# British Council

# Inspection report

| Organisation name | Suzanne Sparrow Language School, Plymouth |
|---|---|
| Inspection date | 13–14 May 2015 |

| Section standard | Met | Not met |
|---|---|---|
| **Management:** The management of the provision will operate to the benefit of its students, in accordance with its publicity and in accordance with the *Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance*. | ☒ | ☐ |
| **Resources and environment:** The learning resources and environment will support and enhance the studies of students enrolled with the provider, and will offer an appropriate professional environment for staff. | ☒ | ☐ |
| **Teaching and learning:** Teachers will have appropriate qualifications and will be given sufficient support to ensure that their teaching meets the needs of their students. Programmes of learning will be managed for the benefit of students. The teaching observed will meet the requirements of the Scheme. | ☒ | ☐ |
| **Welfare and student services:** The needs of students for security, pastoral care, information and leisure activities will be met; any accommodation provided will be suitable; the management of the accommodation systems will work to the benefit of students. | ☒ | ☐ |

| Care of under 18s section | N/a | Met | Not met |
|---|---|---|---|
| There will be appropriate provision for the safeguarding of students under the age of 18 within the organisation and in any leisure activities or accommodation provided. | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

### Recommendation

We recommend continued accreditation with a spot check inspection in summer 2016 to assess the junior summer courses which could not be seen at time of inspection, and also to check the arrangements for the accommodation of under 18s.

### Summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited Suzanne Sparrow Language School in May 2015. 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/education/accreditation for details).

This private language school offers courses in general and professional English for adults (17+), closed groups of under 18s and adults (17+) and vacation courses for under 18s.

The inspection report noted a need for improvement in the area of course design.

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

**Organisation profile**

| Inspection history | Dates/details |
|---|---|
| First inspection | 1984 |
| Last full inspection | August 2011 |
| Subsequent spot check (if applicable) | N/a |
| Subsequent supplementary check (if applicable) | N/a |
| Subsequent interim visit (if applicable) | June 2012 |
| Current accreditation status | Accredited |
| Other related non-accredited activities (in brief) at this centre | None |
| Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates | None |
| Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates | None |

**Private Sector**

| Date of foundation | 1978 |
|---|---|
| Ownership | Limited company |
| Other accreditation/inspection | ISI |

**Premises profile**

| Address of main site | 72–74 North Road East, Plymouth PL4 6AL |
|---|---|
| Details of any additional sites in use at the time of the inspection | None |
| Details of any additional sites not in use at the time of the inspection | Plymouth College, Ford Park Road, Plymouth PL4 6RN<br><br>Plymouth High School, St Lawrence Road, Plymouth PL4 6HT<br><br>For short periods during the summer, two classrooms in Plymouth College and Plymouth High school are used for adult closed group classes. |
| Profile of sites visited | The school occupies a four-storey period building close to the railway station and the city centre. On the ground floor there is reception and the main office, a further office, the staffroom and kitchen, and student lounge. The director of studies (DoS) has an office on the second floor. There are 16 classrooms: five on the lower ground floor, four on the first floor, three and a classroom/computer room on the second floor, and three classrooms and a self-study room on the third floor. At the time of the inspection visit one of the classrooms was being used as an adult lounge. There are toilets on the lower ground, ground, first and second floors. There are some car parking spaces at the rear of the building and a small paved area with bench seating at the front. |

| Student profile | At inspection | In peak week July (organisation's estimate) |
|---|---|---|
| Of all international students, approximate percentage on ELT/ESOL courses | 100% | 100% |
| **ELT/ESOL Students** (eligible courses) | At inspection | In peak week |
| Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) 18 years and over | 29 | 50 |
| Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) aged 16-17 years | 0 | 100 |
| Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) aged under 16 | 0 | 100 |
| Part-time ELT aged 18 years and over | 4 | 5 |
| Part-time ELT aged 16-17 years | 22 | 0 |
| Part-time ELT aged under 16 years | 64 | 0 |
| **Overall total** of ELT/ESOL students shown above | 119 | 255 |
| Minimum age | 12 | 12 |
| Typical age range | 13-16 | 14-25 |
| Typical length of stay | General English - 20 weeks | General English - 24 weeks<br>Juniors and Closed groups - 2 |

| | Closed groups - 1 week | weeks |
|---|---|---|
| Predominant nationalities | French, Saudi | Spanish, French, Saudi |
| Number on PBS Tier 4 General student visas | 4 | 4 |
| Number on PBS Tier 4 child visas | 0 | 0 |
| Number on student visitor visas | 17 | 17 |
| Number on child visitor visas | 0 | 4 |

| Staff profile | At inspection | In peak week (organisation's estimate) |
|---|---|---|
| Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses | 16 | 22 |
| Number teaching ELT under 10 hours/week | 1 | |
| Number teaching ELT 10-19 hours/week | 11 | |
| Number teaching ELT 20 hours and over/week | 4 | |
| Total number of administrative/ancillary staff | 9 | |

### Academic staff qualifications to teach ELT/TESOL

| Profile in week of inspection | |
|---|---|
| Professional qualifications | Total number of teachers |
| Diploma-level ELT/TESOL qualification (TEFLQ) | 1 |
| Certificate-level ELT/TESOL qualification (TEFLI) | 15 |
| Holding specialist qualifications only (specify) | 0 |
| YL initiated | 0 |
| Qualified teacher status only (QTS) | 0 |
| Rationale(s) required for teachers without appropriate ELT/TESOL qualifications | 0 |
| **Total** | 16 |

These figures exclude the academic manager.

| Comments |
|---|
| The senior teachers are included in the total, but not the DoS. |

### Course profile

| Eligible activities | Year round | | Vacation | | Other - N/a | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Run | Seen | Run | Seen | Run | Seen |
| General ELT for adults | ☒ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| General ELT for juniors (under 18) | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| English for academic purposes (excludes IELTS preparation) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| English for specific purposes (includes English for Executives) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Teacher development (excludes award-bearing courses) | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| ESOL skills for life/for citizenship | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Other | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

| Comments |
| --- |
| General English courses for adults aged 17+ are held throughout the year. These courses include preparation for IELTS and Cambridge suite examinations. Occasionally one-to-one courses are run; there was one running at the time of the inspection visit, but it was not observed. From June to August general English vacation courses are run for juniors aged 12 to 16. Short courses, often a week in length, are held for closed groups of adults (aged 17+) and for juniors (aged 12 to 17) throughout the year. Short teacher development courses are also offered; one one-to-one course for teachers was run within the last 12 months. |

### Accommodation profile

| Number of students in each at the time of inspection (all ELT/ESOL students) | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Types of accommodation | Adults | Under 18s |
| *Arranged by provider/agency* | | |
| Homestay | 4 | 86 |
| Private home | 0 | 0 |
| Home tuition | 0 | 0 |
| Residential | 0 | 0 |
| Hotel/guesthouse | 0 | 0 |
| Independent self-catering e.g. flats, bedsits, student houses | 0 | 0 |
| *Arranged by student/family/guardian* | | |
| *Staying with own family* | 0 | 0 |
| *Staying in privately rented rooms/flats* | 29 | 0 |
| | | |
| **Overall totals adults/under 18s** | 33 | 86 |
| **Overall total adults + under 18s** | 119 | |

### Introduction

The Suzanne Sparrow School was founded in 1978 by the current principal. Many of the members of management and administration staff, and some of the teachers, have been with the school for a number of years; the notable exceptions are the three student support officers who have been in post since September 2014, January 2015 and February 2015.

General English courses for adults (aged 17+) are offered throughout the year with students attending 15 to 25 hours per week, although four students were attending part-time (less than 15 hours) at the time of the inspection visit.

Open enrolment courses for junior students (aged 12–17) are held from June to August. Classes take place for 15 hours in the mornings or afternoons, with activities in the other half of the day.

Short closed group courses for both adults (17+) and juniors (under 18s) take place year round and comprise the largest part of the provision. Within the previous12 months the school had received approximately 100 groups, of which 20 were for adults and 80 for under 18s.

The inspection took place over one full day and one extended half day. Meetings were held with:
- the principal
- the deputy principal, marketing, welfare officer
- the director of studies (DoS)
- the finance manager
- a senior teacher (responsible for health and safety)
- two admissions officers
- the programmes manager
- two student support officers.

Focus group meetings were held with adult students, closed group (under 18) students, group leaders and teachers. The inspectors observed 15 of the 16 teachers. One inspector visited three homestays.

## Management

### Legal and statutory regulations

| Criteria | See comments |
|---|:---:|
| M1 Declaration of compliance | ☒ |

| Comments |
|---|
| M1 The items sampled were satisfactory. |

### Staff management

| Criteria | Not met | Met | Strength | See comments | N/a |
|---|:---:|:---:|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| M2 Management structure | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| M3 Duties specified | ☐ | ☒ | N/a | ☐ | |
| M4 Communication channels | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| M5 Human resources policies | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | |
| M6 Qualifications verified | ☐ | ☒ | N/a | ☒ | ☐ |
| M7 Induction procedures | ☐ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | |
| M8 Monitoring staff performance | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | |
| M9 Professional development | ☐ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | |

| Comments |
|---|
| M2 The management and administration structure is clear. The deputy principal is responsible for the day-to-day running of the school, supported by the DoS and the finance manager; all have been in the school for a number of years and continuity of provision has been ensured overall. The programmes manager and all three student services officers have been recruited to their current posts within the last 12 months. In a relatively short period of time the student services officers have had to manage the accommodation arrangements and at the same time set up and manage systems for safeguarding, which were not previously fully in place. See the *Welfare and student services* and the *Care of under 18s* sections. |

M4 Communication channels are generally effective. The principal has a registered office in her home but regularly visits the school (at least twice a week) and is in contact by email and by telephone at the beginning and end of each day. Some of the administrative staff work part-time but there are arrangements for conferring and for cover. There are regular board meetings, and weekly meetings for the management and administration team. Meetings held by the DoS with teachers are more informal in nature.
M5 There are sound recruitment policies, as is appropriate for a school which provides for young students. The procedures are generally implemented according to policy; however, there is little evidence in teachers' files to demonstrate that references had been followed up before deployment.
M6 With some minor exceptions, the qualifications and experience of all employees have been investigated and verified; there are a few cases where originals of certificates have not been seen, and so copies are not on file.
M7 Recently recruited staff reported that they had received a thorough induction. A check list of induction areas is kept on file for each member of staff.
M8 There is a system of annual appraisals for permanent members of staff, with the first appraisal taking place after a three month probationary period. Most teachers are employed on zero-hours contracts so do not fall into the category of permanent staff. However, teachers who are at the school for more than a few months have a performance review with the DoS, during which they can give feedback on their experience.
M9 There are procedures to ensure the continuing development of all staff. Recently there has been a focus on safeguarding training, but training in IT systems has also taken place, and one of the student support officers has been following a course leading to a certificate in student services management. Academic staff are encouraged to take advantage of training and development opportunities online and in the region. There are regular in-house sessions on teaching and cultural awareness, sometimes given by outside speakers.

### Student administration

| Criteria | Not met | Met | Strength | See comments | N/a |
|---|:---:|:---:|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| M10 Administrative staff and resources | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | |

| Criteria | Not met | Met | Strength | See comments | N/a |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| M11 Information on course choice | ☐ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | |
| M12 Enrolment procedures | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ | |
| M13 Student records | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | |
| M14 Student attendance policy | ☐ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | |
| M15 Conditions and procedures | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ | |

**Comments**

M10 Students and group leaders reported that they find the staff to be helpful and friendly. There are generally sufficient administrative staff and resources to handle the volume of work, even in the busy summer period, with a number of members of staff able to cover for one another.

M11 The two admissions officers take separate responsibility for closed groups and individual bookings. The officer responsible for closed groups works closely with the programmes manager when negotiating tailor-made courses. The service provided to individuals and to group organisers is of a high standard.

M13 Next of kin details are obtained from adult students on arrival and for long-stay students their local address is checked, and if necessary updated, during a monthly welfare meeting. For individually enrolled under 18s, parents are required to send contact details in advance of the course via the parental consent form. However, for closed groups of under 18s the school has not routinely requested the students' contact details in advance and it has not been a requirement for the group leaders to provide this information.

M14 Attendance of all students is very closely monitored and any absence followed up immediately. As appropriate, the student, their group leader and their homestay host are contacted if a student fails to arrive for the first class of the day.

**Quality assurance**

| Criteria | Not met | Met | Strength | See comments | N/a |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| M16 Action plan | ☐ | ☒ | N/a | ☒ | ☐ |
| M17 Continuing improvement | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | |
| M18 Student feedback and action | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| M19 Staff feedback and action | ☐ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | |
| M20 Complaints | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

**Comments**

M16 An action plan, based on the points to be addressed of the previous inspection report, was submitted. In addition, the school provided evidence of having conducted self-evaluations in the areas of management, resources and environment, welfare and care of under 18s.

M17 The school regularly reviews its systems, processes and practices with a view to continuing improvement. This is particularly evident in the areas of welfare and care of under 18s.

M18 Students receive a 'Day 2' questionnaire which asks about accommodation, and there is a fuller end-of-course questionnaire which includes questions about the teaching and learning and leisure activities. There is evidence that action is taken as needed and that student feedback informs development. Feedback is also obtained from the group leaders of closed groups at a daily meeting and via a written end-of-course questionnaire.

M19 Staff feedback is obtained via appraisals, performance review meetings and by means of regular questionnaires. Teachers reported that they felt their views were taken into account.

M20 The complaints procedure is made known to students. No student complaints had been received which were serious enough to merit formal treatment. However, there was evidence that complaints made by homestay hosts about incidents involving students had been formally recorded and dealt with appropriately.

**Publicity**

| Criteria | Not met | Met | Strength | See comments | N/a |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| M21 Accessible accurate language | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | |
| M22 Realistic expectations | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | |
| M23 Course description | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ | |
| M24 Course information | ☐ | ☒ | N/a | ☒ | |

| | Not met | Met | Strength | See comments | N/a |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| M25 Cost | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ | |
| M26 Accommodation | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| M27 Leisure programme | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| M28 Staff qualifications | ☒ | ☐ | N/a | ☒ | ☐ |
| M29 Accreditation | ☐ | ☒ | N/a | ☐ | ☐ |

| Comments |
|---|

Publicity consists of a school website, a brochure and fees sheet, social media and entry on the English UK site for English language centres in the region. The websites are more comprehensive and up to date than the brochure.
M21 The publicity is generally clearly set out and in easily accessible English.
M22 Some descriptions of the provision could be open to misinterpretation. For example, the classrooms are described as being 'well equipped' when only whiteboards are standard in every classroom. The publicity claims that 'long-term students receive a monthly tutorial to guide them with their studies, and ensure any welfare matters are dealt with'. Students do have a scheduled one-to-one welfare meeting, but academic tutorials take place within class time and are more informal and *ad hoc* in nature. See also M27, the description of the leisure programme.
M24 All information related to this criterion is included on the website, but some - for example, maximum class size - is not included in the brochure.
M26 The publicity describes the homestay accommodation as 'English families' with an illustration of a family group of five people. This is potentially misleading as hosts are often couples or single people.
M27 The leisure programme is described in sufficient detail but it is not made clear than the programme can depend on student numbers and the time of year. Publicity suggests a fuller programme than that taking place at the time of the inspection visit.
M28 In the brochure and on the website, teachers are described as 'well qualified' and 'experienced'. In the local website it says that teachers have 'considerable experience'. In fact, all but one of the teachers have only a certificate level qualification and five have experience of six months or less.

### Management summary

The provision meets the section standard. The management of the provision generally operates to the benefit of its students. On the whole, staff management and student administration is effective; quality assurance systems work well; there are, however, some points requiring attention in publicity.

## Resources and environment

### Premises and facilities

| Criteria | Not met | Met | Strength | See comments | N/a |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| R1 Adequate space | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | |
| R2 Condition of premises | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | |
| R3 Classrooms and learning areas | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | |
| R4 Student relaxation facilities | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| R5 Signage and display | ☐ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☐ |
| R6 Staff room(s) | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

| Comments |
|---|

R1 Premises are adequate in size to provide a satisfactory environment for staff and students. However, see also R3.
R2 Premises are in a good state of cleanliness. There is a programme of refurbishment, and improvements have been made: for example, double glazing has improved insulation and diminished external noise. However, there are some areas, particularly in the lower ground floor, where there is evidence of damp and where some redecoration is required.
R3 There are sufficient classrooms to accommodate the number of students throughout the academic year. In the summer, during the busiest weeks, two classrooms in a local college and school are used, the adult lounge is used as a classroom and some of the junior closed groups have their lessons in the afternoon, with activities in the morning. The maximum class size of the junior groups has been reduced to prevent overcrowding and in all rooms the students can see, hear and write in comfort. However, the size of many of the rooms does not allow for movement or flexibility of layout.
R4 Junior students have the use of a common room with water cooler, where they can eat their packed lunches.

The adults, outside the summer, have a classroom which serves as a lounge, where they can make themselves a hot drink. Students can also use the computer room outside class time. Break times are staggered to prevent overcrowding. However, when the school is at capacity during the summer, the common areas are cramped if the weather prevents students from being outside.

R5 Signage is clear and noticeboards in the classrooms, corridors and common rooms are attractive and informative, with photographs of staff on display.

R6 There is a small teachers' room, and a staff kitchen. Staff have space for storage of personal possessions. The teachers' room contains the resources and photocopier and is not a suitable place in which to carry out preparation and marking. Most teachers prepare in classrooms or at home and meetings are held in one of the classrooms.

### Learning resources

| Criteria | Not met | Met | Strength | See comments | N/a |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| R7 Learning materials | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | |
| R8 Resources for teachers | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | |
| R9 Educational technology | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | |
| R10 Self-access facilities | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| R11 Library/self-access guidance | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| R12 Review and development | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | |

Comments

R7 Adult students are provided with a coursebook. Junior students on summer courses have an in-house produced booklet with learning materials and a space for diary entries and notes. Teachers can use sets of coursebooks but the common practice is to give students on closed group courses a number of black and white photocopies.

R8 There is an adequate stock of materials and resources for teachers including coursebooks, photocopiable books, a picture library and games.

R9 There are twelve laptops for use in class and Wi-Fi is available throughout the school. However, the screens are too small for easy use with more than two or three students and there is only one overhead projector for use with the computers.

R10 There is a computer room, and a small study room where there are two computers. A small collection of books is housed in the adult common room.

R12 Resources for use with adults and with junior summer course students have been reviewed and developed. However, there is little evidence that the teaching and learning resources for use on the junior closed group courses have been satisfactorily reviewed and developed. See also T12.

### Resources and environment summary

The provision meets the section standard. Overall, the learning resources and environment support the studies of students and offer a satisfactory professional environment for staff. However, attention needs to be paid to the provision of suitable learning materials for junior closed group courses.

## Teaching and learning

### Academic staff profile

| Criteria | Not met | Met | Strength | See comments | N/a |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| T1 General education (and rationales) | ☐ | ☒ | N/a | ☐ | |
| T2 ELT/TESOL teacher qualifications | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | |
| T3 Rationales for teachers | ☐ | ☐ | N/a | ☐ | ☒ |
| T4 Profile of academic manager(s) | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| T5 Rationale for academic manager(s) | ☐ | ☐ | N/a | ☐ | ☒ |

Comments

T2 All teachers have appropriate teacher qualifications, but only one is TEFLQ; a number of the teachers are recently qualified and lack training and experience in teaching teenagers.

T4 The DoS is TEFLQ. He is assisted by two senior teachers (both TEFLI) who do not teach a full timetable.

**Academic management**

| Criteria | Not met | Met | Strength | See comments | N/a |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| T6 Deployment of teachers | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| T7 Timetabling | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | |
| T8 Cover for absent teachers | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | |
| T9 Continuous enrolment | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| T10 Support for teachers | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| T11 Observation and monitoring | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

| Comments |
|---|

T6 Most of the closed group courses are a week long, with only three to five teaching days. Teachers are deployed, sometimes at very short notice, to meet the requirements of the continually changing courses. Teachers appreciate the opportunity to teach on a variety of courses but expressed the desire to have more notice so that they can have more time to plan and prepare.

T7 Class groups are sometimes moved so that the best use is made of the differently sized classrooms.

T8 Cover is provided by the senior teachers and by the DoS.

T9 Most of the courses are for closed groups and are self-contained. Students can join the adult open-enrolment general English courses at the start of any week. They join the course at the point reached in the coursebook and, as they are provided with a coursebook, can review previous work done. There are guidelines in the teachers' handbook to help teachers manage continuous enrolment.

T10 Teachers reported that they received support from their peers, and from one of the senior teachers in particular. However, insufficient guidance is provided by an academic manager to help teachers design courses for, and to manage, monolingual junior closed groups. A number of the teachers are newly qualified and lack the necessary experience to enable them to design a course, sometimes at short notice, for a group of students about which they have very little information. See also T12. Teachers benefit from development sessions; a programme of fortnightly sessions has recently been instituted, held on Friday afternoons when there are no classes.

T11 Teachers are observed by the DoS at least once a year; newly appointed teachers are observed within their first two weeks. Written feedback is provided and realistic action points are noted. The DoS uses information gleaned from observations to plan staff development sessions. However, recommended action points for individual teachers are not systematically followed up. The list of criteria used by the DoS to frame the feedback is helpful. However, insufficient care is being taken by the academic management team to monitor and guide inexperienced teachers in their planning of lessons and in the formulation of learning objectives. See also T10.

**Course design and implementation**

| Criteria | Not met | Met | Strength | See comments | N/a |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| T12 Principled course structure | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | |
| T13 Review of course design | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | |
| T14 Course outlines | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | |
| T15 Study and learning strategies | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | |
| T16 Linguistic benefit from UK | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | |

| Comments |
|---|

T12 Adult general English courses are based on coursebooks. Closed group adult courses often have specific goals, for example preparing for a particular examination, and students sometimes bring their own materials. For summer junior courses, materials and activities have been designed which focus on functional language to be used during their stay in the UK. These courses were not seen in action at the time of the inspection visit but the course design seems suitable for short-stay students, often being taught by less experienced temporary teachers. However, the majority of students at the school come in closed groups for one week and have a programme which includes a full cultural and social programme and a total of nine, 12 or 15 hours of classroom lessons. For these courses, at a number of levels, teachers are provided with checklists of grammar structures, topics, functional exponents, and some phonological points. In addition, there are photocopied excerpts from published materials which relate to the items on the checklist. Teachers are expected to choose from these lists in order to design a course for the designated course length. In practice, most teachers observed during the inspection visit chose three grammar structures or three topics (one for each day) and used a unit from a coursebook which provided related texts and exercises. Teachers' choice of materials, activities and learning objectives is not sufficiently well monitored.

T13 There is evidence that some review has taken place, for example of the summer course design; however, much more needs to be done to improve the course design and delivery of the junior closed group courses.

T14 Teachers provide course outlines with hand-written notes which they display on the classroom wall but these are not very detailed and the attention of students is not always drawn to them. Adults receive a coursebook and an outline of the course in general terms in their welcome pack. Students on junior closed groups are not given a written course outline; nor are the overall learning objectives made sufficiently clear.

T15 In the junior closed group courses in particular, there was no evidence of study and learning strategies that support independent learning and enable students to benefit from their overall programme and continue their learning after the course.

T16 Most courses, in particular those for the junior closed groups, do not include strategies which ensure that students can develop their language skills outside the classroom and benefit linguistically from their stay in the UK.

**Learner management**

| Criteria | Not met | Met | Strength | See comments | N/a |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| T17 Placement and level | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| T18 Monitoring students' progress | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | |
| T19 Examination guidance | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| T20 Assessment criteria | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| T21 Academic reports | ☐ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | |
| T22 Information on UK education | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

Comments

T17 Students on open enrolment courses have an initial placement test. Usually juniors in closed groups are placed according to the advice of their accompanying teachers.

T18 There is a weekly test for students on adult courses. Long-stay students have short academic tutorials approximately once a month when their progress and learning objectives are discussed.

T21 All students receive a certificate of attendance, which states a Common European Framework level and descriptor. They also receive an individual report.

**Classroom observation record**

| | |
|---|---|
| Number of teachers seen | 15 |
| Number of observations | 15 |
| Parts of programme(s) observed | All except the one-to-one class: adults and junior closed group courses; morning and afternoon. |

Comments

The inspectors were made aware of an additional one-to-one class when it was too late to accommodate an additional observation in the programme. Therefore, one of the teachers was not observed.

**Classroom observation**

| Criteria | Not met | Met | Strength | See comments | N/a |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| T23 Linguistic systems of English | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | |
| T24 Appropriate language | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | |
| T25 Planning content | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | |
| T26 Coherent and relevant activities | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | |
| T27 Classroom management | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | |
| T28 Teaching techniques | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | |
| T29 Student engagement | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | |
| T30 Sensitivity and learning atmosphere | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | |

| Comments |
| --- |
| T23 Teachers demonstrated knowledge of the grammar systems being taught and there was some, but in some segments not enough, focus on lexical systems. However, in most lesson segments there was little evidence of knowledge of phonological systems, either in the planning, or in the delivery. |
| T24 Teachers provided an appropriate model of spoken and written English and generally graded their language appropriately for the level of their students. However, there was little evidence in plans and student profiles of strategies for differentiation. |
| T25 In most plans teachers noted teacher aims, rather than learner objectives and planned outcomes. Student profiles were provided for most groups but they tended to be sketchy with not enough detail about how the lesson content had been designed to meet their particular needs or interests. This was particularly true in the junior group classes, with little or no reference made in the plans to how the language being taught related to the overall objectives of the course and to their activities and use of language outside the classroom. |
| T26 Lessons were generally clearly organised, often following exercises in a coursebook unit. However, in weaker segments not enough time was planned for oral controlled practice of the language being learned and, in the junior classes in particular, activities did not always lead to relevant learning outcomes. |
| T27 In most segments observed boardwork was clear and well organised. There were a few teacher-generated worksheets and cue cards, and reference in plans to audio recordings and video clips. However, in most junior classes observed, resources consisted of black-and-white copies of coursebook units. Because of the size of most classrooms it was not possible to plan for activities involving student movement around the classroom. |
| T28 In stronger segments there was effective nomination, eliciting, some clear focus on grammar structures, and some effective means of reviewing and checking understanding. In weaker segments, the lessons were too teacher-centred with over-reliance on description and explanation of language, rather than on controlled student practice. Instructions were often not clear or checked. In a number of monolingual junior groups teachers lacked the necessary techniques to ensure that students did not need to resort to their mother tongue in order to attempt the tasks. In the junior groups overall, too much attention was given to reading and written exercises, rather than to improving spoken fluency and pronunciation. Opportunities were missed for correction, and practice of spoken models. |
| T29 Overall, teachers were able to manage learning activities and interactions effectively to engage students, with most students taking an active part in the tasks set. However, the topics chosen were not always sufficiently engaging or personalised and, as noted above, some teachers found it difficult to ensure that the students' first language was not the predominant language of the classroom. |
| T30 In the adult classes in particular, an awareness of cultural and individual student characteristics and needs was usually in evidence, and in most classes there was a pleasant atmosphere. Teachers knew the names of their students and efforts were made to include all members of the class. However, in some junior classes there was little awareness demonstrated of what topics and approach would motivate teenage students on a short course: to enable them to use and extend the language they already know within the context of a study visit to the UK. |

### Classroom observation summary

The teaching just met the requirements of the Scheme. Most lesson segments observed were satisfactory overall, with the standard ranging from barely adequate to good. Positive aspects include teacher rapport and attention paid to individual students. Negative aspects relate to choice of materials and activities, and reflect the weaknesses identified in the area of course design, above.

### Teaching and learning summary

The provision meets the section standard. Teachers have appropriate qualifications but some are not given sufficient support to ensure that their teaching fully meets the needs of their students. Overall, programmes of learning are managed for the benefit of students and the teaching observed met the requirements of the Scheme. However, there is a need for improvement in *Course design*.

## Welfare and student services

### Care of students

| Criteria | Not met | Met | Strength | See comments | N/a |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| W1 Safety and security onsite | ☐ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | |
| W2 Pastoral care | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | |
| W3 Personal problems | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | |
| W4 Dealing with abusive behaviour | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | |
| W5 Emergency contact number | ☐ | ☒ | N/a | ☐ | |

| | Not met | Met | Strength | See comments | N/a |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| W6 Transport and transfers | ☐ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | |
| W7 Advice | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | |
| W8 Medical and dental treatment | ☐ | ☒ | N/a | ☐ | |

**Comments**

W1 The school has appropriate procedures in place to ensure the safety and security of all students on the premises. Measures include all visitors signing in at reception and wearing badges, staff wearing badges, all under 18s wearing wristbands and a premises risk assessment having been carried out. Regular fire evacuation drills are held.

W2 There are rooms designated as prayer rooms for men and women. The school holds monthly welfare meetings with adult students.

W3 The school has two welfare officers, who can help students with any personal problems they might have.

W4 The school has policies and procedures for dealing with abusive behaviour, but the language used in documentation is not simple enough to be understood by many students and parents.

W6 Travel and transfer arrangements are made clear on the school's website and on the transfer price list. The school has an excellent policy of asking homestays to come to meeting points to pick up students, before taking them home with them.

W7 All of the necessary advice and information is provided to students in handbooks and in welcome packs. The length of some of the information needs to be shortened and some of the language used in these documents is too complex for many students to understand.

### Accommodation profile

**Comments on the accommodation seen by the inspectors**

The school has around 250 active homestays on its database and offers a range of accommodation to junior and adult students and group leaders. One of the inspectors visited three homestay providers, two of which accept students under the age of 18.

### Accommodation: all types

| Criteria | Not met | Met | Strength | See comments | N/a |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| W9 Services and facilities | ☐ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☐ |
| W10 Accommodation inspected first | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| W11 Accommodation re-inspected | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| W12 Accommodation registers | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| W13 Information | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| W14 Student feedback | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| W15 Meals in homestay/residences | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

**Comments**

W9 The three homestays visited were of a very good standard and offered very comfortable living environments and all of the necessary facilities and services.

W11 Not all of the homestays have been revisited in the last two years. The school is prioritising revisits to those homestays scheduled to take students in the near future.

W12 The homestay database does not currently contain easily accessible up-to-date information about homestays, including the records of visits, and whether or not gas safety checks and fire risk assessments have been conducted.

W13 Confirmation of accommodation booked includes information about the type of accommodation, approximate time of travel and the services provided.

### Accommodation: homestay

| Criteria | Not met | Met | Strength | See comments | N/a |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| W16 No more than four students | ☐ | ☒ | N/a | ☐ | ☐ |
| W17 Rules, terms and conditions | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| W18 Shared bedrooms | ☐ | ☒ | N/a | ☐ | ☐ |

| | Not met | Met | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| W19 Students' first language | ☐ | ☒ | N/a | ☐ | ☐ |
| W20 Language of communication | ☐ | ☒ | N/a | ☐ | ☐ |
| W21 Adult to welcome | ☐ | ☒ | N/a | ☐ | ☐ |

**Comments**

W17 Hosts are made aware of the rules, terms and conditions regarding homestay services in detailed documentation. They do not, however, receive written details about students, including any dietary requirements and/or medical conditions. Specific information about students is currently transmitted orally.

### Accommodation: residential

| Criteria | Not met | Met | Strength | See comments | N/a |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| W22 Cleaning | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| W23 Health | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

**Comments**

None.

### Accommodation: other

| Criteria | Not met | Met | Strength | See comments | N/a |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| W24 Information and support | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| W25 Other accommodation | ☐ | ☒ | N/a | ☐ | ☐ |

**Comments**

W24 Oral advice may be given to students regarding the implications of students living in bed-sits or flats, but no written guidelines are available and they are not routinely informed of the implications.

### Leisure opportunities

| Criteria | Not met | Met | Strength | See comments | N/a |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| W26 Events and activities | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | |
| W27 Leisure programmes | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| W28 Health and safety | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| W29 Responsible person | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

**Comments**

W26 The school provides information about social, cultural and sporting events through displays in the student lounges and flyers next to the general activities board. In the monthly welfare meetings, adult students are asked if they have any specific cultural or sporting requests.
W27 The school offers a limited leisure programme for much of the year, but offers more extensive and separate ones in the summer for adults and under 18s. Summer activity programmes include morning or afternoon activities and half-day and full-day excursions. Groups have their own customised social programmes.
W28 Risk assessments are carried out for all activities.
W29 The school has a sensible policy of limiting sports activities to those carried out in centres with professional staff to supervise them. Sports offered include football, hockey, badminton and swimming.

### Welfare and student services summary

The provision meets the section standard. The needs of students for safety and security are met. Accommodation systems are adequate, although improvements need to be made to the way that homestay accommodation information is recorded. Leisure activities are well managed and appropriate for the different age groups catered for.

## Care of under 18s

| Criteria | Not met | Met | Strength | See comments | N/a |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| C1 Safeguarding policy | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| C2 Guidance and training | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| C3 Publicity | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| C4 Recruitment materials | ☐ | ☒ | N/a | ☐ | ☐ |
| C5 Suitability checks | ☒ | ☐ | N/a | ☒ | ☐ |
| C6 Safety and supervision | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| C7 Accommodation | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| C8 Contact arrangements | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

| Comments |
|---|
| The school has closed groups of under 18s (for students aged 12 to 17) throughout the year and an open enrolment summer junior course (12 to 17 year-olds). The school also accepts 17 year-olds on year-round adult courses, although very few students of this age actually enrol.<br>C1 The school's safeguarding policy appropriately specifies the procedures necessary to ensure the safety and well-being of all under 18 students.<br>C2 The policy is made known to adults including staff, homestay providers and group leaders and is to be found on the school's website. Staff receive appropriate guidance and training. Simplified and shorter versions of the policy are not provided to some of these groups.<br>C3 The level of care of under 18s on junior courses is made clear, but not for the very small number of 17 year-olds who may enrol on adult courses.<br>C5 Suitability checks have been conducted for all staff, but not for all homestay providers who currently take under 18s.<br>C7 There are clear guidelines given to homestay providers which include curfew times.<br>C8 The school provides parents, legal guardians, group leaders and agents with a 24-hour telephone number. The criterion, however, is not met as the school does not have a 24-hour contact number for the parents or guardians of group students. |

### Care of under 18s summary

| |
|---|
| The provision meets the section standard. Overall there is appropriate provision for the safeguarding of students within the school, in accommodation and on leisure activities. The school must ensure that all homestay providers who take under 18s have had suitability checks. |