

Organisation name	Oxford English Centre Juniors
Inspection date	19 July 2017

BACKGROUND
Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	1986
Last full inspection	August 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	None
Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates	The Oxford House College (OHC) Group with schools in London, Oxford, Richmond and Stratford-upon-Avon
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	OHC group schools in Australia, Canada and the USA

Current accreditation status and reason for spot check

Current accredited status	Accredited
Reason for spot check	Signalled: check course not running at inspection

Premises profile

Address of main site	66 Banbury Road, Oxford OX2 6PR
Details of any additional sites in use at the time of the inspection	Wychwood School, 74 Banbury Road, Oxford OX2 6JR
Details of any additional sites not in use at the time of the inspection	None
Sites inspected	The main site

Student and staff profile

	At inspection	In peak week <i>July</i>
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	80	80
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	12	12
Typical age range	14–17	14–17
Typical length of stay	2 weeks	2 weeks
Predominant nationalities	Italian	Italian
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	5	5
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	6	6

INTRODUCTION

Background

Since 2012, the Oxford English Centre has been owned by a company based in Australia. The same company also owns the Oxford House College group of schools, based in London, Oxford and Stratford-upon-Avon, and the Sol summer camps. The Oxford school was inspected in August 2016 and its accreditation continued, with a recommendation that a spot check should take place in summer 2017 focusing on the junior and teens summer programmes at Wychwood school, a short distance from the main school in Banbury Road, Oxford.

For 2017 the Oxford school website (18.07.17) offers:

A **summer teen programme** for individuals and groups of students aged 14–17 years old at Wychwood School for between one and ten weeks from mid June to the end of August. Accommodation is in homestay with evening meal, and school lunch vouchers for use in the school restaurant and 'local selected cafes'. Activities take place in the morning, and classes in the afternoon.

A **summer junior programme** for individuals and groups of students aged 11–13 years old at Wychwood School for between one and four weeks from mid July to mid August. Accommodation is in the residence on site, and all meals are taken there. Classes take place in the morning, and activities in the afternoon. This programme is run 'through our partner company Sol Camps'. There is a link to the Sol Camps website on the downloadable fact sheet on the Oxford school website (Junior Courses).

The Accreditation Scheme marque is at the foot of the page with information about the Junior Courses.

The school also accepts closed groups of under 18s in January and in April.

Preparation

The spot check was conducted by one inspector who had not been to the school before. She made contact with the principal of the Oxford school to discuss any days that should be avoided for the visit. The principal informed her that he was no longer the principal but a new centre manager, previously the centre manager in Oxford House Richmond, had been appointed. The inspector then received an email from the principal of Oxford House College, London, informing her he was the contact for the spot check if she needed any information. She thanked him by return email but did not contact him again as she was able to get the information she needed from the centre manager in Oxford.

The inspector received documentation from the Accreditation Unit and checked the school's website before the visit. Since no further contact was made with the principal of the London school and no contact was made directly with the new centre manager of the school, the date of the spot check was not known by either party.

Programme and persons present

The inspector arrived at the Oxford school at 13.00 and left at 17.50. She had discussions with the centre manager, observed all five junior classes running, checked documentation, including teachers' qualifications and homestay records, and talked to some students. The inspector gave feedback on the visit to the centre manager.

The following afternoon (20.07.2017) the inspector went to Wychwood School to check the summer junior programme advertised on the Oxford English Centre website (Junior courses). The students and all staff were out on an excursion. The headmistress' secretary confirmed that there was a course running, the children were living in the school's dormitories, and the course had been held there every summer 'for several years in the past'. No further information was available.

Another inspector went to Wychwood School on 04.08.2017 to check the summer junior programme advertised on the Oxford English Centre website (Junior courses). The centre manager of Sol Camps met the inspector outside the premises and arranged a phone call between the inspector and the principal of Oxford House College, London. The inspector was informed that no OEC students had been, or currently were, enrolled with Sol Camps and that previously Oxford English Centre had used Wychwood School for some afternoon activities for junior students, but this was no longer the case. The inspector left the premises.

A check of the Oxford English Centre website on 04.08.17, as the report was being finalised, revealed that the information about the summer junior programme at Wychwood School was no longer there, although the course dates were originally advertised as finishing in mid August. The downloadable factsheet about the summer teens programme, with a picture of the location on it as being Wychwood School, was also no longer available.

FINDINGS

Management

The new centre manager was appointed in April 2017, by which time the principal had already transferred to other responsibilities in the organisation, so there was no handover or induction. The Oxford school is much larger than the Richmond school which the centre manager was in charge of before. The Accreditation Unit was not informed of this change in management.

When the centre manager took up his appointment there was no accommodation officer in post in the Oxford school so he managed the allocation of homestays in the meantime, appointed a new accommodation officer and trained her. There were 15 groups booked in for the teens courses, all requiring homestay accommodation. He also recruited four activity staff for the teens courses and, together with the director of studies (DoS), three teachers for the teens courses.

The centre manager told the inspector that the accommodation officer had resigned and left the school the day before the spot check. Two administrative staff from the London school were working in reception in the Oxford school dealing with accommodation.

Teens courses: location

The new centre manager was appointed in April 2017 and is in charge of both adult and junior courses in the Oxford school. He told the inspector that, given the overall student numbers, and the classroom capacity in the main school, he took the decision to run all the summer teen programmes in the main Oxford school, and not at Wychwood School (as advertised on the website). There were 80 junior students in school (peak week) at the time of the spot check, being taught in five classes. The school's adult courses were also running and the school was full. No summer teen courses were running at Wychwood School. The centre manager did not know whether any junior courses (for students aged 11–13) were running at Wychwood School and had no contact with any staff there.

According to the last inspection report in August 2016 the teens programme took place in Wychwood School in 2016, and only transferred to the main school when student numbers were lower towards the end of the courses. Also according to the inspection report, the junior programme was offered in 2016 but no enrolments meant the course did not run. The centre manager had no information about this as he was in charge of the Richmond school in 2106.

Teens courses: premises

The five summer teens classes were running in the main school alongside the adult classes. The teens' classes were spread through the building: two classes were on the top floor, one on the middle floor and two were in the ground floor extension at the rear of the building. Adult classes were running in the other seven classrooms on all floors. Lunch for teens was at 12.00 but adult students finished classes at 12.20 and came to the café before the teens had finished lunch so there was overlap. The teens' afternoon break was the same time as adult afternoon classes finished (14.45). Some adult students then went to the café and socialised in the patio/garden at the back of the school. There was no separation of teens and adult students, and no evidence of effective supervision of teens in breaks and at lunchtime.

At lunchtime students can eat in the school café. This is a very nice facility (as pointed out in the last inspection report) offering a good choice of reasonably priced and healthy food. Students on the teens programme have lunch vouchers. They can also use the vouchers at a café further along Banbury Road. One student told the inspector he had had lunch that day in a restaurant with 'other friends' and where he could eat food from his country. There is no supervision of students going out at lunchtime and no system of signing in and out.

Teens courses: age ranges

The summer teen courses are for students aged 14–17. The inspector checked the class lists and four of the five classes had students outside this age range:

Advanced: 1 x 13 year-old
Intermediate: 1 x 13 year-old and 1 x 18 year-old
Pre-int: 2 x 13 year-olds
Pre-int: 1 x 12 year-old and 3 x 13 year-olds

The inspector also checked the class lists for the adult classes. A 14 year-old French boy was listed as being in an advanced class with an age range of 16–60 in the week of the spot check. The centre manager said this was an error and the boy had already been moved to a summer teens class.

Teens courses: activity programme

The teens course has a varied activity programme in the mornings. This was not checked as the inspector visited the Oxford school in the afternoon.

Verifying teachers' qualifications and experience (M6)

Two of the teachers teaching teens classes are teachers on permanent contracts in the main school, one is the director of studies (DoS) and one is the academic lead. They are both TEFLQ and their files contained all the required information.

The remaining three teachers are all TEFLI. One had copies of qualifications on file that had not been endorsed, and her file contained no telephone number for her next of kin. One teacher (teacher A) had no degree and was due to graduate in 2019, had only one reference on file, and no telephone number for his next of kin.

Academic management

The DoS and the academic lead from the main adult school were both teaching teens' classes at the time of the spot check. The centre manager told the inspector there had been no induction specific to the teaching of the teens courses. The three teachers contracted to teach these courses had had a short induction ('20 to 30 minutes') with a focus on safeguarding. No observations of teens' courses teachers had taken place; one newly qualified teacher (teacher A above) was teaching in week three of the programme and had had no feedback or guidance on his teaching. The centre manager is TEFLI and not, therefore, qualified to carry out performance-appraising observations.

Teens courses: teaching observations

The inspector observed all five teens classes. The teaching observed ranged from good to barely adequate. In the stronger segments students were working purposefully in collaborative tasks with a strong focus on speaking skills. Teachers encouraged self- and peer correction, and gave positive feedback. The pace of the lessons was good and students were engaged. In weaker segments teachers did not grade their language sufficiently and instructions for activities were not always clear. Some elicitation was seen but often teachers explained vocabulary themselves, resulting in too much teacher talking time. Students were interested in some of the topics, but less engaged in the tasks they were set. The teaching observed met the requirements of the Scheme.

Accommodation records

The inspector sampled five records of homestays hosting teens. Two of the five had not supplied copies of their Gas Safe certificate, one did not have a fire risk assessment on file, and in one homestay there were five students, three from a Spanish-speaking group, one Russian and one Brazilian.

Parental consent forms are received pre-arrival. One of the teens' student records sampled had no parental consent form on file.

Welfare

Students on the teens courses are required to wear lanyards as ID but three were seen without them in the course of the afternoon. No fire drills had taken place since the teens courses had started. In one teens' classroom a student was allowed to sit in front of a fire exit, despite the 'keep clear' sign.

Publicity

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
M21 Accessible accurate language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
M22 Realistic expectations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
M23 Course descriptions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
M24 Course information	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/a	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
M25 Costs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
M26 Accommodation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
M27 Leisure programme	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
M28 Staff qualifications	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/a	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
M29 Accreditation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/a	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments

The school's publicity materials (checked 18.07.17) comprise a website with a section under Courses dedicated to Junior courses, and two downloadable fact sheets about the teens and junior summer programmes.

M22 The website says that the summer teens programme is run at Wychwood School; there is a picture of Wychwood School on the downloadable fact sheet. In fact the programme is being run at the Oxford school in 2017. The picture and message from the principal is out of date, since a new centre manager was appointed in April 2017.

M24 On the website the age range for the teens programme is given as 14–17. In Oxford there was one 12 year-old, seven 13 year-olds and one 18 year-old in the teens classes. The course length is given as one to six weeks on the website but one to ten weeks on the downloadable fact sheet. The maximum class size is given as 14 but one of the teens classes had 15 students and one had 16 students at the time of the spot check.

M29 The summer junior programme run at Wychwood School was advertised on the Oxford English Centre website (checked 18.07.17), and the Accreditation Scheme marque was at the foot of the page, giving the clear impression that the summer junior programme was part of the accredited provision.

Care of under 18s

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

Comments

There were 80 students aged 12–17, and one student aged 18, enrolled on the teens summer programme at the time of the spot check.

C3 The student guide can be downloaded from the website and this contains information about the level of care, and rules and curfews, for 16 and 17 year-olds on the school's adult courses. The name of the person to go to with concerns about welfare is the principal, who is no longer at the school. The student guide gives a general curfew of 22.30 for all under 18s but it is not clear whether this also applies to the younger students (aged 12 and 13) who were in school at the time of the spot check. There is no further information about any different levels of care available to under 18s on the summer teens and junior programmes. This was a point to be addressed in the last inspection report.

C4 The centre manager told the inspector that all hosts are required to use the question 66 method when applying for DBS checks so that all adults in the household are checked. This information was not on the homestay records for those hosting students on the teens programme, and there was insufficient time during the spot check to check further. The Oxford school website says that 'all hosts are carefully vetted by the OEC accommodation team to make sure that they meet our criteria', but the criteria are not specified.

C5 The teens courses were running in the adult school with insufficient separation of juniors and adults at lunchtime and afternoon breaks, and no evidence of effective supervision of the juniors at these times. The intermediate class had an 18 year-old student placed with students aged under 16. A 14 year-old student had been placed in error in a class of adults with an age range of 16–60.

C6 There was no supervision, and no system of signing in and out, for those students who chose to collect their lunch from a café further along Banbury Road.

Care of under 18s summary

The provision does not meet the section standard. There is a safeguarding policy in place and staff training is appropriate. Information about the different levels of care available for under 18s is not in place. Supervision of students on the teens courses both while they are in school, and at lunchtime if they choose to leave school, is not adequate.

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.

Welfare and student services

W12 Registers do not include information about fire risk assessments.

Partially addressed. Homestay registers include information as to whether homestay hosts have completed fire risk assessments. However, one of the homestays hosting a teens course student had no record of a fire risk assessment having been carried out.

Points to be addressed arising from this visit

Management

M6 One teacher's file contained copies of qualifications that had not been endorsed. One teacher had only one reference on file.

M7 The new centre manager had no induction or handover with the previous principal.

M22 The website says that the summer teens programme is run at Wychwood School but the programme is being run at the Oxford school in 2017. The picture and message from the principal is out of date, since a new centre manager was appointed in April 2017.

M24 On the website the age range for the teens programme is given as 14–17. In Oxford there was one 12 year-old, seven 13 year-olds and one 18 year-old in the teens classes. The course length is given as one to six weeks on the website but one to ten weeks on the downloadable fact sheet. The maximum class size is given as 14 but one of the teens classes had 15 students and one had 16 students at the time of the spot check.

M29 The summer junior programme run at Wychwood School was advertised on the Oxford English Centre website (checked 18.07.17), and the Accreditation Scheme marque was at the foot of the page, giving the clear impression that the summer junior programme was part of the accredited provision.

Teaching and learning

T11 No observations of the teachers working on the summer teens programme had taken place. One newly qualified teacher was teaching in week three of the programme and had had no feedback or guidance on his teaching.

T26 Some teachers explained vocabulary themselves, resulting in too much teacher talking time.

T30 In weaker segments teachers did not grade their language sufficiently and instructions for activities were not always clear. Students were interested in some of the topics, but less engaged in the tasks they were set.

Welfare and student services

W1 Students on the teens courses are required to wear lanyards as ID but three were seen without them in the course of the afternoon. No fire drills had taken place since the teens courses had started. In one teens' classroom a student was allowed to sit in front of a fire exit, despite the 'keep clear' sign.

W12 Two of the five homestay records sampled did not have copies of Gas Safe certificates and one did not have a fire risk assessment on file.

W16 In one homestay there were five students, three from a Spanish-speaking group, one Russian and one Brazilian.

Care of under 18s

C3 There is no information about any different levels of care available to under 18s on the summer teens and junior programmes.

C4 The information confirming whether all adults in homestays hosting students on the teens programme are DBS checked was not easily available and there was insufficient time during the spot check to check further.

C5 The teens courses were running in the adult school with insufficient separation of juniors and adults at lunchtime and afternoon breaks, and no evidence of effective supervision of the juniors at these times. The intermediate class had an 18 year-old student placed with students aged under 16. A 14 year-old student had been placed in error in a class of adults with an age range of 16–60.

C6 There was no supervision, and no system of signing in and out, for those students who chose to collect their lunch from a café further along Banbury Road. One of the teens' student records sampled had no parental consent form on file.

CONCLUSIONS

The teaching observed on the teens summer programme was satisfactory. The management of the summer teens programme is not satisfactory in terms of an appropriate use of premises, some welfare issues, the inappropriate placement of students, and the lack of supervision of students aged under 18. The support for teachers on these courses is not adequate. There are weaknesses in publicity and the section standard for Care of under 18s is not

met. An inspector was told that there were no students on the summer junior programme advertised as being held at Wychwood School.

RECOMMENDATION

In view of the unsatisfactory findings, accreditation should be placed under review. The period of review to be ended by a spot check focusing on Care of under 18s and the junior courses, at a time when courses for under 18s are running.

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Changes to summary statement

The summary statement has been withdrawn and should not be used.
