

Organisation name	Studio Cambridge Language and Activity Programmes
Inspection date	30 July 2014

BACKGROUND

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	1983
Last full inspection	August 2013
Subsequent spot check (if applicable)	July 2014
Subsequent supplementary check (if applicable)	N/a
Subsequent interim visit (if applicable)	N/a
Other related schools / centres /affiliates	Studio School Cambridge
Other related non-accredited activities (in brief) at this centre	Teacher training courses

Current accreditation status and reason for spot check

Current accredited status	Accredited
Reason for spot check	Signalled: follow-up on Points to be addressed

Premises profile

Address of main site	Studio Cambridge, 6 Salisbury Villas, Station Road, Cambridge CB1 2JF
Details of any additional sites in use at the time of the inspection	Sir Christopher, Ridley Hall, Sidgwick Avenue, Cambridge; Sir Laurence, Lucy Cavendish College, Madingley Road, Cambridge; Sir Edward, King's School, Ely, Cambs; Sir Henry, Hockerill Anglo-European College, Bishop's Stortford, Herts Sir William, The American International University in Richmond, London Sir Richard, Leighton Park School, Reading, Berks Sir John, CCSS, Bene't Place, Lensfield Road, Cambridge
Details of any additional sites not in use at the time of the inspection	None.
Sites inspected	Two centres were visited: Sir Christopher at Ridley Hall (SC) and Sir Laurence at Lucy Cavendish College (SL). Both are Cambridge University colleges, each situated about ten minutes' walk from the city centre. Both offer student accommodation on-site; at Ridley College some students were accommodated in the college and some at Newnham College, a five minute walk away.

Student and staff profile	At inspection	In peak week (please give month)
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	120 (SC); 54 (SL)	202 (SC); 57 (SL)
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	16 (SC); 14 (SL)	16 (SC); 14 (SL)
Typical age range	16-19 (SC); 14-17 (SL)	16-19 (SC); 14-17 (SL)
Typical length of stay	2-3 weeks	2-3 weeks
Predominant nationalities	Turkish, Romanian, Italian, French, Spanish	Turkish, Russian, Italian, Spanish
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	10 (SC); 4 (SL)	11 (SC); 5 (LSL)
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	19 (SC); 7 SL)	

INTRODUCTION

Background

Studio Cambridge is a very well established school which runs year-round courses for adults, and summer language and activity programmes (LAPS) for juniors and young adults. The LAPS were inspected in August 2013 when continued accreditation was recommended. A further recommendation was that a spot check should take place in summer 2014 focusing on issues relating to the supervision of students in their free time. This is the report of the spot check.

In 2014 the LAPS were running in the Studio Cambridge main school and in seven off-site locations. All the course names begin with Sir. A range of age groups is catered for: 9-13 year olds at Sir Edward's in Ely, 10-16 year olds at Sir Henry in Bishop's Stortford and Sir Richard in Reading, 14-17 year olds in the Studio main school in Cambridge, Sir Laurence in Lucy Cavendish College, Cambridge, and Sir William in Richmond-upon-Thames, and 16-19 year olds in Sir Christopher in Ridley Hall, Cambridge, and Sir John in Cambridge, in a building next to the main school. All offer residential on-campus accommodation except for the course running at the Studio main school, which offers off-site residential accommodation or homestay. The administration and preparation for the LAPS is the responsibility of a team of permanent staff at the Studio Cambridge main school, led by the academic manager and the operations manager.

Two centres were visited for the spot check: Sir Christopher at Ridley Hall, Cambridge, and Sir Laurence at Lucy Cavendish College, Cambridge.

Preparation

The inspector was sent a copy of the last full inspection report, and publicity materials, by the Accreditation Unit. She was in email contact with the academic manager in charge of the LAPS, who provided timetables and data relating to three possible centres to visit. The proposed week for the spot check was agreed but not the exact day.

Programme and persons present

The spot check was carried out by an inspector who had been reporting inspector on the 2009 inspection of the LAPS. She arrived at Sir Christopher at Ridley Hall, Cambridge, at 10.00, continued to Sir Laurence at Lucy Cavendish College, Cambridge, at 12.00 and had a meeting with the academic manager, who is based at the Studio main school, before leaving at 14.45.

A programme was agreed with the centre director on arrival in each centre and included:

- a brief orientation of the premises
 - discussions with the centre director, welfare and activity staff
 - a focus group with students
 - scrutiny of documentation.
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FINDINGS

Course structure

The Sir Christopher course (SC) at Ridley Hall is for 16-19 year olds and offers 15 hours of English per week. There are activities on four afternoons per week, which are compulsory, and activities every evening, which are not compulsory. There is a full-day excursion on Saturdays for all students.

The Sir Laurence course (SL) at Lucy Cavendish College is for 14-17 year olds and offers 21 hours of English per week. There are activities every evening, which are compulsory, and a full-day excursion on Saturdays for all students.

Publicity

In the publicity materials the minimum age at SC is given as 16. At the time of the spot check visit there were two 15 year olds enrolled, one as part of a group and one an individual with a friend (aged 16) on the course. At SL there was evidence that a 12 year old and a small number of 13 year olds had been enrolled during the summer.

For a further issue relating to publicity materials, see C3 below.

Management

The management structure is clear with centre directors reporting to the academic manager based in the Studio main school. Both the centre director at SC and at SL have experience of working in the Studio Cambridge year-

round school so know the organisation well. Staff in the two centres reported excellent support from the senior team, and good communication.

Academic management

In SC the teaching coordinator is TEFLQ and is a member of the year-round staff in the Studio main school.

In SL the centre director is also the teaching coordinator. He is TEFLI but is responsible for carrying out teacher observations.

Welfare and student services

Both centres provide a safe environment.

At SC staff patrol the college and in the evenings house managers supervise the accommodation. The residential activity organisers have a desk in the college entrance from where they can sign students back in after free time.

At SL the college porter's lodge is staffed all day and there are CCTV cameras around the site. Interior areas are accessed by a key card system. There are regular patrols of the premises by the residential activity coordinators.

There is a list of first aiders in both centres. Regular fire drills are carried out throughout the summer.

There is good provision of pastoral care in both centres. The welfare officer has overall responsibility and is supported by house managers and residential activity organisers. In SC the welfare officer has an assistant. All welfare staff have very good staff manuals; they have regular meetings and discuss any issues relating to pastoral care.

Students have an ID card with a 24 hour emergency number; they also have wristbands which they are required to wear at all times. They are given detailed and sensible advice in their handbook about security, including care of keys, rules relating to smoking, alcohol and drugs, information about how UK laws apply to under 18s, and about staying safe. There is also a clearly expressed policy relating to abusive behaviour.

There is a very good, varied and appropriate programme of activities at both centres.

Care of under 18s

The focus of the spot check visit was on the comment made under *Care of under 18s* W34 (C6 in 1914-15 Handbook) relating to supervision:

W34 It is not clear that the organisation has fully assessed the risks attached to allowing students to leave centres unsupervised during their free time. It is not clear how much legal protection the existing parental consent form, which does not refer to possible risks, would give the school.

At SC (16-19 year olds) afternoon activities are compulsory and usually finish at 15.15. Students then have free time until dinner at 17.45. Evening activities finish at 22.00, after which students are free and can leave the centre; curfew is at 24.00. Any 15 year olds enrolled have a curfew of 23.00. However, evening activities are not compulsory and students can choose to have free time, and leave the centre, unsupervised. There is no signing out system when students choose to leave the centre in their free time after afternoon activities. No check is made on their whereabouts until they are signed back at curfew time (or earlier if students return before 24.00). Students are not allowed to stay away overnight unless the welfare officer receives written permission from the student's parent or guardian. Welfare staff have students' mobile numbers.

There are no separate rules for adult students and those under 18.

After evening activities most students in the focus group said they went into the city to buy fast food and then to eat it and chat on Parker's Piece, a large common close to the city centre, popular with students from many summer centres in Cambridge. Studio Cambridge employs a member of staff to patrol this area on Friday and Saturday nights. Other students said they stayed in the residence where there is a social area with TV.

Students are given information about what to do if they encounter problems while out during their free time. This information is explained at induction, when there is also a talk by the welfare team. Studio Cambridge has an account with a local taxi firm and students are told to call the firm if they have problems, take a taxi back to the residence and pay the following day.

At SL (14-17 year olds) all activities are compulsory. Sunday morning is free time, followed by an afternoon activity (sports or a walk), which is compulsory. Evening activities finish at 21.00 and afterwards students are allowed into the city but must return by the curfew of 23.00. Any younger students enrolled, i.e. 12 and 13 year olds, have a curfew of 22.00. There is a signing in/out book at the entrance of the college where students are required to note where they are going and who with. The book is checked by the activity organiser. There is no specific rule about

going out in groups of two or three, but students are encouraged to do so. The centre has a list of students' mobile numbers.

Students mostly go to buy fast food or sweets and come back to the common room. At induction, and in their student handbook, they are told about the rules for not going into bars, pubs or clubs, and are shown the walking route back to the centre from the city centre. On Sundays if students want to leave Cambridge they must have written permission from their parents/guardians with details of the name and contact number of the person(s) they are visiting, together with details of the travel arrangements. The final decision rests with the welfare officer.

The parental consent form has not been changed since the inspection in 2014. However, a further risk assessment of students' free time in Cambridge has been completed. It identifies significant hazards (being approached by strangers, pickpockets, getting lost, road traffic accidents, breaking the law, leaving Cambridge and events drawing crowds) and outlines the guidance to be given to students at induction, in their handbook, and ongoing through the summer. There is also a list of 'safe' things to do in Cambridge in the student handbook.

The academic manager explained that allowing students to leave the centres, unsupervised, in their free time was part of the concept of the summer courses, especially the degree of independence afforded students at SC. He reported no problems related to the safety and security of students in summer 2014.

Premises and facilities

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
R1 Adequate space	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
R2 Condition of premises	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
R3 Classrooms and learning areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
R4 Student relaxation facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
R5 Signage and display	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
R6 Staff room(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments

The Ridley Hall premises were inspected in 2009 and continue to provide excellent facilities for the summer centre. It is a residential college, affiliated to the University of Cambridge and close to the city centre. It is a Victorian building with the college facilities built around a traditional quadrangle with enclosed gardens. Studio Cambridge has classrooms in two main buildings, offices for the course director, teaching coordinator and activities and welfare staff, a teachers' room and a students' common room. Students take their meals in the dining hall.

Lucy Cavendish College is a University of Cambridge college, established 42 years ago and situated close to the city centre. It is a quiet modern campus with gardens, which provides very suitable premises for a summer centre. Studio Cambridge has well-equipped classrooms, offices for the course director (who is also the teaching coordinator), and a student common room. Students take their meals in the dining hall.

Care of under 18s

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
C1 Safeguarding policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C2 Guidance and training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C3 Publicity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C4 Recruitment materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/a	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C5 Suitability checks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/a	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C6 Safety and supervision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

C7 Accommodation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C8 Contact arrangements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments

C1 The organisation has a safeguarding policy which meets the requirements of this criterion. The designated safeguarding officer is a member of the senior management team based at the year-round school in Cambridge.

C2 All new and returning staff receive the policy and training at induction in its purpose, content and implementation.

C3 There is information about the level of care and support given to students under 18 in both centres. Specific reference is made to '*some free time and independence*' for students at SC, as well as curfew times, 24.00 for SC and 23.00 for SL. The website states that in all centres, except Sir John, activities '*are a compulsory part of your course*'; the evening activities at SC are not compulsory, however, and students can choose to have free time and leave the centre following afternoon activities, and in the evenings, unsupervised.

C6 Students are given information about staying safe during their unsupervised free time. However, at SC there is no signing out system when students choose to leave the centre in their free time after afternoon activities. No check is made on their whereabouts until they sign in at curfew time (or earlier if students return before 24.00). Students are advised, but not required, to go out in groups of minimum two or three students. There are no separate rules for adult students and those under 18. At SL the curfew of 23.00 applies to all students, including 14 and 15 year olds. Any younger students enrolled in either centre have an earlier curfew, which could result in their having to return to the centre on their own.

Care of under 18s summary

The organisation's safeguarding policy is appropriate and known to all staff; all staff undergo suitability checks. Accommodation is appropriate and well supervised. There is some information in the publicity materials about the level of care and support, but the fact that evening activities at SC are not compulsory is not made clear. An appropriate leisure programme is provided in both centres; rules, and a further risk assessment for 2014, are in place for students' unsupervised free time. However, there are insufficient checks on students' whereabouts in unsupervised time and no separate rules for adult students and those under 18 at SC.

POINTS TO BE ADDRESSED

Points to be addressed from the previous inspection report with comments (in bold) to indicate how far these have been addressed.

Management

M19 Initial feedback, carried out informally, may occasionally miss some students and might benefit from a more structured, pro-active approach.

Not checked.

M25 Minimum age limits specified in publicity were breached at both centres.

Not addressed.

Resources and environment

The points to be addressed in this section were not discussed at the spot check as they do not relate to the centres visited in the 2014 spot check.

Teaching and learning

The points to be addressed in this section were not discussed at the spot check as the focus was on welfare issues, and no teaching was observed.

Welfare and student services

W1 Fire evacuation drills are not carried out in the residences at SJ.

Not checked as SJ not visited during the spot check.

W14 Student feedback is not pro-actively sought at an early stage in the course.

Addressed.

W29 Few activity-specific risks have been identified. Staff are not required to sign each risk assessment at the time they lead an activity and the form does not include space for comments.

Addressed.

Care of under 18s

W34 It is not clear that the organisation has fully assessed the risks attached to allowing students to leave centres unsupervised during their free time. It is not clear how much legal protection the existing parental consent form, which does not refer to possible risks, would give the school.

The organisation has carried out a further assessment of risks attached to allowing students to leave centres unsupervised during their free time. The parental consent form is unchanged. For further

comments on issues related to unsupervised free time see above and C3 and C6.

W42 Guidance for group leaders does not explicitly address this criterion.

Addressed.

CONCLUSIONS

The management of the two centres visited is good, and both centres are in very appropriate premises. Welfare provision is generally good, and the leisure programme varied. Although there are rules and information available to students relating to their unsupervised free time, there are insufficient checks on their whereabouts, and no separate rules for adult students and students under 18 at SC. Publicity materials are mostly clear and accurate but the fact that evening activities at SC are not compulsory is not made clear.

RECOMMENDATION

The next inspection falls due in 2017; there are no grounds for bringing this forward. However, written evidence of plans for 2015 that will address the concerns relating to under 18s in C3 and C6 should be submitted to the Accreditation Unit within six months.

PUBLISHABLE STATEMENT

Changes to publishable statement

No changes need to be made to the publishable statement.

Publishable statement

The British Council inspected and accredited Studio Cambridge Language and Activity Programmes in August 2013. The Accreditation Scheme assesses the standards of management, resources and premises, teaching, welfare and care of under 18s and accredits organisations which meet the overall standard in each area inspected (see www.britishcouncil.org/accreditation for details).

This private language teaching organisation offers mainly residential vacation courses for under 18s and for adults (16+).

Strengths were noted in the areas of staff management, student administration, course design, care of students and leisure opportunities.

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

Points to be addressed outstanding from the previous inspection(s) or arising from this visit

Management

M19 Initial feedback, carried out informally, may occasionally miss some students and might benefit from a more structured, pro-active approach.

Not checked.

M25 Minimum age limits specified in publicity were breached at both centres.

Not addressed.

Resources and environment

The points to be addressed in this section were not discussed at the spot check as they do not relate to the centres visited in the 2014 spot check.

Teaching and learning

The points to be addressed in this section were not discussed at the spot check as the focus was on welfare issues, and no teaching was observed.

Points to be addressed arising from this visit

Management

None.

Resources and environment

None.

Teaching and learning

T11 Observations at SL are carried out by the centre director/teaching coordinator, who is not TEFLQ.

Welfare

None.

Care of under 18s

C3 The website states that in all centres, except Sir John, activities '*are a compulsory part of your course*'; the evening activities at SC are not compulsory, however, and students can choose to have free time following afternoon activities, and in the evenings, unsupervised.

C6 At SC there is no signing out system when students choose to leave the centre in their free time after afternoon activities. No check is made on their whereabouts until they sign in at curfew time (or earlier if students return before 24.00). Students are advised, but not required, to go out in groups of minimum two or three students. There are no separate rules for adult students and those under 18. At SL the curfew of 23.00 applies to all students, including 14 and 15 year olds. Any younger students enrolled in either centre have an earlier curfew, which could result in their having to return to the centre on their own.
