

Organisation name	Oxford School of English (Junior provision)
Inspection date	25 July 2024
Current accreditation status	Accredited
Reason for spot check	Signalled: check provision not seen at inspection

Recommendation

We recommend continued accreditation. The next inspection falls due in 2027; there are no grounds for bringing this forward.

Changes to the summary statement

No changes need to be made to the summary statement, apart from adding the date of this inspection.

New summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited Oxford School of English in November 2023 and the junior provision in July 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 for details).

This language school, owned by a college of further education, offers courses in general, academic and professional English for adults (18+) and young people (16+) and vacation courses for under 18s (12+).

Strengths were noted in the areas of premises and facilities, learning resources, academic staff profile, academic management, learner management, teaching, care of students, accommodation and safeguarding under 18s.

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

Updated summary inspection findings

None.

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	2002
Last full inspection	2023
Subsequent checks/visits (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	New City College

Student and staff profile	At inspection	Estimate at peak: July
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	130	130
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	12	12
Typical age range	12–17	12–17
Typical length of stay	2 weeks	2 weeks
Predominant nationalities	Ukrainian, Spanish and Chinese	Spanish and Chinese
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	5	8
Total number of managers including academic	6	6
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	4	4

Premises profile	
Address of main site	14 Friars Entry, Oxford OX1 2BZ
Additional sites in use	City of Oxford College, Oxpens Road, Oxford OX1 1SA
Additional sites not in use	N/a
Sites inspected	City of Oxford College, Oxpens Road, Oxford OX1 1SA

Introduction

Background

Previously a privately-owned language school, Oxford School of English (OSE) was acquired by New City College (NCC), a college of further education based in east London, in September 2022. As a result of this change in ownership a new managing director was appointed by the college who reports to the college board and has responsibility for Oxford School of English and another accredited school of English that also forms part of the college group. All staff are now employees of the college and, as such, have new contracts. As part of this change process the school has brought together its adult and junior schools, the latter of which was separately accredited, and the first inspection reflecting this amalgamation took place in November 2023. As no junior courses were running at the time of inspection a supplementary inspection was requested to assess the junior provision, specifically residential accommodation and safeguarding under 18s.

Preparation

The inspector was in communication with the principal prior to the inspection and a selection of relevant documentation was provided ahead of the visit. Additional documentation was provided on arrival.

Programme and persons present

The inspection took place over half a day with one inspector. Meetings were held with the principal, the operations manager, one activity leader, the director of studies of the main school and the assistant director of studies junior summer school. A focus group meeting was held with the teachers and another with a selected group of students. Short observations were conducted with two teachers. The inspector also visited the student residence, part of Oxford Brookes University, which is a ten-minute bus ride from the college. No homestay hosts were visited as these were checked during the inspection in November 2023.

Findings

Management

There have been no changes in management personnel, structures and policies since the last full inspection in November 2023. Student feedback from the junior summer school was evidenced and actions recorded. All staff had job descriptions, appropriate recruitment processes had been employed and all staff had been inducted. Staff reported that the school provides good opportunities for development. They also reported that communication was very good and involved formal and informal meetings as well as the use of a social media application. There are clear procedures for student attendance, complaints and records of student contact details were complete.

Premises and resources

The summer junior provision is located at a local further education college in the centre of Oxford, a short walk from the main school. The school has the use of six rooms on the first floor of one of the buildings of the college. At the time of inspection, five were used as classrooms and another as a staffroom. All are of a good state of repair, decoration and cleanliness as is the small cafe and the seating area by the ground floor entrance to the building. Staff reported a good availability of teaching and learning resources.

Teaching and learning

The academic team for the junior summer school has a professional profile (qualifications and experience) that is clearly appropriate to the school's context. Most teachers work year-round in the main school and one other was a returner from previous summer schools. The director of studies is appropriately qualified and works in the main school during the year. He has good support from the director of studies of the main school. The recruitment and support policy is very effectively devised and implemented in line with the stated course objectives and the student profile, and all teachers reported that they were very well supported. Course design is entirely appropriate for the provision and students reported very positively about the classes, the materials and felt they were making very good progress.

Welfare and student services

There are robust processes and procedures to ensure the care and safety of students and these were evidenced during the visit. Students were very aware of rules and regulations within the school in terms of their behaviour and safety. All knew who to go to if they had a problem and reported that they felt very well cared for. Activity leaders are well briefed, inducted and supported and risk assessments are thorough and appropriate.

Safeguarding under 18s

The operations manager is DSL for the junior provision. He is appropriately qualified and is supported by the principal and the director of studies who are also level 3 trained. All other staff have at least level 1 safeguarding training. Appropriate measures are in place to ensure safety and security both during lessons and activities and outside scheduled activities. The operations manager and activity staff work closely with group representatives to ensure they are fully aware of the schedule and of the rules and regulations of the school.

Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance

Not checked as part of this spot check.

Accommodation (W7–W18 as applicable)	Area of strength
<i>All accommodation</i>	
W7 Students have a comfortable living environment throughout their stay.	Strength
W8 Arrangements for cleaning and laundry are satisfactory.	Met
W9 A responsible representative inspects all accommodation (for safety and suitability) before students are placed, and at least every two years after that.	Met
W10 Students receive written confirmation of accommodation booked, giving clear and accurate information.	Strength
W11 There are effective procedures for identifying and resolving any problems students have with their accommodation.	Strength
W12 Accommodation providers receive written confirmation of the rules, terms and conditions applied by the provider with respect to the provision of accommodation services.	Met
W13 Students receive meals as agreed; these offer a well-balanced diet, taking into account any reasonable dietary requirements students may have.	Strength

Comments

W7 The residence visited provides a very comfortable living environment for students. All summer school students are housed in one block and have single ensuite rooms in houses of six, each with a communal relaxation space. The outside space is quiet and green and there is a welcoming reception area in the block with a staffed reception.

W10 Written confirmation is clear and personalised, with a useful map and includes information on public transport. Students and group leaders staying in the residence are given a bus pass and are given guidance on the journey.

W11 It was evident that the operations manager has developed a good working relationship with staff at the student residence and they are quick to respond to any issues identified. Students at the focus group were very happy with their accommodation, both residential and homestay.

W13 Students in the residence eat their meals at a cafe in the centre of Oxford, very close to the bus stop and a few minutes' walk from the college. The food is of a high quality and the menu is varied and caters for a wide range of needs. The cafe provides a meeting point for all students, including those in homestay, and they are accompanied there to and from the college between classes and activities. There is also a small cafe in the college that provides snacks and drink during breaktimes.

Safeguarding under 18s

Safeguarding under 18s	Area of strength
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.	Strength
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.	Strength
S5 There are suitable arrangements for the supervision and safety of students during scheduled lessons and activities.	Strength

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

Comments

S2 All staff were very aware of their safeguarding responsibilities. All staff are trained to basic level, and four members have specialist training. These are the designated safeguarding lead (the principal), his deputy (the DoS), the operations manager, who is leading the junior provision, and the accommodation manager, all of whom have differing but clearly delineated responsibilities in this area.

S4 The recruitment policy is appropriate, and there were no gaps in staff files. Procedures are in place to check the safeguarding status of those who are not school employees, such as group leaders and taxi drivers.

S5 Supervision is well managed, with checks on absentees initiated promptly with specific procedures in place for under 18s. Supervised activities are provided afternoon, evening and weekend for juniors and strict ratios are observed. Group leaders are briefed on their roles and responsibilities and on supervision ratios.

Action taken on points to be addressed

Points from the previous full inspection and/or subsequent spot checks or interim visits with comments (in bold) to indicate how far these have been addressed. Only points reviewed during this spot check are included here. Any points outstanding will be checked at the next full inspection.

N/a.

Conclusions

This supplementary spot check found that the OSE junior summer school is working well and is fully integrated into the main school in terms of its policies, procedures and also its personnel. Management, operations and academic delivery reflect those of the main school and the premises and residences are appropriate. The standards identified in the last full inspection are fully replicated in this junior provision and there is consistency in the quality of its provision.