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| Organisation name | The Stay Academy, London |
| Inspection date | 13 July 2016 |

BACKGROUND
Organisation profile

| Inspection history | Dates/details |
|---|---|
| First inspection | August 2014 |
| Last full inspection | N/a |
| Subsequent spot check (if applicable) | February 2016 (following the February 2015 supplementary check) |
| Subsequent supplementary check (if applicable) | February 2015 |
| Subsequent interim visit (if applicable) | N/a |
| Other related non-accredited activities (in brief) at this centre | N/a |
| Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates | N/a |
| Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates | N/a |

Current accreditation status and reason for spot check

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

Premises profile

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| Address of main site | 5J Nicoll Road, London NW10 9AX (the Willesden site). |
| Details of any additional sites in use at the time of the inspection | 34, Chalk Farm Road, London NW1 8AJ (the Camden site) |
| Details of any additional sites not in use at the time of the inspection | A new centre in Colindale which will open in September 2016 and be fully functional in January 2017. |
| Sites inspected | The Willesden site |

Student and staff profile

| | At inspection | In peak week July |
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| Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT) | 105 (W) 25 (C) | 120 (W) 79 (C) |
| Minimum age (including closed group or vacation) | 12 (W) 16 (C) | 12 (W) 16 (C) |
| Typical age range | 12–17 (W) 16–26 (C) | 12–17 (W) 16–26 (C) |
| Typical length of stay | 2–3 weeks (W) 2 weeks (C) | 2–3 weeks (W) 2 weeks (C) |
| Predominant nationalities | Italian, Argentinian (W) Argentinian (C) | Italian, Argentinian (W) Argentinian (C) |
| Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses | 7 (W) 3 (C) | 5 (W) 5 (C) |
| Total number of administrative/ancillary staff | 5 (W) 3 (C) | 5 (W) 3 (C) |

INTRODUCTION

Background

The Stay Academy (TSA) grew out of, and is housed in, a student residential development called The Stay Club. The Stay Club is a limited company, the Hallmark Property Group, which is developing a series of custom-built student residences across London. Two are already in operation: The Stay Club, Camden opened in March 2013; The Stay Club, Willesden opened in August 2012. The Camden Stay Club has 260 studios that can accommodate a maximum of 530 students and is open to students both from London universities and from language schools. The Willesden Stay Club also houses students but, as it has a part-hotel licence, it can take guests who are not students. It has 126 studios and can accommodate a maximum of 264 guests. Both clubs accept both UK and non-UK students.

A 2013 survey of students staying in the Camden residence revealed that some of the language school students staying there would prefer to have language lessons in their residence, rather than travelling to schools around London, so the company decided to introduce English language lessons, initially at the Camden residence and then at the Willesden residence, under the name The Stay Academy (TSA). TSA is a separate company but is under the same ownership as The Stay Club.

The management of the two Stay Clubs – unit managers, reception managers and maintenance teams – run the non-academic side of the two TSA sites but are not employed by TSA and were not interviewed during the previous inspections or during this check.

General English courses run at both centres. Accompanied groups of students who are under 18 are taught and accommodated at Willesden year round, with a significant rise in numbers in July. Both group and individual bookings are accepted at Camden, where the minimum age is 16.

Another site is due to open in Colindale in September and will be fully functional in January 2017. This is a 20-floor building with 600 studios and 32 classrooms. There will be a library, an IT centre, 1:1 rooms, a restaurant, a supermarket and a gym. Courses that will take place there will include EFL courses: general English, exam preparation, ESP, English Plus and closed groups. The ELT operation at the Colindale school is going to be re-branded as Chartam English and the school will be known as Chartam English. However, it will remain under the umbrella title of TSA. All English classes will eventually move to Colindale, with the exception of the summer period, when it is hoped that all three centres will be running at full capacity with EFL courses.

Three quotations from the strategic sales and marketing plan for the new centre give a taste of the long-term plans for the Colindale school. It is intended to be ‘an academic institution for serious learners’, ‘a pathway to top UK HE institutions’ and ‘our aim is to achieve HE status within five years’.

More immediately, plans for courses at the three centres from January 2017 are as follows:

Camden: Adult (16+ courses) including general English, exam preparation, closed groups. Once the Colindale centre is fully operational, Camden may only have EFL students in the summer.

Willessden: Closed groups of juniors year round, summer school for juniors. Once the Colindale centre is fully operational, Willessden may only have EFL students in the summer.

Colindale: Adult courses, summer courses for individuals and groups with plans for a range of more academic courses.

All three centres have been advertised as The Stay Academy@Camden, The Stay Academy@Willessden and The Stay Academy@Colindale but they are now usually referred to as The Stay Academy Camden, The Stay Academy Willessden and the Stay Academy Colindale or TSA Camden, TSA Willessden and TSA Colindale.

The Stay Academy was inspected for the first time in August 2014. Accreditation was withheld because the section standard for *Care of under 18s* was not met. However, the school was invited to apply for a supplementary inspection, which was arranged for February 2015. The school demonstrated that the weaknesses in *Care of under 18s* and in two sections, publicity and course design, had generally been addressed and accreditation was awarded for four years. The routine spot check of a newly accredited provider that took place in February 2016 stated that, in view of the unsatisfactory findings relating to recent and proposed management changes and to a few aspects of *Care of under 18s*, an action plan should be submitted within three months and a further spot check should be carried out within six months. This was the spot check – a short visit to be followed by a more substantial spot check when the Colindale school is open.

Preparation

The inspector was sent copies of all previous reports, the action plan following the last inspection, correspondence between the school and the Accreditation Unit, and a brochure. He contacted the school a month before the inspection to ascertain when key members of staff would be absent and to check at which of the two centres he would find these key members of staff. The business and development director sent him a strategic sales and marketing plan. Nearer the time of the spot check, he contacted the school to remind them which documents he would need to see at his visit.

Programme and persons present

The inspector arrived at the Willesden centre at 14.00 and left 17.00. Meetings were held with the chief executive officer (CEO) and the principal/DoS of the two centres at Willesden and Camden. He examined documents relating to the points to be addressed from the last report, and held discussions about recent developments and future plans with the CEO and Principal.

FINDINGS

At the last inspection, the then DoS had been acting principal for three weeks in the wake of the previous principal leaving a month earlier. She had been DoS of the two centres since February 2015. The newly appointed CEO had just taken up his post, having been appointed at the end of 2015. There had been considerable changes to management staff in the previous year and a resulting lack of continuity. Although a full complement of management staff is not yet in place, this period of change should soon end.

At the time of this visit, the principal of the two schools had been in her post for four months. A new appointment of Chartam principal and ELT head of operations had been made and the appointee was due to take up her post in the week following this inspection. The new appointee will line manage the principal of the Camden and Willesden centres. The school administrator, responsible for all the administrative functions of TSA English, took up her post in April. The post of student experience manager is currently being advertised. Once the Chartam principal is in post and the student experience officer has been appointed, the lack of continuity highlighted at the February 2016 spot check should end.

Most of the points to be addressed arising from the February 2016 spot check had been addressed but some remain only partially addressed or not addressed.

POINTS TO BE ADDRESSED

Management

M2 Recent changes in management roles and structure have resulted in some lack of continuity and uncertainty about the future management structure.

Partially addressed. A clear management structure is now in place but one key post remains unfilled (but is currently being advertised) and one new appointment – Chartam principal and head of ELT operations, will not be in post until the end of July.

M3 Job descriptions of current and proposed management roles are not finalised.

Addressed. There are now full job descriptions for all staff.

M22 Publicity does not make the location of courses at the different sites clear.

Partially addressed. More detail is now provided but the lack of clarity in some places reflects the current fluidity of the operation, with the new school waiting to begin taking students.

M25 There is no mention of the approximate cost of any leisure programme not included in the course fees.

Not addressed.

Resources and environment

R3 The problems with seating arrangements in some classrooms in the Camden school remain.

Addressed. The original seating arrangement is still in place but new tables and chairs have been ordered and were due to be delivered the following week.

Welfare and student services

W1 Security risks at both centres have not been fully assessed or addressed in the premises risk assessments.

Addressed. Suitable premises risk assessments are now in place for both schools and appropriate steps are now taken to ensure the safety of students on site.

W4 Policies and procedures relating to the Prevent strategy are not made known to students.

Addressed. The policies and procedures are discussed at induction and posters describing core British values are on the walls of both schools.

Care of under 18s

C1 Full procedures for safe recruitment are not stated in the safeguarding policy.

Partially addressed. There is no mention of the steps to be taken when employing a new member of staff who is awaiting DBS clearance.

C3 The different levels of care and support given to students under 18 at the two centres are not made clear in publicity.

Partially addressed. Brochures have clear statements about the level of care and support given to students but the website statement is very limited.

C6 Rules are not specific enough to take account of the differences at the two centres. The school does not provide group leaders with guidelines or rules for students to ensure adequate safeguarding measures are in place when they take the under 18s off the premises.

Addressed. Group leaders receive information about the rules that apply to under 18s before they leave their home countries and are then given guidelines on arrival.

CONCLUSIONS

Most of the outstanding points to be addressed from the last spot check inspection have either been fully or partially addressed. However, one point has not been addressed and the partially addressed points, particularly those in the area of publicity, still need to be fully addressed.

RECOMMENDATION

In view of the fact that a new centre is about to open and that that centre will ultimately become the main EFL school, as well as the fact that not all points to be addressed from the last spot check inspection have been fully addressed, a further spot check should be carried out once the new centre is fully operational and within six months at the most.

SUMMARY STATEMENT**Changes to summary statement**

No changes need to be made to the summary statement.

Summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited The Stay Academy in February 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 residential courses in general English for adults (16+) and for closed groups of under 18s.

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