



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

EXTENDED MONITORING VISIT

ST GILES BRIGHTON

Full Name of College **St Giles Brighton**

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Telephone Number 01273 682747

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Principal Mr Niall Chafey

Proprietor Mr Mark Lindsay

Age Range 16+

Total number of students 451

Numbers by age and type of study
Under 18: 16
18+: 435
EFL only: 439
FE only: 12

Inspection date **14 May 2013**

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the Framework for Educational Oversight 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 UK Border Agency to inspect privately funded further education colleges, including 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 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 for private colleges;
- Assess and report on the quality of educational outcomes and provision;
- Where applicable, make recommendations to colleges 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. CONTEXT

- 1.1 St Giles Brighton is part of the St Giles International group, made up of four English language schools in the UK, with other schools in the USA, Canada and Brazil. It was established in 1955 and is a limited liability company. Its founder is still a director and it remains a family-owned business. The school in Brighton opened in 1969 and is a short walk from the city centre. Since opening, it has expanded its premises and now occupies three houses in a Victorian terrace and part of an adjacent building.
- 1.2 The school aims to provide high quality, good value English language courses for international students and trainee teachers in a positive and inclusive learner-centred environment, and to offer a range of support services to enable students to enjoy their courses to the full.
- 1.3 St Giles Brighton offers programmes in general English, examination classes, teacher training courses and courses designed for business managers and professionals. There is continuous enrolment and the length of courses varies between one week and eleven months. The majority of students are recruited overseas through agents. Their suitability is checked through a centralised pre-course application process and they are placed on courses after initial assessment and interviews on arrival.
- 1.4 At the time of inspection there were 451 students, including 12 trainee teachers. Sixteen of the students were under the age of 18. Students mainly come from Switzerland, Korea, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Spain. There are four students identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). All students have English as an additional language (EAL).
- 1.5 Since the previous inspection of 3 to 4 April 2012, the school has acquired residential accommodation for students. As a result, an extended monitoring visit is required to re-examine Section Four of the Framework.
- 1.6 At the previous inspection, the school was found to exceed expectations. The main recommendation from the previous report is:
 - Implement a system for recording student progress in lessons, to inform planning and teaching which meets individual needs.

2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1 **The language school exceeds expectations.** The previous inspection of 3 to 4 April 2012 was judged 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 learners' achievements is excellent. Students are placed in appropriate classes following initial assessment. The range of classes offered meets students' needs and, where relevant, Home Office requirements. Teaching is very good and engages learners through a variety of appropriate techniques. Excellent use of educational technology further supports learning. Marked homework contains useful feedback to help students improve. Regular assessment during the course, supported by one-to-one meetings between students and teachers, is effective in indicating the progress students are making. Progress over the course is effectively measured by linking course initial assessment with end-of-course outcomes.
- 2.3 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is good. Part of the premises is currently being refurbished to meet staff and student needs. However, at peak times in particular, the communal areas become congested. Fire safety in the school is good. The new residential facilities are of high quality, although aspects of health and safety in these facilities have yet to be implemented. High levels of pastoral care are offered to ensure students are well supported. Effective counselling assists students wishing to progress into higher education. A comprehensive induction allows students to settle into their classes quickly. Safeguarding is excellent and all staff and students have appropriate security checks. Levels of awareness of how to identify and manage students with SEND are limited amongst the majority of staff.
- 2.4 Governance, leadership and management are excellent. Communications at all levels are frequent, varied and effective in keeping staff informed, and in helping on-going improvement. Senior managers offer excellent leadership and support, which contribute to a positive ethos. Good quality assurance systems being developed are impacting positively on business development, which include student feedback data from questionnaires and focus groups. Results from a new annual staff survey have yet to be analysed. Professional development activity for staff is excellent and varied and contributes to the high quality learning environment. Appraisals are conducted, though not always regularly, nor in sufficient detail to lead to improvement and development. Staff turnover is low and students benefit from this stable environment. Staff files do not always contain references.

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

- 3.1 The quality of curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is excellent. All key Standards continue to be met.
- 3.2 The recommendation in this area from the last inspection report is:
- Implement a system for recording student progress in lessons to inform planning and teaching which meets individual needs.
- 3.3 Good progress has been made against this recommendation. Teachers record any issues related to student progress on a daily record sheet after each lesson. This is used to review lessons and revisit any areas that need to be addressed, either by a class as a whole or by individual students. It is also used to inform future planning to better meet students' needs. This information further assists teachers when liaising with each other so they are kept abreast of the needs of individuals. The school analyses students' competence at the start and end of courses by means of level testing, and produces statistics detailing the average class progress made, as well as progress made by each student. This data is linked to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).
- 3.4 Initial assessment is effective in placing students at the correct level. Assessments are conducted regularly throughout students' programme of study to monitor progress. Programmes are well matched to students' different needs. A wide range of levels and examination classes are available, as are specific courses tailor-made to suit individuals and groups. The programmes offered meet Home Office requirements.
- 3.5 Teaching is very good, and is effective in promoting students' progress. Students are engaged and motivated, contribute throughout, and work well together. Lessons are well planned and are delivered at a good pace. Effective use of information technology (IT) in the classroom engages students. Written work is marked helpfully to allow students to improve. Students make good progress, as demonstrated by achievement in lessons and analysis of entry standards and examination data. Individual progress is discussed every two weeks in one-to-one sessions with students, so they are aware of their progress and what they need to do to improve.

4. STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 4.1 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is good. All key Standards continue to be met.
- 4.2 Pastoral support continues to be excellent. There are excellent relationships between teachers and students, and amongst students themselves. The social programme includes a suitable range of activities to enhance the students' experience of the UK, and is currently being reviewed to better meet the needs of long-term students. A comprehensive induction allows students to settle quickly into their courses of study. Students wishing to progress to higher education benefit from expert counselling. Registration and attendance records are accurate and well maintained. Appropriate systems are in place for making any necessary reports to the Home Office.
- 4.3 Provision for safeguarding is very good. The school conducts mandatory checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for all staff and for families accommodating students under 18. The majority of staff have limited awareness of how to recognise and support students with SEND. The design of the building prevents access for wheelchair users.
- 4.4 The acquisition of a new student residence has had a positive impact as the school is now able to offer more choice of accommodation. The quality of the facility is very good and is located a short walk from the school, providing students with quick and easy access. An excellent security system is in place, which ensures student safety. Staff provide appropriate evening cover, but there is no daytime staff cover. Neither of the two wardens has undertaken first aid training and only one has received fire marshal training. Only one first aid box, located on the top floor, is in place. These factors contribute to a reduction in levels of care. Student issues are addressed in a weekly meeting and prompt action is taken to resolve these.
- 4.5 The café is undergoing a major refurbishment to create additional space and the staffroom has been expanded to better accommodate teachers. As a result of increased student numbers, communal areas are congested, particularly at peak times, thereby reducing comfort and safety. Health and safety reports are completed thoroughly and contain action points for remedial action. Risk assessments are regularly monitored and contribute to continuing improvements in health and safety. Attention to fire safety within the school is good, with a large number of staff trained as fire marshals. Students are familiar with fire evacuation procedures.

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 Communication within the school is excellent. The variety of different team meetings offer valuable opportunities for reporting back on activities and updating, including the review of student feedback. Effective leadership is evident, and the support offered by the principals of each school has a positive impact on developments. Staff are positive about the high level of quality management support they receive. There is excellent rapport between the principal and staff, which has a positive effect on the overall learning environment. Staff feel valued and, consequently, work to high standards for the benefit of the students.
- 5.3 Quality assurance is good. Feedback is collected after the first week of each course and any concerns arising are promptly dealt with. However, analysis of this data is limited in terms of identifying patterns. Consequently, opportunities are missed to supply quality management information on matters arising. End-of-course feedback is routinely collected from students, collated and analysed on a quarterly basis. Comparative results from each school contribute to raising standards. However, the action to be taken is not routinely noted. Results from the annual staff survey are yet to be analysed and disseminated. Issues arising from student focus groups are dealt with promptly, leading to improvements. Complaints are logged centrally and, if a complaint arises, it is handled promptly.
- 5.4 The school is committed to the professional development of its staff. Activities organised by the school are excellent and provide a wide range of sessions delivered by staff. The annual teachers' conference enhances the excellent learning environment, as do the regular observations of teachers. The inclusion of development time for contracted teachers supports excellence in this area. A system of annual appraisals for staff is in place, though forms are not always completed in sufficient detail to identify areas for improvement or development. Lesson observations do not currently feed into the appraisal system and not all staff are appraised on an annual basis.
- 5.5 Staff files are comprehensive, though references are not retained. Staff turnover in the school is low, resulting in highly trained and experienced staff who offer consistency and excellent service to the students.

6. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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

Suggestions for further improvement

In order to improve the excellent quality provided, the language school is advised to:

- Review processes to ease pressure of numbers in communal areas, particularly at peak times, to ensure comfort and safety of staff and students.
- Ensure appropriate levels of care in the residence for first aid and fire safety by training staff.
- Increase awareness of how to identify students with SEND and how to better support such students.
- Implement a regular system of staff appraisal, supported by documentation, which is completed in sufficient detail to bring about improvement and development.
- Ensure that staff files include references.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with students and staff and examined samples of students' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff. Inspectors visited residential accommodation. The responses of staff and students to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed.

Inspectors

Ms Nicole de Lalouvière	Lead Inspector
Ms Suzanne Bell	Team Inspector
Mr Mark Marr	Team Inspector
Ms Christine Powell	Team Inspector