

Organisation name	Severnvale Academy, Shrewsbury
Inspection date	11 July 2019
Current accreditation status	Accredited
Reason for spot check	Signalled: inspect new or additional premises

Recommendation

We recommend continued accreditation. However, evidence must be submitted within three months to demonstrate that weaknesses in W1 and W2 have been addressed. The required evidence was subsequently submitted.

Changes to the summary statement

No changes need to be made to the summary statement, apart from adding the date of this inspection.

New summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited Severnvale Academy, Shrewsbury in May 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 in general and professional English for adults (20+) and vacation courses for under 18s.

Strengths were noted in the areas of premises and facilities and teaching.

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

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	1993
Last full inspection	May 2019
Subsequent spot check(s) (if applicable)	N/a
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	N/a
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	N/a

Student and staff profile	Inspection as at peak / Junior courses	Adult courses
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	81	26
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	13	20
Typical age range	13–17	20–63
Typical length of stay	3 weeks	7 weeks
Predominant nationalities	Spanish and Italian	Spanish, Chinese, Italian, Russian, Swiss
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	7	6
Total number of managers including academic	4	3
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	3	3

Premises profile

Address of main site	25 Claremont Hill, Shrewsbury SY1 1RD
Additional sites in use	University Centre Shrewsbury, Guildhall, Frankwell Quay, Shrewsbury SY3 8HQ
Additional sites not in use	N/a
Sites inspected	University Centre Shrewsbury, Guildhall, Frankwell Quay, Shrewsbury SY3 8HQ

Introduction

Background

The main school and year-round provision had a full inspection in May 2019. The premises for the junior courses, which were being used for the first time in summer 2019, were not visited as they were not in use by the school at the time of the full inspection. It was recommended that a premises spot check should take place during the peak weeks in July.

The modern premises, leased for the duration of the course, are located in the centre of Shrewsbury and a short walk from the main school. The premises are formed of four interconnecting blocks, each with four floors. At the time of the inspection the school was using seven classrooms, a chillout area, a staffroom, and designated toilets. A large assembly hall was available to them when needed. They had shared use of a café and terrace areas outside the café. The rooms and areas used by the school were spread over the four floors in the four blocks.

Preparation

The inspector contacted the school for information about excursion days to make sure the premises would be in use on the day of the visit. The school did not know the exact date of the inspection. The report from the full inspection was not available at the time of the spot check. The inspector checked the website and some basic information sent from the Unit.

Programme and persons present

The inspector arrived at 9.00 and left the junior premises at 13.00. Some documents were then seen at the main school and a brief roundup was given to the two directors.

Meetings were held with both directors, the director of studies and the university site services coordinator. The inspector spent ten minutes in each of the classes being taught by the seven teachers. She met and had brief meetings with the course coordinator and the junior course assistant, and inspected all parts of the premises being used by the school.

Findings

Management

The course is well managed by the two school directors and the year-round director of studies. They are assisted by the course coordinator and the junior course assistant. Many of the staff and teachers return each summer or are based in the main school at other times of the year.

M22 Publicity gives only a very brief description of the facilities at the premises. Some of those listed, such as a library and area for quiet study, were not actually provided. Although the sports facilities listed were provided, they were not, as stated in publicity, onsite, but at another location, a ten-minute walk away.

Teaching and learning

Teachers have regular teacher development sessions and are observed and supported by the director of studies. It was evident from observing all the classes that the students were generally engaged and enjoying a positive learning atmosphere.

Welfare and student services

The students are very well looked after and a full programme of activities is carefully organised and managed.

W1 The school has conducted its own fire risk assessment and all staff have received training. However, no fire drills had been carried out or were planned. Access to the premises is through the main entrance where there is a reception desk staffed by university staff. Although visitors are meant to be checked and signed-in at the desk, this procedure is not enforced.

W2 The school has an emergency plan and has general procedures in place. However, there are no specific measures in place for these premises and there has been no liaising with the university.

Safeguarding under 18s

There was evidence of thorough safer recruitment procedures with new and returning staff. Supervision while the children are on the premises has been well considered and there are adequate measures in place to ensure that they do not come into contact with unknown adults, who have access to the building, while they are on the premises. There are very good measures in place when they are not having lessons or on activities. Rules are clear

and homestays are well briefed. The children are taken into school each morning in private coaches and dropped off again after activities. Members of staff greet the children off the coaches and escort them into the school.

Premises and resources

Premises and facilities	Met
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.	Met
P3 Students have adequate room and suitable facilities for relaxation and the consumption of food.	Strength
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.	Met
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.	Met

Comments

P1 The premises provide a very comfortable environment for students and staff. All the rooms and common areas are bright, modern and very well maintained.
P2 All the classrooms are large, light and airy. The furniture is flexible. However, in some rooms, the very small whiteboards and flip charts were difficult for some students to see.
P3 The cafeteria and chillout area provide large and comfortable spaces for the students to relax in and eat their packed lunches.

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

Comments

All the relevant criteria in this area are fully met.

Conclusions

The course is well managed and the students are very well looked after. The premises provide a very comfortable and suitable environment for students and staff and measures to ensure the safety and supervision of the students both on and off site are very good. This is the first year these premises have been used and some security and safety issues have not yet been fully addressed in conjunction with the university. With cooperation from the university, it should be possible to address and resolve these issues.