

Organisation name	St George's International, London
Inspection date	30 November 2021
Current accreditation status	Accredited
Reason for spot check	Signalled: inspect new or additional premises

Recommendation

We recommend continued accreditation. The next inspection now falls due in 2023; there are no grounds for bringing this forward.

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 St George International, London in August 2018, June 2019 and November 2021. 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, academic and professional English for adults (18+) and young people (16+) and vacation courses for under 18s.

Strengths were noted in the areas of *Academic management*, *Learner management* and *Teaching*.

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

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	1992
Last full inspection	August 2018
Subsequent spot check(s) (if applicable)	June 2019
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	The English Studio

Student and staff profile	At inspection	In peak week: July
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	34	160
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	18	6
Typical age range	16–57	6–65
Typical length of stay	3–4 weeks	2 weeks
Predominant nationalities	Italian, French	Russian, Italian, Japanese
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	7	17
Total number of managers including academic	3	7
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	1	9

Premises profile

Address of main site	10 Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7JU
Additional sites in use	N/a
Additional sites not in use	N/a
Sites inspected	10 Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7JU

Introduction

Background

A spot check was arranged as a result of a change in premises. SGI moved to the current address in November 2019. Due to the pandemic, the spot check was delayed until now.

Preparation

The school was contacted to ascertain whether certain dates would not be suitable for the spot check because of the absence of key personnel. The inspector familiarised himself with the full 2018 report as well as the 2019 spot check report. The school sent a number of documents to the inspector in advance, including a staff organogram and the teaching timetable. The inspector also viewed publicity in the form of the website.

Programme and persons present

One inspector visited the school, arriving at 10:30 and leaving at 15:00. Meetings were held with the CEO and the general manager. There were focus group meetings with a group of students and a group of teachers. A tour of the new premises was conducted.

Findings

Management

The management section was not specifically inspected but there have been a number of changes since the last inspection. The general manager (GM) is responsible for the day-to-day management of the school. A new DoS is in place, who was formerly a teacher trainer at SGI. As well as teaching his own classes, the DoS is responsible for academic support of the teaching team. There is a sales and student services assistant who reports to the GM. The GM reports to the CEO. The unaccredited sister school currently only exists as a website. Any student applying to this school is incorporated into SGI. There are plans to reopen the sister school in the future, possibly in the same building. The management is aware of the need to keep the two schools distinct if and when this happens. The website for SGI is generally accurate, but the information on homestays did not make it clear that all of this accommodation is now offered through an agency. There were also a number of external photos of the previous premises which could lead to unrealistic expectations.

Premises and resources

The new premises are on the third floor of an office building in a quiet side street in Fitzrovia. Holborn underground station is a 10-minute walk from the school and the surrounding area is full of shops and cafes. The school has eight classrooms of varying sizes which can cater to between two and twelve students. The classrooms also vary in terms of furnishing, some with tables and chairs and some with pallet chairs. Two of the eight rooms have an interactive whiteboard. The other rooms have standard whiteboards as well as a computer in each. There is a central reception area with four desks for management and administrative staff. The teachers' room is well-stocked with resources and there are two computers for teachers' use. There is one photocopier/printer in reception for both academic and administrative staff. All rooms have heating as well as ventilation and all classrooms have natural light.

At the time of the spot check inspection, SGI had lost the use of a women's toilet on another floor which was shared with the rest of the building. They had sole use of the toilet on the third floor which is for both male and female use. Formerly it was the men's toilet and shared with others in the building. The number of toilets as well as the ungendered nature of the single bathroom is unsatisfactory for both students and staff. The management is hoping that they will soon have access to the second toilet which they had before the pandemic. This may be unlikely to happen, however, as the other occupants of the building are, in light of the pandemic, reluctant to share a toilet with the school.

The situation was resolved after the inspection and the school provided an update for the Accreditation Scheme Advisory Committee. It was noted that SGI now has access to toilets on the ground floor. This means that toilets on the third floor (2 toilets and 2 basins) are now only for males and toilets on the ground floor (2 toilets and 2 basins) are for females only.

Welfare and student services

The welfare and student services sections were not specifically inspected. SGI no longer manages its own homestays. All homestay accommodation is offered through an agency which is registered with the British Council.

Safeguarding under 18s

The safeguarding section was not specifically inspected. The school does not currently have any students under the age of 18, but they do accept 16 and 17-year-olds on adult courses, as well as closed groups of young learners.

The plan is to only have young learners study in the afternoon when there will be no adult students on the premises.

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.	Not met
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.	Met
P4 Free drinking water is available. A choice of appropriate food at affordable prices is available to students on site, if not available locally.	Not 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 Although the premises overall provide a suitable environment for students and staff, there are currently only two toilet cubicles available, which is insufficient for the number of students and staff. These two cubicles are in a 'neutral' bathroom so there is no separation of gender. Both students and staff in focus groups expressed dissatisfaction with the two points raised above. Access to additional facilities was subsequently restored and this is no longer a point to be addressed.

P3 There is no specific space for students to relax and consume food, but there are a number of cafes within a few minutes' walk of the school. Additionally, a room can be made available to students to meet and consume food upon request.

P4 The drinking fountain was turned off by the management of the building at the start of the pandemic. The school is waiting for it to be serviced and turned on again. Both students and staff complained that drinking water is not available.

Action taken on points to be addressed

There were no outstanding points from the previous inspections besides those related to teaching.

Conclusions

Overall, the new premises offer a suitable environment for both students and staff. Teachers who had worked at the previous building felt that the new premises benefited from more natural light and better temperature control.

Now that the issue with access to toilet facilities has been addressed, provision is satisfactory.