



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

MONITORING VISIT

INTERNATIONAL HOUSE LONDON TRUST

(1239120)

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CEO Mr Mark Rendell

Proprietor IH Trust Ltd

Age Range 8+

Total number of students 1163

Numbers by age and type of study Under 16: 5
16 – 18: 17
18+: 1141
EFL only: 327
FE only: 836

Inspection date **03 Oct 2023**

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the Framework for Educational Oversight Monitoring Visits and Extended Monitoring Visits of private further education colleges and English language schools. The focus of the visit is to confirm that the quality standards reported at the last full inspection are being maintained.

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 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.

A monitoring visit is for those colleges found at the last inspection to have met or exceeded the Standards for Educational Oversight. Inspectors will make judgements on progress against any action points and recommendations made at that time. The inspection will not examine all other Standards in detail but will sample to confirm that previous Standards have been maintained and that there are no contrary indicators to those quality judgements.

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1. CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT

- 1.1 International House (IH) London is a language school located in central London. It is an affiliate of the International House World Organisation (IHWO), the largest network organisation of independent schools in the world. IH London was established in 1959 and is a registered charity. It moved to its current premises in March 2007. Its mission is to promote education as a force for good, and its aim is to raise standards of teaching and training worldwide. A board of trustees oversees the management of the school. The operational oversight is under the direction of the chief executive (CEO), who reports to the board. He is supported by the director of operations and the senior management team.
- 1.2 The school provides courses in general English from beginner to advanced levels. Students can enrol on these courses weekly throughout the year. The students' level of language is assessed through on-line language and speaking tests to ensure that they are placed at the appropriate level to meet their needs. Part-time courses in thirteen foreign languages at different levels are also available. There are no specified entry requirements. Courses are face-to-face or on-line. A minority of classes are also delivered at the weekend. Junior centres operate at three locations in the UK for children in the summer. These courses are face-to-face. All language courses are appropriately aligned to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), so allowing for a shared understanding of levels.
- 1.3 IH also offers International English Language Testing system (IELTS) examination, enrolling every four weeks, preparation for the Cambridge examinations enrolling on specified dates and bespoke executive English courses enrolling at any time. Students wishing to study for the Occupational English Test (OET) for healthcare professionals can enrol on specified dates and must have English qualifications at Level B2 or above with relevant experience in the industry.
- 1.4 The school offers teacher training courses, including The Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (CELTA) and Diploma in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (Delta), full and part-time. Trainees can enrol every four or twelve weeks. They must have English qualifications at C1 or above. Suitability is assessed through an application form, pre interview task and an interview.
- 1.5 IH London offers accommodation to students in homestay providers or in residences. Accommodation on the summer courses is provided in the residences of the schools being used to deliver the courses.
- 1.6 At the time of the inspection 1163 students were enrolled, the majority of whom are on part-time courses. The vast majority are over the age of 18. Students originate from a wide range of countries, including Japan, Korea, Saudi Arabia, Italy and Turkey. These students all have English as an additional language. Students on teacher training and modern foreign languages courses are mainly from the UK and

the vast majority have English as their first language. 7 students have declared additional learning needs or disabilities.

1.7 The school was previously inspected on 28 – 30 September 2021 when it met all Key Standards and the quality of education was judged to exceed expectations.

1.8 The recommendations from the previous report are:

- Ensure the online induction is effectively communicated to all students to support them in their life in the school and their time in London and the UK.
- Provide further emergency fire signage on the stairs areas so that staff and students are easily directed where to go in the event of an emergency evacuation.

2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1 **The school meets expectations.** At the previous inspection of 28 – 30 September 2021 the school was found to exceed expectations and, though the quality of education as judged at that time has not been maintained in all respects, the school still meets expectations.
- 2.2 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is excellent. Assessment of students prior to and on arrival to the college is excellent. A wide range of courses meet students' needs and objectives extremely well. All courses on offer to prospective students on Student visas meet the definition of an approved qualification as set out in Home Office guidance. Teaching and learning are excellent. Knowledgeable teachers use their expertise very effectively to deliver challenging lessons and support individuals, so that students develop their vocabulary, pronunciation and speaking skills well. Teachers use carefully chosen resources to engage students' interest. However, they do not fully utilise all the features of the interactive whiteboards to aid learning. Students make good or better progress and the large majority of those who enter pass their examinations. Students are kept well informed of their progress during tutorial meetings with teachers. However, a small minority of tutorials do not take place within the prescribed time.
- 2.3 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is excellent. Highly effective arrangements exist to ensure the health and safety of staff and students. Premises are fit for purpose, well maintained and classrooms are equipped to a high standard. The school keeps highly accurate registration and attendance records. Attendance monitoring is rigorous and reports are made to the Home Office as necessary. Pastoral and personal support for students is excellent. An extensive induction prepares students well for their studies. Arrangements to safeguard students under the age of 18 are excellent. Staff at all levels understand their responsibilities and are appropriately trained. Residential accommodation is of a very high standard, well monitored and maintained.
- 2.4 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is good. The board provides effective oversight and ensures sufficient investment in staff and accommodation. All legal permissions are met. Together with senior managers, they fully discharge their duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of students and to safeguard students under the age of 18. They ensure that students receive a high standard of care and education. Quality assurance is excellent. Staff recruitment is unsatisfactory. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), right to work in the UK and identity checks are made before staff start work. However, not all safer recruitment practices are consistently followed. Provision of information is excellent.

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

- 3.1 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is excellent. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 3.2 Assessment of students prior to and on arrival to the college is excellent. Thorough initial assessments of students' prior attainment and skill levels are undertaken at the application stage and at the start of the course. These detailed assessments are carried out very effectively to ensure that students are placed accurately at the appropriate level and on a course that meets their identified needs.
- 3.3 Course provision is excellent. Courses are in accordance with those detailed in the prospectus and other marketing material. The school provides a wide range of courses delivered in highly flexible manner to suit students' differing patterns of study. Consequently, the large majority of students complete the course for which they initially registered. All courses on offer to prospective students on Student visas meet the definition of an approved qualification as set out in Home Office guidance.
- 3.4 The quality of teaching and learning is excellent. Knowledgeable and experienced teachers deliver well planned lessons. They are skillful in using a variety of questioning techniques to elicit responses and ensure that all students contribute. They consolidate new learning and build on previous learning highly effectively at all stages of the lesson. Teachers support individuals who are struggling extremely well, which ensures that they keep up with the class. They consistently correct errors so that students make common mistakes less frequently. As a result, all students make good progress, particularly in improving their pronunciation and confidence in speaking. Students on IELTS courses rapidly increase their use of subject related vocabulary.
- 3.5 Teaching promotes fundamental British Values of mutual respect and tolerance and does not discriminate against those with protected characteristics. Good relationships exist in classes that enable a productive learning environment. Students from a wide variety of cultures and backgrounds work well together in pairs or small groups.
- 3.6 Teachers use carefully selected, stimulating and challenging resources including the use of technology to support learning. However, the majority of teachers do not use the interactive whiteboards to their full effect to aid learning.
- 3.7 Students' progress and attainment is excellent. The large majority of students pass their examinations. However, a minority choose not to take the examination at the end of the course. Students on non-examination courses make good or better progress from their starting points and the large majority move up a level within the expected timeframe.

- 3.8 Students are kept well informed of their progress during tutorial meetings with teachers. However, a small minority of these tutorials do not take place within the prescribed time.

4. STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 4.1 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is excellent. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 4.2 The recommendations in this area from the previous inspection report are:
- Ensure the online induction is effectively communicated to all students to support them in their life in the school and their time in London and the UK.
 - Provide further emergency fire signage on the stairs areas so that staff and students are easily directed where to go in the event of an emergency evacuation.
- 4.3 The school has made excellent progress towards the first recommendation. Induction is now provided face to face for all students attending the school. An extensive range of information is provided to students which prepares them for their studies, enabling them to settle in quickly and enjoy their time in London and the UK.
- 4.4 The school has made excellent progress towards the second recommendation. Very clear and plentiful signage is now provided on every floor directing students to the emergency escape routes.
- 4.5 Health, safety and security of premises is excellent. There are highly effective arrangements for ensuring the health and safety of staff and students. Comprehensive risk assessments are undertaken covering all aspects of the school's operation and actions are put in place to minimise identified risks. Staff and students receive appropriate information and training during induction to ensure they understand their responsibilities to ensure their own safety and that of others. As result students feel very safe. All necessary measures are taken to minimise risks from fire and other hazards. The school maintains a good level of fire safety measures including very clear signage, sufficient fire extinguishers, trained fire marshals and regular fire evacuation drills. There is an appropriate policy on first aid, which is implemented effectively to provide assistance for students who are ill or injured. Free drinking water is freely available to support students' wellbeing.
- 4.6 The building is fit for purpose and very well maintained. It allows for all students, including those with disabilities, to enter and leave safely. There are sufficient, suitable washrooms, including for disabled students. All areas are well decorated and kept in clean, tidy and hygienic state. Classrooms are exceptionally well equipped and furnished with high quality technology to aid learning. They are well lit, ventilated and have appropriate sound insulation.
- 4.7 Student registration and attendance records are excellent. The school keeps highly accurate registration and attendance records. The attendance policy is clearly communicated to students. Attendance at classes is monitored carefully and prompt

action taken where students do not meet requirements. Appropriate reports are made to the Home Office as necessary. Consequently, attendance rates are high.

- 4.8 Pastoral and personal support for students is excellent. Students know who to go to with any problems. They feel that staff are approachable and will do everything they can to help. Consequently, students feel safe and are confident that any problems that arise will be addressed. Relationships between staff and students, and students themselves, are excellent.
- 4.9 Safeguarding arrangements are excellent. The school has a comprehensive safeguarding policy, which is well understood by all staff and managers, and is reviewed regularly. There is an appropriately trained designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and several deputies to provide sufficient support for the number of students. The DSL reports on safeguarding issues to the board of trustees. Appropriate arrangements exist for students to contact the school out of hours should this be necessary. All staff receive relevant and helpful training in safeguarding and preventing radicalisation and extremism.
- 4.10 Residential accommodation is excellent. Arrangements made by the school for accommodation, through homestay and halls of residence are managed, monitored and registered in accordance with national requirements. The standard of the accommodation provided is extremely high. Where students of any age are accommodated in host families, the school obtains enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for all the responsible adults in the family.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- 5.1 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is good. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 5.2 Ownership and oversight of the school is good. The board of trustees have effective oversight of the school and provide support, challenge and stimulus for growth and improvement. They ensure that the school maintains a high standard of care and education for students in line with its stated aims and ethos. The board ensures sufficient investment in staff, accommodation and resources through robust financial planning. All legal permissions are met. There is a highly effective relationship between the board, the CEO and senior managers so that educational direction is clear and key messages are very well communicated throughout the whole organisation. However, oversight has not ensured that all safer recruitment practices are consistently followed.
- 5.3 Management structures and responsibilities are excellent. Management roles and responsibilities are clear. Managers at all levels fully discharge their duty to ensure the safety, health and welfare of students and to safeguard students under the age of 18. They work very effectively together to maintain and improve a high standard of care and education.
- 5.4 Quality assurance is excellent. The school collects the views of staff and students extensively and uses this feedback well to make improvements to provision. Lesson observations are carried out frequently and are used effectively to inform staff appraisal and identify training needs. Staff are given ample opportunities for continuous professional development. There is a well-publicised formal and informal complaints procedure for students and staff to follow. Managers closely monitor complaints and resolve them at an early stage.
- 5.5 Staff recruitment and suitability checks are unsatisfactory. All required checks to confirm the identity of staff and their right to work in the UK are completed. Enhanced DBS checks are carried out on all staff, not just those who will work directly with students under the age of 18, before they start work. An accurate single central record (SCR) is kept, and is regularly reviewed.
- 5.6 The school requests two references for all staff before they start work. However, the form used for references is not fit for purpose as it does not clearly identify the name, role and status of the referee. References are not adequately verified by follow-up telephone calls and there is an over-reliance on email signatures to confirm the source of the reference.
- 5.7 Provision of information is excellent. The information provided on the website is detailed and comprehensive. It offers very clear guidance to prospective students and their parents to help them choose an appropriate course, what to expect from living in the UK and London, arrangements for students under the age of 18,

applying for visas and choosing accommodation. The school provided inspectors with all the information they needed to carry out the inspection effectively.

6. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for further improvement

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

- Strengthen the process for obtaining and verifying references so that all safer recruitment guidelines are followed
- Improve teachers' skills in using the interactive whiteboards and ensure that they consistently use the full range of features to support learning
- Ensure that all students receive their tutorials within the expected time frame

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 chair of the board of trustees. Inspectors visited residential accommodation. The responses of staff and students to confidential pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Ms Angela Moir	Lead Inspector
Mr Saul Hyman	Team Inspector
Ms Kanwaljit Dhillon	Team Inspector
Mr Benjamin Llewelyn	Team Inspector