

Organisation name	Suzanne Sparrow, Plymouth
Inspection date	12 November 2024
Current accreditation status	Accreditation under review
Reason for spot check	Signalled: end period under review

## Recommendation

We recommend continued accreditation. The period of review may now be ended and accreditation continued until the next full inspection, which falls due in 2028.

## Changes to the summary statement

The need for improvement in staff management and development and publicity can now be removed. An updated summary statement can now be issued.

## New summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited Suzanne Sparrow Plymouth Language School in July and November 2024. 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](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation) for details).

This private language school offers courses in general English for adults (18+) and young people (16+), vacation courses for under 18s, and for closed groups of adults (18+) and young people (16+), and 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.

## Updated summary inspection findings

### Management

The provision meets the section standard. The management of the provision operates to the benefit of the students, and in accordance with the provider's stated goals, values, and publicity.

### Premises and resources

The provision meets the section standard. The premises provide students and staff with a safe, comfortable and professional environment for work and relaxation. A range of learning resources is available, appropriate to the age and needs of the students. Guidance on the use of these resources is provided for staff and students where needed.

### Teaching and learning

Overall, the provision meets the section standard. The academic staff team has a professional profile appropriate to the context. The recruitment and support policy is sufficiently well devised and implemented for the current academic team in line with the stated course objectives and the student profile but would need further development to meet the needs of any new teachers, and there is a lack of continuing professional development opportunities available to teachers. Course design documents are not systematically reviewed and learning outcomes are not made available to students. The teaching observed met the requirements of the Scheme. There is a need for improvement in *Course design*.

### Welfare and student services

The provision meets the section standard. The provision meets the needs of the students for security, pastoral care, information and leisure activities. Students benefit from well-managed student services, including, where offered, out-of-class activities and suitable accommodation.

### Safeguarding under 18s

The provision meets the section standard. There is appropriate provision for the safeguarding of students under the age of 18 within the organisation and in any leisure activities or accommodation provided.

**Organisation profile**

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	1984
Last full inspection	July 2024
Subsequent checks/visits (if applicable)	November 2024
Other related non-accredited activities (in brief) at this centre	N/a
Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates	N/a
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	N/a

Student and staff profile	At inspection	Estimate at peak: July
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	10	63
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	12	12
Typical age range	20–33	16–25
Typical length of stay	8 weeks	2 weeks
Predominant nationalities	Spanish, Chinese	French, Spanish
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	2	8
Total number of managers including academic	3	3
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	2	5

**Premises profile**

Address of main site	72 North Road East, Plymouth PL4 6AL
Additional sites in use	N/a
Additional sites not in use	University of Plymouth, Rolle Building
Sites inspected	72 North Road East, Plymouth PL4 6AL

**Introduction****Background**

This was a signalled spot check to end a period of review with a focus on safeguarding under 18s and points to be addressed from the previous inspection.

**Preparation**

Prior to the visit, the reporting inspector contacted Suzanne Sparrow Plymouth to confirm key staff would be available during November. An updated action plan on points to be addressed and *People to be seen* form were requested. The date of the visit was not disclosed until the day before.

**Programme and persons present**

The inspection was carried out by two inspectors and lasted for one day. The inspectors arrived at 09:00 and left at 16:00. Meetings were held with the principal/director, director of studies (DoS), and the finance manager. Documents viewed included, collated student feedback, staff references, records of staff training, job descriptions, induction checklists, records of continuing professional development for administrative and management staff, the critical incident plan, and premises risk assessments. The website was also checked.

**Findings**

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

Staff management and development	Met
M8 The provider implements appropriate human resources policies, which are made known to staff.	Met
M9 The provider specifies the duties of all staff working with ELT students, and ensures that these are up to date.	Met
M10 There are effective procedures for the recruitment and selection of all staff.	Met
M11 There are effective induction procedures for all staff.	Met
M12 There are effective procedures for monitoring and appraising all staff, for highlighting good performance, and for handling unsatisfactory performance or conduct. These procedures are made known to all staff.	Met

M13 There are effective procedures to ensure the continuing professional development (CPD) of all staff to meet the needs of the individual, the students and the organisation.	Met
<b>Comments</b>	
All criteria in this section are fully met.	
<b>Publicity</b>	Met
M21 All publicity and information is accurate, and gives rise to realistic expectations about the premises, location, and the extent and availability of the services and resources.	Met
M22 All publicity and information about the provider and the services it offers is in clear, accurate and accessible English.	Met
M23 Publicity gives clear, accurate and easy-to-find information on the courses.	Met
M24 Publicity includes clear, accurate and easy-to-find information on costs.	Met
M25 Publicity or other information made available before enrolment gives an accurate description of the level of care and support given to any students under 18.	Met
M26 Publicity gives an accurate description of any accommodation offered.	Met
M27 Descriptions of staff qualifications are accurate.	Met
M28 Claims to accreditation are in line with Scheme requirements.	Met
<b>Comments</b>	
All criteria in this section are fully met.	

### Safeguarding under 18s

<b>Safeguarding under 18s</b>	Met
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.	Met
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.	Met
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.	Met
S6 There are suitable arrangements for the supervision and safety of students outside the scheduled programme.	Met
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
<b>Comments</b>	
No students under the age of 18 were enrolled on courses at the school at the time of the spot inspection. At peak, the school enrolled less than 10 students of this age. The provider also accepts closed groups of students aged 12–17. All criteria in this section are fully met.	

### Action taken on points to be addressed

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

#### **Points which must be addressed before continued accreditation can be recommended**

#### **Premises and resources**

P1 Risk assessments are not in place for the university premises used in peak periods, and insufficient in scope for the school premises, particularly in relation to under 18s. There are no records of fire drills in the last year.

**Addressed. Detailed risk assessments are now in place for all premises. Particular attention is paid to managing potential risks to students under the age of 18. Fire drills take place every quarter.**

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## **Welfare and student services**

W1 The critical incident plan lacks substance. Not all members of staff named in it have access to key contact information.

**Addressed. The critical incident plan is now comprehensive and made known to all stakeholders.**

W6 There are insufficient first aid-trained members of staff for the size of the provision.

**Addressed. An additional two members of staff are now first-aid trained.**

## **Safeguarding under 18s**

S2 No staff have up-to-date advanced and specialist safeguarding training.

**Addressed. All key staff have up-to-date specialist and/or advanced safeguarding training.**

S4 References on file for newly recruited and returning administrative staff did not follow safer recruitment guidelines.

**Addressed. Safer recruitment procedures are now in place for all newly recruited staff, including appropriate reference request forms.**

S5 There are no risk assessments in place covering safety and supervision.

**Addressed. Risk assessments have been reviewed to ensure the safety and security of under 18s at all times.**

S6 The routes 12–17-year-old students take from their accommodation to the school have not been risk assessed.

**Addressed. Risk assessments have been developed to minimise any potential risks travelling from accommodation to the school.**

## ***Other points to be addressed***

### **Management**

M3 Staffing levels are not always sufficient to ensure the effective delivery of the provision and ensure continuity at all times.

**Addressed. Staff have begun a training programme to ensure they are able to cover for each other during times of absence. Areas of responsibility have been reassigned between staff to balance workloads more effectively.**

M5 Student feedback is not currently collated, reviewed or recorded.

**Addressed. Feedback is now collated to provide useful statistics. It is clear action is taken in response to individual feedback and trends and patterns that emerge. Actions are recorded.**

M9 Job descriptions are in place for all staff but do not reflect the full range of responsibilities currently expected of the post holders. Safeguarding duties are not made sufficiently clear in key roles and there is no evidence of review dates.

**Addressed. Job descriptions are reviewed on a regular basis to clearly reflect the full range of responsibilities. Dates of review are noted. Safeguarding duties are now specified.**

M11 Induction procedures had not been followed or recorded for newly recruited and returning staff.

**Addressed. Comprehensive Induction checklists are now in place for all staff.**

M13 More careful planning of the CPD programme is required to ensure updates to essential training are completed.

**Addressed. A professional development plan has been implemented for all administrative and management staff.**

M19 Conditions under which a student may be asked to leave the course are not made clear.

**Addressed. The student handbook now includes clear guidance on the school's disciplinary policy and procedures, with examples of behaviour that will lead to immediate expulsion.**

M21 Information on the extent and availability of the leisure programme is misleading.

**Addressed. The website has been updated to provide information on the extent and sample costs of the leisure programme offered by the provider.**

M23 Information about the maximum class size on the website is inconsistent.

**Addressed. The maximum class size is included in descriptions of all courses on the website.**

M28 The Accreditation Scheme marque and the English UK logo are incorrect on the brochure.

**Addressed. All accreditation marques are now correct.**

### **Premises and resources**

P4 Facilities for junior students are not appropriate, particularly during bad weather.

**Addressed. Two basement classrooms have been allocated for use by under 18s during breaks, and outside areas are now supervised by a member of staff.**

## **Welfare and student services**

W19 The school provides no information on events or excursions available to students outside its own leisure programme.

**Addressed. Information on things to do in and around Plymouth is featured on the website. Posters in the adult student lounge promote seasonal cultural events and activities taking place in the city.**

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### **Safeguarding under 18s**

S1 The safeguarding policy is confusingly written in places.

**Addressed. The safeguarding policy is now clearly presented and well organised. It contains all required information.**

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### **Conclusions**

The school has worked hard to ensure that the points to be addressed within three months have been fully addressed. Additionally, good progress has been made on points to be addressed in other areas. The requirements for staff management, publicity and safeguarding are now met.

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