



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

EXTENDED MONITORING VISIT

BELL EDUCATIONAL SERVICES LTD

(Company registration no. - 07169627)

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Email Address	info.cambridge@bellenglish.com
Website	www.bellenglish.com
Principal	Mr Frank Pinner (Cambridge School) Mr Jonathan Richards (London School)
Proprietor	The Bell Educational Trust
Age Range	16+
Total number of students	197
Numbers by age and type of study	16 – 18 18 18+: 179 EFL only: 181 FE only: 16
Inspection date	05 June 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.

An extended monitoring visit is for those colleges found at the last inspection to have met or exceeded the quality 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. Inspectors will also consider the impact of any material change reported since the last inspection.

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1. CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT

- 1.1 The Bell Educational Trust operates through its wholly owned subsidiary, Bell Educational Services Ltd. It was established in 1955 and aims to help students become better learners, increase their confidence and achieve their goals. Courses for adults are run at schools in London and Cambridge. Short summer programmes are run for children at the groups year-round school in St Albans and in centres in different locations rented for the summer. The scope of this inspection is limited to the adult provision in London and Cambridge and not the courses for children.
- 1.2 The group's head office is located within grounds of the school in Cambridge. The group of schools are governed by a board, which has four members. The senior management team consists of the chief executive, the finance director, the director of sales and marketing and the director of operations. The day-to-day running of the schools is the responsibility of the principals, who report to the director of operations. A wide range of residential accommodation is offered by both schools.
- 1.3 The schools provide English as a Foreign Language (EFL) courses to adults and to students under the age of 18 years. General English courses are offered at a number of levels, as well as examination preparation and specialist optional courses. One-to-one tuition is also available. University Foundation Programmes, with a wide range of subject specific courses are offered at the Cambridge site. In addition, both schools deliver a Master's preparation course and offer teacher training courses leading to the Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (CELTA) and teacher development courses for overseas teachers. An on-line Diploma in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (DELTA) is available, with the face to face element taught only at the Cambridge school.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection there were 197 students enrolled. They come from a wide range of countries, with the highest numbers from Belgium, Korea, Saudi Arabia and Thailand. The majority of students are male and the vast majority speak English as an additional language. At the time of the visit there were no students identified with language and learning difficulties or disabilities. Enrolment is on a continuous basis for the adult EFL courses. The university foundation courses, the Master's preparation course and the teacher training courses have specific start dates and entry requirements.
- 1.5 This visit took the form of an extended monitoring visit as the school reported a change of the London school's premises. Consequently, section four of the Educational Oversight Framework concerning student welfare, including health and safety will be examined in detail.
- 1.6 The schools were last inspected on the 14-16 June 2016 when they met all key standards and the quality of education was judged to exceed expectations. The main recommendations from the previous report are:

- Ensure consistency within and between the schools in the analysis of data including welfare issues and complaints to enhance the quality of provision.
- Extend CPD provision to all staff to maintain and enhance quality across the full range of the provision.

2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1 **The language schools exceeds expectations for the quality of education.** At the time of the inspection, all Standards for Educational Oversight were met and the quality is excellent.
- 2.2 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is excellent. Students are extremely well educated in a friendly and supportive environment in accordance with their objectives and the schools aims. Course provision is excellent. The curriculum is very well organised and is highly effective in meeting the needs of students. English language courses are aligned to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Courses on offer to Tier 4 students meet the definition of an approved qualification, as set out in the Home Office guidance. Initial assessment prior to and on arrival is accurate and is highly effective in ensuring that students are placed on the right of course in accordance with their language abilities and academic aims. Teaching is excellent and results in high levels of student progress. Teachers are experienced, well qualified and have excellent subject knowledge. Lessons are very well planned and use a wide range of teaching and learning methods to deliver engaging lessons which fully involve students in learning. The use of technology to enhance learning in the classroom is highly developed. Regular tests are used to check students' progress and to provide teachers with up-to-date progress results to ensure that they effectively plan to meet students' needs. Students' achievement and progress are excellent and attendance high.
- 2.3 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is excellent. The schools' buildings are very well maintained and provide a safe and comfortable environment which effectively supports learning. Procedures for managing health and safety are excellent and are consistently implemented and updated. A high level of fire safety is maintained. Student registration and attendance recording are excellent. Records are accurate, very well managed and are used effectively in monitoring attendance and taking necessary action. Procedures for reporting to the Home Office are highly secure. Pastoral support is excellent and provides a high level of support and guidance in accordance with the school's aims. Relationships between staff and students are outstanding. Arrangements for the safeguarding of students under the age of 18 are comprehensive, fully implemented and reflect official guidance. Students report that they are extremely well supported and would recommend the school's to others. Residential accommodation is of a good standard, secure and well maintained.
- 2.4 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is excellent. Comprehensive oversight ensures that high levels of education, welfare and health and safety are maintained and that sufficient financial support is in place so that both schools development is well supported by high quality resources. Leadership and management are excellent. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and there is highly effective communication between managers and other staff. A comprehensive range of well-defined policies and procedures are introduced,

implemented and monitored appropriately. However, in a small number of instances, the schools attendance policy is not always consistently implemented with students being allowed into lessons after the prescribed cut off time. Mechanisms to monitor quality and the tracking of student progress are excellent. Self-assessment is highly-developed and used effectively to ensure the necessary resources are in place to meet the needs of the school. Student feedback is regularly sought, with trends analysed and used to effectively improve the quality of the student experience. Experienced and well-qualified teachers are recruited, with the school's undertaking all appropriate checks to confirm their identity and suitability.

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 quality of course provision and curriculum is excellent. Students are very well educated in accordance the school's aims and their objectives. The curriculum is based on a suitable policy statement, is very well planned and provides a comprehensive range of courses to meet the different needs, aspirations and language capabilities of the variety of students who attend the schools. Testing of students prior to and on arrival is very thorough. The process is highly accurate and ensures that students are placed on courses that meet their needs. As a result, students are extremely satisfied with the provision offered. Courses on offer to Tier 4 students meet the definition of an approved qualification, as set out in the Home Office guidance. Courses offer suitable progression routes, with English language courses being aligned to the Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR).
- 3.3 Teaching is excellent and results in high levels of student progress. Detailed planning and an extensive understanding of the needs of their students allow teachers to successfully adapt lessons to meet individual learning needs and effectively challenge students. Teachers are extremely enthusiastic and have extensive subject knowledge and an excellent rapport with their students. A wide range of teaching and learning methods are used to deliver engaging and student-centred lessons. Effective use of a range of resources and activities is supplemented by technology to enhance and support learning. Teachers effectively organise work to ensure that students of different abilities make appropriate progress. Students work extremely well in groups, showing excellent co-operative learning and independence.
- 3.4 Assessment is regular and thorough. It accurately identifies strengths and weaknesses in the students' progress and highlights areas for improvement. Feedback to students is positive, encouraging and accurate, and clearly identifies areas for improvement. Arrangements for tracking students' progress are excellent. The progress of each student is very carefully tracked, allowing managers, teachers and students to monitor their progress effectively. Teachers make good use of assessment outcomes to inform their planning. Overall, students' attendance, achievements and progress are excellent.

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 recommendation in this area from the previous inspection report is:
- Ensure consistency within and between the schools in the analysis of data including welfare issues and complaints to enhance the quality of provision.
- 4.3 Good progress has been made against the recommendation. The schools have re-introduced a centralised electronic welfare log to record student issues and complaints. The log is well maintained and kept up to date on issues as they arise and is fully accessible to staff at both schools and to other stakeholders. Data is effectively reviewed and analysed by senior managers and effectively results in improvement to the provision and the student experience.
- 4.4 Following a change of the London school premises, student's welfare, including health and safety, was examined in detail
- 4.5 The schools premises are fit for purpose, very well maintained and enhance the students learning experience. Comprehensive and detailed policies and procedures are in place and ensure that the health and safety of students and staff are effectively managed, and all of the schools premises secure. Classrooms are spacious, light and well furnished. Washroom facilities are adequate in number and well maintained. All necessary measures to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards have been taken. Both schools have an appropriate number of fire marshals and staff trained in first aid. A secure plan is in place for disabled access which complies with legislation. Consequently, students report that they feel safe, secure and comfortable.
- 4.6 Systems for recording registration and attendance are extremely well-managed. Admission procedures are highly detailed and strictly observed. A central register is accurately maintained and individual student files contain all relevant information. Attendance records are accurate and daily attendance is closely monitored. Home Office monitoring and reporting procedures for Tier 4 students are well understood and adhered to rigorously.
- 4.7 Pastoral support for students is excellent. Student welfare is a key priority and the school has invested well in ensuring that it meets its aim of providing a safe and supportive environment where students can progress quickly. On arrival students receive a comprehensive induction which is highly effective in helping them settle quickly in their course, their school and the local area. In addition, students benefit from a wide range of interesting and diverse social activities which are offered through an innovative programme that links activities to education. Relationships between staff and students, and amongst the students themselves, are excellent with a strong culture of mutual respect, integration and tolerance. A wide range of policies and procedures reinforce this culture and the expectations of appropriate

behaviour and conduct. Students report that they are happy at the schools and feel well supported. Effective careers advice ensures that students are very well prepared for further study choices and life beyond their course.

- 4.8 The safeguarding arrangements for students under the age of 18 are excellent. Arrangements have proper regard to official guidance and the implementation of all strategies is frequently checked by senior managers. There is a designated child protection officer at both schools who is appropriately trained. All staff are subject to Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks prior to or on appointment, and an accurate central register is maintained of suitability checks on staff.
- 4.9 The quality of residential accommodation is good and forms a valuable part of the students' education and personal development. The accommodation is secure, very well managed and registered in accordance with national standards. Students report that they are satisfied with the accommodation provided and feel that it is managed very effectively.

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:
- Extend CPD provision to all staff to maintain and enhance quality across the full range of the provision.
- 5.3 Excellent progress has been made against the recommendation. Opportunities for continual professional development (CPD) aimed at improving the quality of teaching and the learning experience of students have been greatly extended and now include additional course dates and the availability of online opportunities. As a result, all teachers, including those who teach for just a few hours per week on the University Foundation Programme, now have access to numerous CPD events.
- 5.4 The quality of governance and leadership is excellent and has a clear emphasis on supporting students and maintaining very high standards. The leaders are highly successful in providing clear educational direction and discharging their responsibilities in accordance with the aims of the schools. As a result, a culture of caring for students is successfully embedded throughout the whole organisation and this ensures that all decisions and actions consider the student experience and meeting students' needs. Financial management is excellent and is highly effective in maintaining the existing high standards and ensuring appropriate action is taken with regard to course development, maintenance of premises and student welfare. Well-defined policies and procedures are introduced at all levels, and implemented and monitored appropriately. However, in a small number of instances, the schools attendance policy is not always consistently implemented with students being allowed into lessons after the prescribed cut off time. All necessary legal permissions are in place for the use of the premises, including relevant insurances and licenses.
- 5.5 Management roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and there is highly effective communication between leaders, managers and other staff. Relationships between the leadership team and the teaching staff are excellent. Replies to the pre-inspection questionnaire and meetings with staff show that they are extremely supportive of the schools.
- 5.6 Arrangements for quality assurance and the tracking of student progress are excellent. Managers are highly effective in monitoring procedures and evaluating outcomes to ensure high standards of academic and personal development continue. Self-assessment is well-developed, accurate and is used effectively to ensure the necessary resources are in place to meet the needs of the schools. Performance data are used very effectively to evaluate the provision and to highlight key issues for leaders and managers. Student feedback is regularly sought and trends analysed and used, together with external examination results, to improve the quality of the student experience.

- 5.7 Experienced and well-qualified teachers are recruited, with the schools undertaking all appropriate checks to confirm their identity and suitability.
- 5.8 The schools were very responsive in providing information for the inspection in a timely manner.

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 the school's lateness policy is consistently applied to ensure that students are not allowed into lessons after the prescribed cut off time.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Inspectors

Dr Nigel Chambers	Lead Inspector
Mrs Margaret Arokiasamy	Team Inspector
Mrs Pauline Bateman	Team Inspector
Ms Eileen O'Gara	Team Inspector
Ms Christine Reba Edge	Team Inspector