checks have been carried out on all adults in homestays where under 18s are accommodated.

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Changes to summary statement

Courses for closed groups of under 18s can be added.

Previous summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited New College Group, Liverpool in October 2016. 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 English for adults (16+).

Strengths were noted in the areas of staff management, student administration, quality assurance, premises and facilities, academic management, learner management, teaching, care of students and leisure opportunities.

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

Amended summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited New College Group, Liverpool in October 2016. 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 English for adults (16+) and for closed groups of under 18s.

Strengths were noted in the areas of staff management, student administration, quality assurance, premises and facilities, academic management, learner management, teaching, care of students and leisure opportunities.

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