



**EDUCATIONAL OVERSIGHT INSPECTION OF PRIVATE FURTHER
EDUCATION COLLEGES AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE SCHOOLS**

INTERNATIONAL HOUSE LONDON TRUST

(Company Registration No. 1239120)

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Proprietor	International House Trust Ltd
Age Range	16+
Total number of students	941
Numbers by age and type of study	Under 16: 15 18+: 926 EFL only: 306 FE only: 635 EFL and FE: 0
Inspection dates	06 - 08 December 2016

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the Framework for Educational Oversight of private further education colleges and English language schools. The inspection consists of a three-day team inspection of the institution's educational provision.

The ISI is an approved Educational Oversight body authorised by the Home Office to inspect privately funded further education colleges and English language schools in England and Wales offering courses on the Qualifications and Credit Framework. It is designed to improve the quality of education on offer to international students who attend UK colleges through Tier 4 of the points-based system for student visas.

ISI inspections are required to:

- Report on the extent to which colleges comply with the published Educational Oversight Standards;
- Assess and report on the quality of educational outcomes and provision;
- Where applicable, make recommendations outside the scope of the Standards to support continued improvement of quality.

Inspection provides objective and reliable reports on the quality of colleges, and by placing reports in the public domain, makes this information available to students, Government and the wider community. Inspection takes account of the context of each individual college, and of how it evaluates its own performance and demonstrates its success.

The inspection of the college is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, though inspectors will comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on students. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit;
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the college, its services or other physical features;
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the college or its accounting procedures;
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the college's compliance with employment law.

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1. CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT

- 1.1 International House London is part of International House Trust Ltd, which is a registered charity. International House London was set up in 1959 and moved to its current premises in Holborn in March 2007. The aim of the trust is to improve the quality of language teaching and teacher training worldwide. A board of trustees oversee the management of the school. Operational oversight of the school is under the direction of the chief executive officer, who reports regularly to the board of trustees. He is supported in his role by the director of operations, who manages the day-to-day operations of the school with the senior management team.
- 1.2 The school offers an extensive range of courses in general and business English as well as Cambridge and IELTS examination courses. In educational training the school offers a range of courses in house, online and overseas to both teachers and managers. The main teacher training courses are the part-time and full-time CELTA and DELTA courses. The school also offers part-time courses in modern foreign languages from beginner to advanced level and bespoke business executive courses.
- 1.3 Students enrol at intervals with weekly enrolment for general English courses, monthly for teacher training courses and 6 weekly for modern language courses. English and modern language courses are open to all, whilst teacher training courses require a minimum standard of English which is determined prior to acceptance.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection 941 students were enrolled, the vast majority of whom were adults. Students come from a wide range of countries in Asia, the Middle East and Europe, and there is a slight predominance of females. Students on general and specialist English courses do not have English as their first language. Students on teacher training courses and modern foreign language courses are predominantly from the UK with the vast majority having English as their first language. There is 1 student on a Tier 4 visa.
- 1.5 There is currently a very small number of students assessed as having special educational needs or disabilities (SEND).
- 1.6 The college was last inspected on 24 November 2015 when it met all Key Standards and the quality of education exceeded expectations.

2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1 **The language school exceeds expectations for the quality of education.** At the time of the inspection, all Standards for Educational Oversight were met and quality is excellent.
- 2.2 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is excellent. Initial assessment and induction are very accurate. They ensure that students are enrolled on the most suitable course and any special educational needs are identified early. Courses on offer to Tier 4 students lead to outcomes that meet Home Office requirements. Teaching, learning and achievement are outstanding. Teachers plan activities that are well designed and encourage a high level of collaboration between students. Teachers explain very clearly and use questioning well to ensure that all students understand. They check students' progress consistently in lessons giving verbal feedback constantly. A very small minority of lessons lack pace and challenge. Teachers mark students' work with excellent attention to detail, explaining mistakes and guiding students to make improvements. Students' progress is tracked in detail, allowing managers and teachers to monitor progress effectively. The new tutorial system is very effective in helping teachers and students to assess their progress. Trainee teachers have outstanding opportunities to develop excellent teaching skills. Extra support has been extremely helpful for students with writing difficulties. Attainment and progress are outstanding; students make excellent progress in developing their skills.
- 2.3 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is excellent. The school's premises are of high quality, very well maintained and secure. Excellent measures are in place to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards. Provision for first aid is excellent. Admission and attendance registers are accurately maintained in accordance with Home Office requirements for Tier 4 reporting procedures. Support for students is excellent, with outstanding pastoral support, a wide range of social activities and guidance for their future aspirations. The school has very effectively implemented the national requirements for the welfare and safeguarding of students who are under 18. Excellent and safe arrangements are made for students under 18 to stay with host families.
- 2.4 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is excellent. Strong leadership is evident at all levels, providing clear direction and resulting in high quality education. As a result the school fulfils its aims, ensuring all students successfully achieve high standards. The leadership and management are successful in appointing high quality staff. Quality assurance including student feedback is excellent. Student data on attainment and progress is gathered well; however, there is insufficient analysis and use of patterns and trends over time. An accurate self-evaluation report is monitored very effectively and has ensured improvements. Staff performance is monitored and supported very well through excellent and helpful personal development interview, which includes information from lesson observations and students' feedback. Staff benefit from a wide range of staff

development activities. Student feedback is gathered frequently and used well to make improvements. This feedback reports high levels of satisfaction.

3. THE QUALITY OF THE CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENTS

3.(a) Assessment of students prior to or on arrival

- 3.1 Assessment of students prior to or on arrival is excellent. Ability is assessed prior to arrival by an appropriate online test followed up by an interview on arrival. This effectively ensures that the vast majority of students are placed on the most suitable programme for their needs. In the very few cases where a change is necessary, this is carried out quickly and with minimum interruption to the students' education. Once they have started their course, students are monitored very carefully to ensure that they are in the right class. There is flexibility to move levels if necessary.
- 3.2 Assessment information is used effectively by teachers to plan for each individual's needs. Lessons for the executive students' lessons are planned on the basis of a needs analysis, which successfully ensures their aims are well met. The school works very hard to ensure the students are on the right course.

3.(b) Suitability of course provision and curriculum

- 3.3 Suitability of course provision and curriculum is excellent. Students are extremely well educated in accordance with the clear statement of educational aims which are accessible on the school's website.
- 3.4 A very wide range of courses at different levels are advertised clearly in the school's prospectus and on the website. A good range of short executive courses, one-to-one business courses and modern foreign language courses ensures these students' needs are well met. As a result, students can easily find a course to suit this needs to enable them to progress well. Courses on offer to Tier 4 students lead to outcomes that meet Home Office requirements.
- 3.5 The school offers excellent support for students, especially those with learning or language difficulties, which enables them to make very good progress. A member of staff is trained in supporting special educational needs. As a result, outstanding support is given to students who have been identified as needing additional support for dyslexia.

3.(c) The quality of teaching and its impact on learning

- 3.6 The quality of teaching and its impact on learning is excellent. Teachers have extensive subject knowledge and are highly skilled in developing student's understanding and fluency in language. Teachers know their students well and plan lessons accordingly, ensuring that previous learning is taken into account, reinforced and built on. The relationship between teachers and students is excellent and students ask questions with confidence.

- 3.7 Planning of lessons is detailed and includes an imaginative and innovative range of activities so that students enjoy their lessons and are actively engaged in their learning. These activities are well designed and well-balanced with high quality collaboration between students in groups or pairs. Teachers demonstrate and explain very clearly using questioning well to ensure that all students understand.
- 3.8 The creative use of a wide variety of resources, including interactive materials, enhances students learning very well. Teachers skilfully facilitate class discussions which encourages the students to speak with enthusiasm. As a result students make outstanding progress. A very small minority of lessons lack pace and challenge and result in a lack of opportunity for students to engage.
- 3.9 Teachers check students' progress consistently in lessons and adapt their teaching to ensure that students have a secure grasp of work covered. Teachers mark students' written work with excellent attention to detail, explaining mistakes and guiding students, as well as providing praise and encouragement where appropriate. The assessment of students' work and progress is timely and used well to plan for individuals in lessons. Extra support has been extremely helpful for students with writing difficulties.
- 3.10 The school is a teacher training centre employing teacher trainers who are very well qualified and experienced. They fully share their skills and knowledge with their trainees. They model good practice extremely well which allows their trainees to develop excellent teaching skills.
- 3.11 The tracking of students' progress is detailed, allowing managers and teachers to monitor progress effectively. The new tutorial system is very effective in identifying students' needs and helping teachers and students to assess their progress. Students interviewed say they are aware of the excellent progress they are making and value the support they receive from teaching staff. The school has expectations of how long students take to complete a level, and offers effective support where necessary.

3.(d) Attainment and progress

- 3.12 Attainment and progress are excellent by reference to externally accredited examinations and the Common European Framework (CEFR). Students are very successful in achieving their aims through Cambridge and IELTS examinations, where success rates are very high. The vast majority of teacher trainees complete their courses and achieve their certificates to become competent English teachers.
- 3.13 The school monitors and records students' progress very effectively, electronically and through tutorials. All students make rapid progress over time and reach good levels of attainment from their starting points. Students report that they are highly satisfied with their overall progress and attainment.

4. STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY

4.(a) Health, safety and security of the premises

- 4.1 Health, safety and security of the premises are excellent. Regularly updated policies show clear responsibilities for the key aspects of health, safety and welfare and underpin good day-to-day practice at the school. Risk assessments, including those for external activities, are detailed and used well. Signage throughout the school is excellent. The school effectively manages the risks of fire and other hazards. There are regular fire evacuation drills and trained fire marshals are in place. Fire action notices are clearly displayed and fire exits are well signposted. Fire protection equipment is properly sited and regularly checked.
- 4.2 The policy and provision for first aid is very good and an appropriate number of qualified first aiders are present on the site at all times. There are suitable notices for the identification of first aiders and numerous first aid boxes located around the school. The accident book is up to date. The provision for students who are ill or injured is very good.
- 4.3 The school premises are high quality and in excellent decorative order, clean, tidy and fit for purpose. Premises are secure and reception desks are staffed at all times. Well designed classrooms are equipped with high quality interactive display equipment and furniture. There are sufficient washrooms, which are clean and very well maintained. The building is fully accessible for those with physical disabilities. Facilities in the cafe for preparation and serving of food are very good.

4.(b) Student registration and attendance records

- 4.4 Arrangements for student registration and recording of attendance are excellent. The school maintains an accurate admissions register and attendance levels are high. Registration details are carefully maintained and students who may register but do not attend are followed up meticulously to identify possible causes and to provide appropriate support where relevant.
- 4.5 Attendance registers are accurate and up to date, with procedures and processes for identifying and following up absences which are excellent. All students have a good understanding of attendance expectations. Excellent systems are in place to make the necessary reports to the Home Office when a student does not fulfill requirements.
- 4.6 The school has fair and clear procedures for the collection and refund of fees and deposits.

4.(c) Pastoral support for students

- 4.7 Pastoral support for students is excellent. The school provides very clear information on pastoral and personal support, which is communicated well to students together with notices prominently displayed throughout the school. First day induction, together with a comprehensive student handbook, gives students an excellent introduction to the school, their studies and life in the UK.
- 4.8 The outstanding pastoral support team benefit from frequent professional training. Students are actively encouraged to seek support on academic or personal issues. Highly effective systems are in place for reporting issues and actions taken. All students interviewed were aware of the support available and how to access it. Excellent attention is paid to the security and welfare of students under 18 years and there is close liaison with parents to ensure parental consent for activities and to report academic progress.
- 4.9 Students benefit from a high quality social programme to enrich their time in the UK. Appropriate and effective career information is provided by an outside organisation to guide students in further study or employment. Students confirm that the school is a friendly and welcoming place, and they feel secure and supported.

4.(d) Safeguarding for under 18s

- 4.10 Excellent provision exists for the safeguarding of under 18s. There is a clear strategy, with a detailed policy which is frequently reviewed by management. The safeguarding policy and procedures are fully understood and scrupulously implemented by all staff.
- 4.11 A designated safeguarding lead is in place who has been appropriately trained. The school follows exemplary standards for the recruitment of staff and all persons involved in the care of under 18s, including full Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) disclosure, and seeks to ensure student safety at all times. Detailed recording systems are in place for any possible safeguarding concerns and the proper procedures are followed to report them to the relevant authorities. An accurate single central record is kept of all checks on all staff and other personnel.
- 4.12 Students are advised on how to stay safe while in the UK and how to seek help with any problems, including internet and social media safety. The school also pays careful attention to the possibility of radicalisation and extremism, with full guidance to staff on how to recognise and report suspicions. Consequently, the school environment is safe and secure, with clear understanding by all staff of their responsibilities in this area.

4.(e) Residential accommodation

- 4.13 Excellent arrangements are in place for the accommodation of students. Halls of residence are available for students over 18 years, managed by an outside organisation. The school ensures the quality of these residences by careful checks,

including regular visits by the school to the residences and recording of statutory safety and insurance certificates provided by the managing body.

- 4.14 Excellent arrangements are in place for students under 18 to stay with host families. The school register of host families is scrupulously managed. Families are carefully screened for suitability, including DBS checks for those hosting under 18s. Homes are regularly visited in order to review the provision for students, and any concerns on the part of students or host families themselves are immediately investigated and the outcome recorded. Families show exemplary concern for their student guests, and students report high satisfaction with their host families.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) Ownership and oversight

- 5.1 The effectiveness of ownership and oversight is excellent. The chief executive officer and director of operations provide clear educational direction which ensures the school meets its published aims and ethos. There is an ambitious three-year strategic plan with clear targets for development of the business. These initiatives are to ensure the school retains its long standing reputation in teaching and teacher training.
- 5.2 The chief executive officer and director of operations are fully involved in successfully discharging their responsibilities for business planning, educational standards, financial planning and investment in staff, accommodation and resources. They oversee welfare, safeguarding, health and safety throughout the school very effectively. All legal permissions are in place and effective policies are reviewed and updated at least annually.

5.(b) Management structures and responsibilities

- 5.3 Leadership and management of the school are excellent. The chief executive officer and director of operations effectively oversee the delegation of the strategic targets to provide educational and professional challenge to the senior managers. Frequent management and staff meetings ensure rapid and clear communication between chief executive officer, director of operations, managers and staff.
- 5.4 The school successfully recruits and retains excellent staff, who are well qualified and experienced. They receive high quality staff development which ensures that they carry out their roles in meeting student needs to a very high standard.
- 5.5 Student data on attainment and progress is gathered well; however, there is insufficient analysis of patterns and trends over time to inform the monitoring of provision.

5.(c) Quality assurance including student feedback

- 5.6 Quality assurance including student feedback is excellent. A wide range of thorough quality assurance mechanisms are in place, which lead to a high level of student satisfaction. The school works hard to improve its provision. The self-evaluation process makes valid and evaluative judgements about the provision. This results in identification of appropriate areas for improvement which are monitored rigorously by managers.
- 5.7 The school has a wide range of methods for receiving feedback from students. This feedback shows a high level of satisfaction with the school. Posters around the school inform students of the improvements that have been made. The pre-

inspection feedback from staff and students confirmed that they considered the school was very good.

- 5.8 Staff performance is monitored and supported through very well designed personal development interviews where targets are set and monitored. Lesson observation information is used well at these interviews. These give helpful feedback to the teacher on their performance with recommendations for improvement. A wide range of staff development activities are available based on needs identified in personal development interviews and the needs linked to the strategic objectives.
- 5.9 The policy and process for making formal complaints is clear and appropriate with access to an independent panel if necessary. The complaints log is up to date.
- 5.10 A fee protection scheme is in place.

5.(d) Staff recruitment, qualifications and suitability checks

- 5.11 Staff recruitment, qualifications and suitability checks are good. Prior to confirmation of the appointment of all staff the school conducts appropriate checks to confirm their identity and right to work in the UK. The single central record is effectively used to monitor right to work in the UK and expiry dates of visas.
- 5.12 References, qualifications and employment history are checked prior to appointment. Enhanced DBS checks are made as soon as possible after appointment. There are suitable arrangements to ensure that teachers waiting for DBS clearance are not given classroom responsibilities for students who are under 18.

5.(e) Provision of information

- 5.13 Provision of information is excellent. The school's website is very comprehensive and user-friendly. Prospective students are able to access accurate and highly relevant information to inform their study choices.
- 5.14 The school was very responsive in providing all the information required for the inspection in a timely manner.

6. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for further improvement

In order to further improve the excellent quality provided, the language school should:

- Ensure that the pace of all lessons challenges students, to improve their engagement and motivation.
- Analyse data for patterns in trends over time in order to set clear targets where improvement is necessary.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with students and examined samples of students’ work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chief executive officer. Inspectors held telephone interviews with host families. The responses of staff and students to confidential pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the college.

Inspectors

Mrs Prue Amner	Lead Inspector
Mrs Liz Brynin	Team Inspector
My Tony Gill	Team Inspector
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