

Organisation name	Oxford School of English (Juniors)
Inspection date	8 July 2019
Current accreditation status	Accreditation under review
Reason for spot check	Signalled: end period under review

Recommendation

We recommend continued accreditation. The period of review may now be ended and accreditation continued until the next full inspection, which falls due in 2022. However, evidence must be submitted within three months to demonstrate that weaknesses in W1, W26 and S4 have been addressed. The required evidence was subsequently submitted.

Changes to the summary statement

An updated summary statement can now be issued.

New summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited Oxford School of English Juniors in August 2018 and July 2019. 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 for closed groups (aged 12 to 19) and vacation courses for under 18s.

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

New summary inspection findings

Management

The provision meets the section standard. The management of the provision operates to the benefit of students and staff, and in accordance with the provider's stated goals, values, and publicity.

Teaching and learning

The provision meets the section standard. The academic staff are appropriately qualified and teachers receive the guidance needed to ensure they support students effectively. Courses are suitably structured. The teaching observed met the requirements of the Scheme.

Welfare and student services

The provision meets the section standard. Although there is generally good provision for the safety and security of the students, risk assessments do not address all the risks of using a shared site campus. Staff are aware of their responsibilities for pastoral care and students feel safe and well looked after. Accommodation is of a satisfactory standard. The leisure programme is varied and appropriate to the age and interests of the students and also allows some room for flexibility.

Safeguarding under 18s

The provision meets the section standard. All adults are given safeguarding training appropriate to their roles. Supervision ratios are high and students are never left unsupervised. Details informing parental consent were found to be lacking but were quickly addressed. Some of the practices for the recruitment of hosts were also updated to meet safer recruitment guidelines, although there were not two references on file for all homestays recruited since the beginning of 2016.

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	2002 as part of the main school
Last full inspection	2018
Subsequent spot check(s) (if applicable)	2019 (this spot check)

Subsequent supplementary check(s) (if applicable)	N/a
Subsequent interim visit(s) (if applicable)	N/a
Other related non-accredited activities (in brief) at this centre	N/a
Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates	Oxford School of English adult school
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	N/a

Student and staff profile	At inspection	In peak week: July
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	147	243
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	12	12
Typical age range	12–17	12–17
Typical length of stay	2 weeks	2 weeks
Predominant nationalities	Ukrainian	Chinese
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	6	11
Total number of managers including academic	5	5
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	2	2

Premises profile	
Address of main site	4th Floor Clarendon House, Shoe Lane, Oxford OX1 2DP
Additional sites in use	N/a
Additional sites not in use	Newman House, Mandelbrote Drive, Oxford OX4 4XG
Sites inspected	City of Oxford College, Oxpens Road, Oxford OX1 1SA

Introduction

Background

Oxford School of English (OSE) has offered junior courses for students aged 12–17 since 2006. Until 2016 these courses formed part of the overall provision of the adult school, but in 2016 a separate company was created for junior courses. Most of the junior provision takes place during six weeks in July and August, but a number of closed group courses are provided at other times of the year. These programmes, referred to as mini-stay courses, range in length from one to 15 days, and are run for closed groups of students aged 12–19.

In the summer the junior school is run from premises in a further education college situated a ten-minute walk away from the main school. At other times of the year, rooms are used in a Catholic chaplaincy (Newman House) or in the adult school (for those students aged 16–18). The junior school is run by the principal, supported by an operations manager, the main school director of studies (DoS), who is also safeguarding designated lead, an assistant director of studies (ADoS) and an activities and groups manager.

Following the full inspection in 2018, the school's accreditation was placed under review because the section standard for Management was not met and there were weaknesses in W1, W13, W26, S4 and S6. The period of review was to be ended by the submission of an action plan within three months and a spot check focusing on these areas.

Preparation

The two inspectors were sent relevant documents by the Accreditation Unit, including a submitted action plan, and looked at the school's website. The reporting inspector contacted the school before the visit but did not indicate when the spot check would take place.

Programme and persons present

In the week of the spot check, the school was offering junior courses of 15 and 27 hours duration to a mixture of group and individual students between the ages of 12 and 17. Lessons were offered in the morning and in the afternoon. Most of the students were staying in homestay accommodation with others in nearby university residential accommodation.

The inspectors arrived at the school's junior school premises at 09.20 and left at 17.30. They met the principal, the DoS, the operations manager, the accommodation officer and the activities and groups manager. They had meetings with group leaders and with four of the teachers. They examined documentation, which was provided in paper form or electronically. They did not observe any of the teaching.

Findings

Management

Findings are reported in the following section.

Teaching and learning

Findings are reported in the Action taken on points to be addressed.

Welfare and student services

Findings are reported in the Action taken on points to be addressed.

Safeguarding under 18s

Findings are reported in the Action taken on points to be addressed.

Management

Strategic and quality management	Met
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.	Met
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.	Met
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.	Met
M6 The provider regularly seeks and records feedback from all staff on the services offered. Appropriate action is taken and recorded.	Met
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

M1 The junior school's mission statement is made known to staff at induction and is found in the staff handbook.
M2 There is an organisational plan for junior courses.
M5 The OSE had not collected initial feedback in the first week of the summer course, but this was rectified during the spot check visit.
M6 The school has started to collect feedback from staff at the end of mini-courses throughout the year, and plans to do so during the summer.
M7 OSE has introduced periodic, minuted meetings to review strategic issues. Reviews are conducted at the end of all mini-courses that refer to feedback from students, staff and group leaders.

Staff management and development	Met
M8 The provider implements appropriate human resources policies, which are made known to staff.	Strength
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.	Met
M11 There are effective induction procedures for all staff.	Met
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.	Met
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.	Met

Comments

M8 Comprehensive human resources policies are contained in the staff handbook, which both adult and junior school staff receive, as was outlined in the 2018 report.

M9 A number of job descriptions have been revised since the inspection in 2018.

M12 The school has conducted a number of appraisals of junior course staff, often linked to observations.

M13 The continuing professional development (CPD) of junior summer course teachers includes them being invited to workshops throughout the year and to three summer workshops, which they are paid to attend.

Student administration	Met
M14 Staff are helpful and courteous to students and their representatives, and provide satisfactory levels of customer service.	Met
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.	Met
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.	Met

Comments

M18 The contact details of students and their designated contacts are accessible to all relevant staff through the school's database.

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.	Met
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.	Not met
M28 Descriptions of staff qualifications are accurate.	Met
M29 Claims to accreditation are in line with Scheme requirements.	Met

Comments

Publicity includes a junior course brochure and a website.

M24 Although much of the relevant information is accurate, there is no maximum class size given in the publicity. The junior course age range is given as 12 to 17, but the brochure indicates that a small number of students under 12 may enrol.

M26 The level of supervision is made clear on the website. However, the information is not as accessible as it might be, as it is located under the parental consent form on the website in the *Downloads* section.

M27 The publicity does not make clear that some of the homestays in the summer are provided by an accommodation agency.

Action taken on points to be addressed

Points which must be addressed before continued accreditation can be recommended

Management

M1 There is no statement describing the goals and underlying ethos of the junior school.

Addressed. There is a mission statement made known to staff through the staff handbook and at induction.

M2 Plans for the junior school are not documented, and no clear, measurable targets have been set.

Addressed. An organisational plan has been devised for junior courses.

M3 The structure of the junior school is not clearly documented. Lines of responsibility and accountability are not obvious.

Addressed. There is a clear structure of the junior courses made known to staff, group leaders and students.

M7 There are no formalised self-evaluation meetings and no evidence of planning and implementation.

Addressed. There are periodic, minuted meetings to review strategy.

M9 The principal's responsibilities as overall manager of the junior school are not contained in his job description. There is little evidence that the duties of all staff are specified, made known to the post holders, or regularly reviewed.

Addressed. The principal's job description has been updated.

M18 Student records are not yet fully centralised in one database. Emergency contact details are contained in the parental consent documents, which the principal carries at all times. This is an unsatisfactory arrangement from security and accessibility perspectives.

Addressed. The school's database enables emergency contact details to be stored and accessed by members of staff, when required.

M22 Some of the information in the website is out of date and so not accurate; for example, accommodation that is no longer used is listed.

Addressed. Most of the website is now up to date with the exception of the point raised under M27.

M26 Information about the level of supervision offered is general, with insufficient detail about certain aspects; for example, students' travel to and from school or any limits on free time.

Partially addressed. This information is now available on the website. However, the information is not easy to find.

M27 An accommodation agency occasionally used for providing homestay accommodation, is not mentioned in publicity.

Not yet addressed. There is still no reference to this agency in the brochure and on the website.

Points to be addressed within six months

Welfare and student services

W1 There is no risk assessment for Newman College, which is used for closed groups of juniors at periods throughout the academic year.

Addressed. There are risk assessments for premises including Newman College.

W13 Action taken following feedback is not systematically recorded. Problems with residential accommodation and action taken are not systematically recorded.

Addressed. Problems with residential and homestay accommodation are recorded and appropriate action taken.

W26 Group leaders who arrange their own activities are not asked to assess the potential risks involved. A first aid kit is not carried with staff when on excursions or activities.

Partially addressed. Although in place, risk assessments for activities do not cover steps taken to address identified risks.

Safeguarding under 18s

S4 There was no evidence of references for homestay providers.

Not addressed. The school has not collected two references for all homestays recruited since the beginning of 2016. References have only been systematically collected for hosts recruited since 2019.

S6 There are no risk assessments for students travelling with group leaders or parents and guardians.

Addressed. Risk assessment are available.

Other points to be addressed

Management

M6 There are currently no systems for recording staff feedback, or any action taken.

Addressed. Staff provide feedback on groups throughout the year.

M12 There are no systems for appraising short-term staff, and little evidence of procedures for dealing with unsatisfactory performance.

Addressed. The school has conducted a number of appraisals of junior course staff, often linked to observations.

M13 There is no evidence of any professional development for the junior school staff.

Addressed. Professional development opportunities are provided for junior school teaching staff before and during courses.

Teaching and learning

T13 Students do not receive written course outlines with intended learning outcomes.

Addressed. Detailed written course outlines are made available to students.

T15 Although teachers often include strategies to support independent learning in their lessons, this depends on individual teachers, rather than on the course design.

Addressed. Guidelines are provided to teachers. Students also receive study advice in the junior summer school handbook.

T18 There are no procedures for evaluating or recording students' progress on the summer school.

Addressed. Review and progress lessons and materials are scheduled into the course programme.

Premises and facilities

P5 There is minimal signage for OSE and the host organisation does not permit the use of its noticeboards for OSE displays.

Not yet addressed. Signage remains minimal and OSE does not use noticeboards in corridors or display much information about courses in classrooms.

Welfare and student services

W3 Some information given at induction is not reinforced during the course.

Addressed. Information given at induction is appropriately reinforced by staff.

Conclusions

The school has taken appropriate measures to address nearly all of the issues concerning management and the section standard is now met. The period of review may be ended and accreditation continued until the next full inspection. However, weaknesses in W1, W26 and S4 have not yet been satisfactorily addressed.
