



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

MONITORING VISIT

INTERNATIONAL HOUSE LONDON TRUST

(1239120)

Full Name **International House London Trust**

Address 16 Stukeley Street, London WC2B 5LQ

Telephone Number 020 7611 2400

Email Address info@ihlondon.com

Website www.ihlondon.com

Principal Mr Mark Rendell

Proprietor IH Trust Ltd

Age Range 8+

Total number of students 1125

Numbers by age and type of study

16-18:	05
18+:	1120
EFL only:	312
Modern Languages:	813

Inspection date **10 September 2024**

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), a major international network organisation of independent language schools. 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, with students 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 home-stay 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, 1125 students were enrolled, the majority of whom are on part-time courses. Students are nearly all over the age of 18 and the majority female. 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. No

students have declared additional learning needs or disabilities. One student is studying under Student visa arrangements.

1.7 The school was previously inspected on 3 October 2023 when it was judged to meet expectations and the quality of education was good. The recommendations from the previous report are to:

- 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.

2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1 **The school exceeds expectations.** At the previous inspection of the 3 October 2023, the school was found to meet expectations and the quality of education as judged at that time has been improved.
- 2.2 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is excellent. The school has clear educational aims and objectives and offers a wide range of very high-quality courses that fully supports its stated aims and objectives. Initial assessment prior to, and on arrival, is excellent. It is accurate and effective in ensuring that students are placed on the right of course in accordance with their language abilities. The suitability of course provision and curriculum is excellent. Courses are very well organized, flexible and are effective in meeting the language needs of the students. Language courses are aligned to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Courses on offer to students on Student visas meet the definition of an approved qualification, as set out in the Home Office guidance. Teaching is excellent and results in high levels of language development across the range of courses. Teachers are experienced, well qualified and have excellent subject knowledge. Lessons are very well planned. Highly effective teaching methods ensure that students develop their knowledge and use of the new language and are able to apply it to new contexts. Consequently, students make excellent progress in class and achievement is high.
- 2.3 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is excellent. Health and safety and security are well managed, monitored, with comprehensive oversight that ensures that issues are quickly addressed. The premises are fit for purpose, well maintained and of a high quality. They provide excellent facilities that effectively support learning and ensure a safe and secure learning environment. Classrooms are well equipped and furnished to a high standard. Detailed policies and procedures are in place to reduce the risks from fire and other hazards and ensure high levels of health and safety are maintained. Fire precautions, drills and evacuations are systematically undertaken and are clearly understood by all students and staff. Student registration and attendance records are accurate. They are well managed and staff are highly effective in monitoring attendance and taking any necessary action. Procedures for reporting to the Home Office are highly secure and fully understood by relevant staff. Pastoral support and guidance for the students is excellent and in accordance with the school's aims. Students are highly supportive of the school and report that they are very well supported. Arrangements for the safeguarding of students under the age of 18 years are excellent, fully implemented and reflect official guidance.
- 2.4 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is excellent. The board of trustees is highly effective in ensuring that high levels of education, welfare and health and safety are maintained. A clear vision for the school is shared by all staff, who work together for the good of the students. A comprehensive and detailed management structure ensures that roles and responsibilities within the school are clearly defined and understood by all staff. Highly effective communication within the school ensures that staff are well informed of any issues or changes. A comprehensive

range of well-defined policies and procedures are introduced, implemented and monitored appropriately. As a result, the school is well run and meets all its legal obligations. The school is highly successful in attracting and retaining well-qualified and experienced teachers. Procedures for the recruitment of staff are in accordance with legal requirements, with all appropriate checks undertaken.

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 The recommendations in this area from the previous inspection report are to:
- 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.
- 3.3 Good progress has been made against the first recommendation. The school has reviewed the use of interactive whiteboards in lessons with its teachers and encourages their use and teacher skills development through regular training opportunities. As a result, lesson observations confirm that the use of interactive whiteboards effectively supports learning. Students confirm that the use of technology in the classroom meets their expectations and helps them learn.
- 3.4 Good progress has been made against the second recommendation. A review of the tutorial system has been undertaken by the school to ensure that teachers are better able to follow the tutorial timeframes. Academic managers monitor the delivery of tutorials to ensure that the system supports and meets the needs of the students. Students report that they are happy with the tutorial system.
- 3.5 Initial assessment prior to, and on arrival, is excellent. The process is accurate, and a comprehensive series of tests and interviews ensures that students are accurately placed on a programme of study in accordance with their language abilities. As a result, students report that they are very satisfied with their course.
- 3.6 The suitability of course provision and curriculum is excellent. Students are well educated in accordance with the school's aims and objectives. The curriculum is based on a clear policy statement, is well planned and provides a comprehensive range of language courses and levels to meet the different needs of students. Courses are appropriately aligned to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Programmes of study on offer to Tier 4 students meet the definition of an approved qualification, as set out in the Home Office guidance. The school ensures that students enrolled on Student visas are studying at an appropriate level on an approved full-time programme which includes at least 15 hours a week of classroom-based, weekday daytime study.
- 3.7 Teaching is excellent and is characterised by detailed planning, with considerable care taken to match tasks to individual levels of English language ability. Lessons are delivered at a lively pace and include a wide variety of teaching methods and resources to suit different learning styles and to foster interest. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge, are very enthusiastic and motivate their students to enjoy their learning. Students work well individually and in small groups, showing good co-operative

learning and independence. Classroom resources are of an excellent quality, quantity and range and are used effectively by teachers to support learning. As a result, students make excellent progress in class and achievement rates are high.

- 3.8 Teaching is inclusive and effectively promotes fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. It encourages respect for other people including those with the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

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 Health, safety and security of premises are excellent. Health and safety and security are well managed, monitored with comprehensive oversight that ensures that any issues are quickly addressed. The premises are fit for purpose, well maintained and of a high quality. They provide high-quality facilities that effectively support learning and ensure a safe and secure learning environment. Classrooms are clean, with good lighting, heating, sound insulation and ventilation. They are well equipped and furnished to a high standard. As a result, they provide a comfortable, safe and secure learning environment.
- 4.3 Health and safety, first aid and fire safety policies and procedures are detailed and effectively implemented. All necessary measures to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards have been taken. Fire precautions, drills and evacuations are systematically undertaken and are clearly understood by all students and staff. An appropriate number of fire marshals and staff trained in first aid are in place, with full details available on noticeboards throughout the school, including in each classroom. Free drinking water is readily available throughout the school.
- 4.4 Systems for recording registration and attendance are excellent. Comprehensive admission procedures ensure that accurate admission registers and records are maintained. Electronic student files are accurately maintained and provide a clear record of checks on identification, previous academic experience, and visa status. Attendance records are accurate and daily attendance is closely monitored. Procedures for reporting to the Home Office are highly secure and fully understood by relevant staff. Overall, student attendance is high. Attendance for the one student on a Student visa is very high and exceeds Home Office requirements.
- 4.5 Pastoral support for students is excellent. Students receive a comprehensive and effective induction on arrival which includes detailed information about their studies, the school and health and safety and welfare arrangements. They know who to go to if they have a problem, and settle in their course, the school and the local area quickly. Relationships between staff and students, and amongst the students themselves, are excellent. A wide range of policies and procedures reinforce a culture of mutual respect, integration and tolerance and the expectations of appropriate behaviour and conduct. The school provides a varied social programme for its students in the form of trips, hospitality and culturally based events.
- 4.6 Safeguarding arrangements for students under the age of 18 are excellent. Arrangements have proper regard to official guidance and the implementation of safeguarding and recruitment strategies are appropriately checked and regularly reviewed by senior managers. There is an appropriately trained designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and several deputies to provide appropriate support for the number of students. The DSL reports on safeguarding issues to the board of trustees.

All staff are subject to an appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) suitability check prior to or on appointment and receive relevant training in preventing radicalisation and extremism.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- 5.1 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is excellent. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 5.2 The recommendation in this area from the previous inspection report is:
- Strengthen the process for obtaining and verifying references so that all safer recruitment guidelines are followed.
- 5.3 Satisfactory progress has been made against the recommendation. The school has reviewed and revised the process for obtaining references. Candidates are required to provide two satisfactory employment references, including their most recent employer. Only company or professional email addresses are accepted and they are cross referenced with the information provided on the candidate's curriculum vitae. Where a telephone reference is obtained, it is recorded on a reference request form with all details and notes from both parties. Verification of email references is by way of the referee's email address. The school does not attempt to further verify references with the referees themselves or their companies by telephone.
- 5.4 The board of trustees provides comprehensive oversight of all aspects of the school's work and effectively discharges their responsibilities for financial planning and investment in the future. As a result, they have been highly effective in building a strong academic and administrative team to ensure that high levels of education, welfare, and health and safety are maintained. A clear vision for the college is shared by all staff, who work very well together for the good of the students. Relationships between senior managers and staff are excellent.
- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management is excellent. Highly effective communication within the school ensures that staff are well informed of any issues or changes. A comprehensive range of well-defined policies and procedures are introduced, implemented and monitored appropriately. As a result, the school is well run and meets all its legal obligations.
- 5.6 Procedures for the recruitment of staff are in accordance with legal requirements, with all appropriate checks completed on staff before their employment is confirmed.
- 5.7 The provision of information is excellent. The school's website is clear and user-friendly. Prospective students are able to access accurate and relevant information to inform their study choices. The school was highly responsive in providing information for the inspection in a timely manner.

6. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The school has improved the good quality found at the last inspection.

Recommendations for further improvement

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

- Review and strengthen the process for verifying employment references.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons and conducted formal interviews with staff and students. They held discussions with the principal, senior members of staff and attended registration sessions. 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

Dr Nigel Chambers	Lead Inspector
Ms Jane Beeson	Team Inspector
Mr Patrick Lawlor	Team Inspector
Mr Mark Marr	Team Inspector