

Organisation name	St Giles International, Cambridge
Inspection date	9 July 2019
Current accreditation status	Accredited
Reason for spot check	Signalled: monitor effect of change of provision

Recommendation

We recommend continued accreditation. The next inspection falls due in 2022; there are no grounds for bringing this forward.

Changes to the summary statement

An area of strength can be added for Safeguarding under 18s.

New summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited St Giles International, Cambridge in March 2018, February 2019 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 (18+) and young people (16+), for closed groups of adults (18+) and young people (16+), and vacation courses for under 16s.

Strengths were noted in the areas of student administration, premises and facilities, learner management, teaching and safeguarding under 18s.

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

New summary inspection findings

Safeguarding under 18s

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in many respects. A comprehensive safeguarding policy is in place and is made known to staff, students and accommodation providers. Safer recruitment practice is followed. Supervision of under 16s is suitably differentiated from supervision of under 18s on adult courses. The care provided is appropriate to the ages of the students and arrangements are communicated to parents/guardians and homestay hosts. Suitable accommodation is provided. *Safeguarding under 18s* is an area of strength.

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	1985 as New School of English
Last full inspection	March 2018 as St Giles International, Cambridge
Subsequent spot check(s) (if applicable)	February 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	None
Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates	St Giles has four other year-round accredited centres in the UK: in Brighton, Eastbourne, and two in London.
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	The St Giles group has schools in the USA and Canada, with seasonal schools for juniors throughout these countries, and an affiliated school in Brazil.

Student and staff profile	At inspection	In peak week: July
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	130	156
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	14	14
Typical age range	18–20	18–25
Typical length of stay	4 weeks	4 weeks
Predominant nationalities	Turkish, Italian, Swiss, Saudi Arabian	Turkish, Italian, Swiss, Saudi Arabian
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	12	15
Total number of managers including academic	3	3
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	3.5	3.5

Premises profile	
Address of main site	52 Bateman Street, Cambridge CB2 1LR
Additional sites in use	The Courtyard, George IV Street, Cambridge CB2 1HH used during peak months of June–August, three extra classrooms
Additional sites not in use	None
Sites inspected	52 Bateman Street, Cambridge CB2 1LR The Courtyard, George IV Street, Cambridge CB2 1HH

Introduction

Background

St Giles purchased a former accredited school of English in June 2017. The school continued to trade under its former name until it was rebranded as St Giles International, Cambridge in January 2018. A full inspection of the school took place in March 2018. The inspection report noted that since the change of ownership there had been several management, academic and welfare staff changes. It was also noted that major refurbishment of the main site had been undertaken and that some of the work was still on-going at the time of the inspection. The resulting recommendation was for continuing accreditation. However, because of the very recent change in ownership a spot check was conducted in February 2019 to focus on the consolidation of St Giles' methods and practices. A further spot check was scheduled for summer 2019 to inspect the new vacation courses for under 16s.

General English courses are run including examination preparation classes (IELTS and externally validated English examinations). Four levels from elementary to advanced were running during the inspection week. During the last 12 months, English for Business courses have been run in the afternoons; these are usually combined with a morning general English course. Students can also combine one-to-one classes in the afternoon with a morning programme. At the time of the spot check inspection there was a vacation course for 14 to 16 year-olds taught in two classes.

Junior courses for under 16s were planned for 2019 and started running from June.

This inspection focused on aspects of course design relating to the junior programme and safeguarding.

Preparation

This was a scheduled spot check. The inspector received the 2018 and 2019 reports and relevant documentation from the Accreditation Unit; she contacted the school a few weeks before the inspection to check student numbers and the availability of members of management staff during the following four weeks. The exact date of the inspection was not given.

Programme and persons present

The spot check inspection was conducted by one inspector over half a day. She arrived at the school at 08.30 and departed at 12.45. Meetings were held with the principal who is also the safeguarding lead and the DoS. Short meetings were also held with the teachers and a representative group of students. The inspection included a brief tour of the building and a check of the teaching resources. Documentation provided by the school was scrutinised.

Findings

Premises and resources

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

Teaching and learning

Findings are reported in the following section.

Welfare and student services

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

Safeguarding under 18s

Findings are reported in the following section.

Course design and implementation	Met
T11 Course design is based on stated principles. There is a coherent and appropriate course structure described in writing for teachers' guidance.	Met
T12 Course design is regularly reviewed in light of the different and changing needs of students and feedback from teachers and students.	Met
T13 Written course outlines and intended learning outcomes, appropriate to the course length and type, are available to students.	Strength
T14 Any activities additional to English classes, and which form part of the language curriculum, encourage the acquisition of language and the development of relevant language skills.	Met
T15 Courses include study and learning strategies that support independent learning and enable students to benefit from their programmes and continue their learning after the course.	Met
T16 Courses include strategies which help students to develop their language skills outside the classroom and benefit linguistically from their stay in the UK.	Met

Comments

T11 This criterion is met overall. There is a clear rationale for the structure of junior courses, choice of coursebook and materials to be used by teachers. Schemes of work are negotiated with students effectively.
T12 A review of the new junior vacation course programme is scheduled for the end of August.
T13 Weekly plans were clearly live documents created by teachers and negotiated with students. Staff and learners both reported satisfaction with the process.

Learner management	Area of strength
T17 There are effective procedures for the correct placement of students, appropriate to their level and age.	Strength
T18 There are effective procedures for evaluating, monitoring and recording students' progress.	Strength
T19 Students are provided with learning support and enabled to change courses or classes where necessary.	Strength
T20 Where relevant, students are guided to select the examinations and examination training best suited to their needs and interests.	Met
T21 Academic reports are made available to students on request and, in the case of under 18s, to their parents/guardians.	Met
T22 Students wishing to progress to mainstream UK education have access to relevant information and advice.	Met

Comments

T17 The placement procedures are thorough and effective. Prior to arrival students have the opportunity to submit a pre-course test, consisting of a gap-fill task and a postcard written to a member of the academic staff. On arrival students take the St Giles written placement test and also have a structured oral test in pairs. Students are asked to fill in their student record card indicating their language goals.
T18 Student progress is assessed in a variety of ways. Homework is set on a daily basis. Teachers rank students at the end of each week and progress tests are given fortnightly with results being recorded. The test is followed by a one-to-one feedback session with the main teacher. Additional progress and achievement tests are available for longer-stay students.
T19 Class changes are carried out efficiently. Teachers monitor the performance of new students and discuss any potential changes with the acting DoS. After the induction period movement between classes involves the acting DoS and the two teachers involved. The regular monitoring and recording of progress and the one-to-one feedback every two weeks ensure that students are well supported and that the teachers can make informed decisions about level changes.

Safeguarding under 18s

Safeguarding under 18s	Area of strength
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.	Strength
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.	Strength
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.	Strength
S6 There are suitable arrangements for the supervision and safety of students outside the scheduled programme.	Strength
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

At the time of the inspection there were 36 under 18s attending adult courses and 16 students enrolled on the junior vacation course. During the academic year there are a few under 18s (16+) on adult courses.

S1 A safeguarding policy is in place and meets all Scheme requirements, including a code of conduct and guidance on dealing with safeguarding issues. The code of conduct and the guidance on dealing with safeguarding issues are both well formulated and are sensitive to the needs and circumstances of 16 and 17 year-old students. Provision and practice for junior students on vacation courses is good.

S2 The policy is available to consult on the school's website and is included in the student and staff handbooks. It is also communicated to homestay hosts. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) has received training to specialist level and the deputy safeguarding person to advanced level. All other staff are trained to basic level. Reporting procedures are set out in the teachers' handbook and are outlined in the student handbook. Homestay providers are made aware of the policy and the code of conduct.

S5 Arrangements are very comprehensive with well thought-through use of the premises shared by students on adult courses and those attending the under 16s course, including staggered breaks and high staff ratios.

S6 Provision is very thorough. All under 18s have a detailed individual induction with the DSL or her deputy. Arrangements for attendance, curfew times excursions and accommodation are checked and the parental consent form information is shared with students, staff and homestay hosts.

Action taken on points to be addressed

Premises

P9 Problems with the new IT infrastructure are ongoing resulting, on occasions, in limited internet access for administrative and teaching staff.

Addressed. The issues have been effectively resolved and the system is now reliable.

Welfare and student services

W6 Travel information from the point of entry to the school or to accommodation is not provided for individual students.

Addressed. Adult students now receive a travel options document with information and under 18s have to use the taxi transfer system.

Conclusions

The school has taken appropriate measures to address the implications of providing vacation courses for under 18s including adjustments to course design. The junior academic systems and practices are working effectively. All areas of safeguarding have been covered very satisfactorily.