



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

MONITORING VISIT

INTERNATIONAL HOUSE NEWCASTLE

Company registration no. – 1381691

Full Name **International House Newcastle**

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Principal Mr Trevor Udberg

Proprietors Mr Trevor Udberg
Ms Patricia Mullen
Ms Caroline Preston

Age Range 13+

Total number of students 216

Numbers by age and type of study 16-17: 14
18+: 202
EFL only: 144
FE only: 72

Inspection date **15 November 2018**

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 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.

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) Newcastle is a privately-run English language school located in Newcastle city centre. The school is part of the International House World Organisation group of language schools. IH Newcastle is owned and governed by three proprietors who also act as principal, marketing director and academic director. The school's aim is to provide the best possible student experience through managing a meritocratic organisation with fairness and without fear or favour.
- 1.2 IH Newcastle offers a range of general English language courses at different levels and for different durations. The school also offers courses in English for specific purposes (ESP), preparation for a range of English language examinations, and teacher training courses for teachers of English as a foreign language (TEFL). Recruitment and enrolment for most courses is continuous throughout the year. There are published entry requirements and start dates for teacher training programmes.
- 1.3 The school accepts students aged 16 and over onto year-round English language programmes and for students aged 13 and over in closed groups each January and throughout the summer period. Accommodation is provided in homestay accommodation organised by the school and in an externally managed student residence.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection there were 216 students enrolled. Most are adults, speak English as an additional language and a slight majority are male. Students are recruited from countries all over the world. During the inspection the largest groups were from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. At the time of the inspection, there were no students identified with learning difficulties or disabilities.
- 1.5 The school was last inspected on 29 November - 01 December 2016, when it met all Key Standards and the quality of education was judged to exceed expectations.
- 1.6 The recommendations from the previous report are:
 - Improve punctuality for the small minority of students who arrive late to ensure that all students gain full benefit from the well-planned lessons.
 - Ensure that most students complete a final course evaluation to provide more robust student feedback data for the purpose of self-evaluation and improvement planning
 - Collate all evidence of pre-employment checks on staff in one place to facilitate access to these documents.

2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1 **The language school exceeds expectations.** At the previous inspection of 29 November - 01 December 2016, the language school was found to exceed expectations and the quality of education as judged at that time has been maintained.
- 2.2 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and students' achievements is excellent. Courses are well matched to students' aims and educational goals. Courses on offer to Tier 4 visa students meet the definition of an approved qualification, as set out in Home Office guidance. The quality of teaching and learning is excellent. Students benefit from well-planned lessons and knowledgeable teachers. Lessons are engaging and encourage students to collaborate with each other to practise their speaking and listening skills. Most teachers use a range of learning strategies and resources to challenge and motivate students. In a very small minority of lessons, teachers do not always carry out timely checks on learning to support students who make less effective and rapid progress. Most students arrive on time for their lessons and understand the importance of good attendance. Where students are late, they are well managed to minimise disruption to the class. Students are well supported to develop independent learning strategies. They benefit from regular assessments, timely feedback and clear actions to inform their ongoing development. As a result, students make very good progress in developing their language skills. They are well prepared to undertake external examinations and pass rates are very good.
- 2.3 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is excellent. Effective policies and procedures are implemented by well-trained staff to ensure the health and safety of students. Risks associated with trips and visits are appropriately assessed and managed. Students benefit from clean, secure and well-maintained premises. Classrooms are appropriately furnished and equipped. Attendance and admission registers are accurate and very well maintained. There are clear and effective arrangements in place to make the necessary reports to the Home Office on Tier 4 visa students when required. Student attendance rates are very good. The standard of pastoral care is excellent. Students are well supported on both academic and personal issues. They benefit from a diverse social activities programme and opportunities to apply their language skills in different contexts. Students are well prepared for their next steps into employment or higher education. Safeguarding arrangements are effective, although not all staff have a secure understanding of the risks associated with radicalisation and their role in minimising and managing these risks. Students are placed with appropriately checked and vetted accommodation providers.
- 2.4 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is excellent. Senior leaders provide effective strategic direction and operational oversight. They discharge their responsibilities effectively to ensure legal and financial obligations are met. Managers meet regularly to monitor the quality of education and ensure students receive a high-quality learning experience in line with the schools' mission.

Student feedback is regularly collected and used to inform improvement planning. Policies and procedures are comprehensive and regularly updated. Quality assurance arrangements are very effective, including the regular monitoring of teaching and learning standards. Self-evaluation is detailed and provides a realistic overview of the school and areas for further development. Staff recruitment and selection procedures, including the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are effective. A single record of appointments accurately records the necessary pre-employment checks in one place. 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 The recommendation in this area from the previous inspection report is:
- Improve punctuality for the small minority of students who arrive late to ensure that all students gain full benefit from the well-planned lessons.
- 3.3 Good progress has been made against this recommendation. Students are briefed effectively during induction on the importance of good punctuality and the impact of attendance on their learning. Where students do arrive late, their integration into class is well managed by teachers to avoid disruption to others. Rates of punctuality are effectively monitored and tracked over time by teachers, managers and students themselves, with clear actions set where required.
- 3.4 IH Newcastle offers well-planned courses that lead to a high-quality learning experience for students. Courses on offer to Tier 4 visa students meet the definition of an approved qualification, as set out in Home Office Guidance. The curriculum is very well matched to students' aspirations and educational goals, providing a clear progression pathway through the different levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR).
- 3.5 The standard of teaching and its impact on learning is excellent. Knowledgeable and well-qualified teachers plan lessons effectively to ensure that most learners are appropriately challenged. Teachers manage the learning environment very effectively, proactively encouraging students to collaborate and giving them time to practise their developing speaking and listening skills. In the most effective lessons, teachers expertly detect errors and challenge learners to correct their pronunciation skills and extend their vocabulary. Most learners are fully engaged in class and enjoy their studies. In a very small minority of lessons, teachers do not always carry out timely checks on learning in order to identify, and better support, students who make less effective and rapid progress.
- 3.6 Managers and teachers have effectively established a school culture where students are encouraged to develop their own independent learning strategies, as well as their applied English language skills. Students are very well supported on their personal study programme and benefit from timely assessments, regular feedback and clear targets to inform their academic development. Ongoing assessments are very well tracked, and students effectively monitor and take responsibility for their own progress over time. Most students make very good progress in developing their language skills. Where appropriate, students are well prepared to undertake external examinations and pass rates are very good.

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 Arrangements for ensuring the health, safety and welfare of students are excellent. Experienced and well-trained staff demonstrate a high regard for health and safety. They implement effective arrangements to manage fire safety and first aid. Risks relating to activities and visits outside of the school are appropriately assessed and managed.
- 4.3 The school is well maintained and provides a safe, secure and clean environment for learning and work. Classrooms are well equipped, with appropriate heating, lighting and ventilation. Furniture and fittings are appropriate to meet the needs of students. Students benefit from a welcoming and well-resourced personal study area that supports their independent learning very well.
- 4.4 Student registration and attendance records are accurate and clearly recorded. There are clear and effective arrangements in place to make the necessary reports to the Home Office on Tier 4 visa students when required. Student attendance is very well recorded and monitored using effective electronic systems. Absences are followed-up promptly and overall attendance rates are excellent.
- 4.5 Pastoral care is excellent. Students value the high levels of personal support and care provided by all staff. They benefit from a comprehensive programme of social activities which take into account their personal needs and interests. The diverse social programme provides valuable opportunities for students to develop their understanding of life in the UK and to apply their language skills in a range of different contexts. Effective information and guidance is provided that prepares students well for their next steps into employment or higher education.
- 4.6 Safeguarding arrangements are effective. Appropriate background checks are implemented for all staff, along with relevant training at the appropriate level. Safeguarding concerns are well recorded and appropriately monitored. Relevant safeguarding policies and procedures are comprehensive and regularly reviewed. They highlight the need to keep students safe from different risks, including extremism. However, not all staff have a secure understanding of the risks associated with radicalisation and their role in minimising and managing these risks.
- 4.7 Student accommodation arrangements are effective. Homestay families are appropriately vetted and inspected to ensure that students are placed with suitable providers, who understand their responsibilities. Appropriate checks are in place to ensure an externally managed student residence provides good quality, clean and secure accommodation.

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 recommendations in this area from the previous inspection report are:
- Ensure that most students complete a final course evaluation to provide more robust student feedback data for the purpose of self-evaluation and improvement planning
 - Collate all evidence of pre-employment checks on staff in one place to facilitate access to these documents.
- 5.3 Satisfactory progress has been made against the first recommendation. Managers collect a range of feedback from different stakeholders, including students, to inform the ongoing review and evaluation of the school's performance. The percentage of students completing a satisfaction survey at the end of their course has increased slightly since the last inspection, although managers acknowledge that increasing completion rates to further inform improvement, remains a challenge.
- 5.4 Good progress has been made against the second recommendation. Arrangements to check the suitability of staff are effective. Staff are appropriately qualified and vetted to ensure their suitability to work with children and vulnerable adults. DBS background checks have been undertaken for all current staff. Records of checks are accurately recorded on a single central record of appointments on the school management information system. A range of useful reports are generated by managers to check and monitor ongoing compliance.
- 5.5 The standard of governance, leadership and management is excellent. Senior leaders have established a clear educational direction and ethos of continual improvement. They provide clear strategic leadership of the school, along with effective operational oversight, discharging their responsibilities appropriately to meet legal and financial obligations. Managers and staff meet regularly and work effectively together to ensure students benefit from a high-quality learning experience, in line with the school's aim and mission. Policies and procedures are comprehensive, clearly written and regularly reviewed and updated.
- 5.6 Quality assurance arrangements are very effective. A comprehensive package of lesson observation and performance appraisal effectively monitors the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers receive clear judgements, constructive feedback and clear action plans to inform the ongoing development of their professional practice. Self-evaluation is detailed and provides a realistic overview of the quality of the school and areas for further development. A clear and transparent complaints process is effectively implemented, with a clear record of resolution where appropriate.

- 5.7 Provision of information is excellent. The school provided all the requested information to inspectors prior to and during the inspection.

6. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The language school has maintained the excellent quality found at the last inspection.

Recommendations for further improvement

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

- Ensure that all staff have a secure understanding of the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism and their role in minimising and managing these risks
- Ensure that all teachers carry out checks on learning in lessons, to support all students who are making less effective and rapid progress.

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, attended registration sessions and interviewed home stay hosts. The responses of staff and students to confidential pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the language school.

Inspectors

Mr Steve Ingle	Lead Inspector
Ms Julie Griffiths	Team Inspector
Mr Peter Hymans	Team Inspector