

Organisation name	Richard Language College, Bournemouth
Inspection date	6 November 2018
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.

Changes to the summary statement

An updated summary statement can now be issued.

New summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited Richard Language College, Bournemouth in April 2018 and November 2018. 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 and professional English for adults (16+) and for closed groups of under 18s and vacation courses for under 18s.

Strengths were noted in the area of premises and facilities.

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

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	1982, DoE inspected originally
Last full inspection	April 2018
Subsequent spot check(s) (if applicable)	November 2018
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	Teacher methodology/refresher courses
Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates	N/a
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	N/a

Student and staff profile	At inspection	In peak week: <i>July</i>
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	24	154
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	16	12
Typical age range	18–30	18–30
Typical length of stay	5 weeks	2 weeks
Predominant nationalities	Saudi Arabian	Saudi Arabian, French
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	7	17
Total number of managers including academic	4	4
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	5	10

Premises profile

Address of main site	43–45 Wimborne Road, Bournemouth BH3 7AB
Additional sites in use	N/a

Additional sites not in use	N/a
Sites inspected	Main site

Introduction

Background

Richard Language College was established in Bournemouth in 1964 and forms part of a conglomerate of companies with the head office and owner/chairman based in Paris. In addition to year-round courses for adults, the school runs closed group and vacation courses for under 18s: an all-inclusive culture, language, activities and sports programme (CLAS) for younger teenagers aged 12–17 and an intensive course (Integra) for older teenagers aged 16–20, with an optional leisure programme.

The school was inspected in April 2018 and accreditation was placed under review as the section standard for safeguarding under 18s was not met and there were points to be addressed in welfare and student services, including issues relating to the use of school premises for different age groups.

This is the report of the spot check conducted by two inspectors to end the period of review.

Preparation

The spot check was carried out by two inspectors, one of whom had been part of the inspection team for the previous inspection in April 2018. The reporting inspector informed the school of the period in November within which the spot check would take place but the precise date was not given. It was not possible to schedule the spot check while under 18s were on courses in the school.

The inspectors were sent the last inspection report and other relevant documentation by the Accreditation Unit and they checked the school's website before the visit.

Programme and persons present

The inspectors arrived at 11.00 and left at 16.15. They talked to the principal, the academic manager and the client services manager who is responsible for welfare and accommodation. They had a short meeting with the teacher responsible for the junior summer courses and one of the teachers who had taught the juniors. Documentation relating to the points to be addressed from the last inspection report, including an emergency plan, premises risk assessments and a safeguarding policy, had been prepared for the inspectors by the school management team.

Findings

Significant changes since the last inspection

There had been no changes in the school management team since the last inspection.

The junior courses in summer 2018 were all held at the school's main premises in Wimborne Road, rather than at off-site premises as in previous summers. A good range of nationalities attended the junior courses. As before many of the groups throughout the summer were from France, accompanied by group leaders. A group of students from Saudi Arabia aged 13–20 attended courses; they were accommodated in a residence and supervised by their group leaders, who also organised their social programme. Other groups included students from Spain and Japan.

Welfare and student services

See W1 and W2 below.

Safeguarding under 18s

See S1–S8 below.

Managerial and teaching staff told the inspectors how much they preferred being able to run the junior courses onsite in summer 2018, rather than in separate premises as in previous years. Co-ordination among staff and supervision of the juniors had been much easier, and a more cohesive atmosphere had been achieved with all staff getting to know the juniors well. The client services manager checked registers as students arrived, and any absences were followed up immediately. Younger students aged 12–13 had been placed with homestay hosts as close to the school as possible and always with other students of similar age so they could walk to school together. The principal and the client services manager, as well as other staff, supervised the juniors at lunchtime and at the end of the day as they left the school. All juniors were required to wear wristbands with different colours for the under 16s.

Many of the French group leaders were returners in 2018 and new group leaders had been trained in France following requirements set out by the school. The client services manager was in contact with all group leaders before their arrival and then in daily contact during the courses, with a meeting of group leaders midweek.

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.	Met
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.	Met
S5 There are suitable arrangements for the supervision and safety of students during scheduled lessons and activities.	Met
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

The school accepts 16 and 17 year-olds on its adult courses. In the summer, junior courses (CLAS) are run for students aged 12–17, and year round for closed groups, and Integra summer courses for students aged 16–20. At the time of the spot check visit there were no under 18s in school.

S1 The school has drawn up a safeguarding policy which meets all the requirements of this criterion. The policy was drafted following the last inspection, reviewed in July 2018 and will be reviewed in July 2019.

S2 Summaries of the safeguarding policy have been produced for school staff, homestay hosts, group leaders and activity leaders. Everyone has to sign to say that they have read and understood the policy. Appropriate training is in place. Since the last inspection the client services manager has completed advanced safeguarding training and has applied to join a specialist safeguarding training course.

S3 The school has drawn up a comprehensive parental consent form which meets all the requirements of this criterion.

S5 A risk assessment of the shared use of premises by adult and junior students has been carried out and is satisfactory. See also W1 below. Some simplification of the language in the group leader information has been completed but further simplification would be beneficial.

S6 There are clear rules for under 18s relating to their unsupervised free time in Bournemouth and risk assessments of the rules. The document is written in very clear language.

Action taken on points to be addressed

Points from the previous full inspection and/or subsequent spot checks or interim visits with comments (in bold) to indicate how far these have been addressed. Only points reviewed during this spot check are included here. Any points outstanding will be checked at the next full inspection.

Points which must be addressed before accreditation can be recommended

Safeguarding under 18s

S1 The school has no safeguarding policy. The child protection policy does not include information on recognising abuse, has insufficient detail about response procedures, and has no guidance on handling delayed suitability checks.

Addressed. See S1 above.

S3 The school's parental consent form does not inform parents/guardians about situations requiring their consent such as travel, participation in activities, and the specifics about students' unsupervised free time.

Addressed. See S2 above.

S6 Students aged under 18 are given insufficient information on rules relating to their unsupervised free time in Bournemouth. There are no risk assessments on file relating to any such rules.

Addressed. See S6 above.

Points which must be addressed within three months

Welfare and student services

W1 The premises risk assessment does not assess the use of the building for juniors, or the juniors' shared use of the main building with adult students at lunchtimes, nor does it assess any potential risks of the open side entrance to the school premises from the street.

Addressed. New premises risk assessments have been carried out to assess the use of the building for juniors and the juniors' shared use of the main building with adult students at lunchtimes. Junior courses are taught in an adjoining building next to the main school building with the younger learners on the ground floor and the older juniors on the first floor. Timetables have been amended so that adult and junior students have different times for breaks and lunch. Students aged 18–20 on the Integra summer courses are required to use the adult toilet facilities in the main building, and not those reserved for juniors in the junior building. New gates have been installed at the side entrance to the school premises and these are kept locked while juniors are on site, and firmly closed at all other times of the year. Staff have been briefed on these changes. The situation is now entirely satisfactory.

W2 There is no comprehensive plan in place to respond to emergencies.

Addressed. A plan has been drawn up which meets the requirements of this criterion. A training session on the plan and procedures was to be held for staff later in the week of the spot check.

Other points to be addressed

Management

M9 The safeguarding responsibilities of the academic manager are not included in the job description. There is no evidence that the job descriptions are regularly reviewed or updated.

Addressed. The academic manager's job description has been amended and his safeguarding responsibilities added. There was evidence of some job descriptions having been reviewed since the last inspection.

M10 In one case, a non-standard TEFL qualification had not been investigated.

Addressed. The teacher concerned has agreed to upgrade his qualifications by enrolling on a diploma-level course in the near future. Information about suitable courses has been provided by the academic manager.

M18 Some of the designated emergency contact details are paper-based records kept in the school, and they are not printed out for the out-of-hours emergency phone holder.

Addressed. All emergency contact details are now held electronically on the school's database and the emergency phone holder can access them remotely.

M24 Information about non-teaching days within the different courses is not clear.

Addressed. It is clear on the website that the school is closed on all public holidays but that some closed groups may run on those days.

M26 There is insufficient information about the level of care and support given to any students under 18.

Addressed. Documents relating to rules for under 18s, including supervision and curfew times, and the school policies on lateness and absences, are now on the website.

M29 Both the website and flyer display an outdated Accreditation Scheme marque.

Addressed. The correct Accreditation Scheme marque is now on the website and will be corrected on the flyer when it is next printed.

Teaching and learning

T10 Most of the observations in the last 12 months have not been conducted by an academic manager.

Addressed. There was evidence of some observations having been conducted by the academic manager since the last inspection.

T13 There is no evidence that the weekly schemes of work posted on noticeboards in the classrooms are adjusted or reviewed during the course.

T15 Course design does not systematically include study and learning strategies for all students.

T16 Courses do not specifically include strategies which help students to benefit linguistically from being in the UK.

T25 Learning outcomes were usually expressed as teaching aims and had not been made known to students.

T13, T15, T16 and T25 have been partially addressed by continuing professional development (CPD) sessions having been held to explore with the teachers these issues highlighted in the last inspection. No teaching was observed as teaching and learning was not the focus of this spot check.

Welfare and student services

W11 Accommodation staff do not routinely ask to see fire risk assessments completed by homestay hosts.

Partially addressed. A new system has been set up by the accommodation officer so that fire risk assessments completed by homestay hosts are required before new homestays are accepted. Current hosts who have not completed one are being required to do so and approximately 50 per cent of the school's homestays have been checked so far.

Safeguarding under 18s

S5 There is some shared use of the cafeteria by junior and adult students which has not been risk assessed. The language in the group leader guidance notes on safety and emergency procedures for activities is too complex.

Addressed. See S5 above.

Conclusions

The school has taken prompt and effective action to deal with all the points to be addressed from the last inspection report. Issues related to safety and security of adult and junior students on the premises are entirely satisfactory. A safeguarding policy and a comprehensive parental consent form are now in place, and rules for under 18s are clear.
