



BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

RANDOM SPOT CHECK INSPECTION (Short Course Provider)

PROVIDER: The Summer Academy

ADDRESS: 5 Ravenscourt Road
Hammersmith
W6 0UH

HEAD OF PROVIDER: Mr James Hewer

DATE OF INSPECTION: 27 July 2018

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE: Continued accreditation 27 September 2018

PART A - INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the provider

The Summer Academy (the Provider) is the trading name of Academic Summer Academies Limited. It is a limited company with three directors, who are also its shareholders. The Summer Academy, which is also the name of the course offered by the Provider, is delivered at Sunningdale School, which is a private preparatory boarding school in Berkshire. It is a two- or three-week residential summer school for international students and is designed to provide the students, the majority of whom are going to attend boarding schools in the United Kingdom (UK), with an exceptional boarding experience and a good idea of what it is like in a real UK boarding school. It also provides an opportunity for students to improve their English language skills. An optional third week has been recently introduced, at the request of the parents, to extend the programme and to provide an opportunity for new students to join just for the shorter one-week course.

The three directors have a background in education and provide the day-to-day management of the programme. In addition, one of the Directors is responsible for health and safety and safeguarding. The three directors are supported by the teacher and activity teams, which include activity leaders, who are university undergraduates. In addition, housemistresses, who are employed by Sunningdale School and who are trained first aiders, are present during the summer school to support the staff and the students. The school's chefs and cleaners also work for the Provider during the summer school. Sunningdale School's bursar and site manager are also present to support the Provider as required.

Two of the Provider's directors also founded an education and tuition company in Hong Kong ten years ago. This company focuses on teaching academic English language skills. There is no input, from the company in Hong Kong, into the Summer Academy programme but the staff in Hong Kong do help to promote the course and attract students. The Hong Kong operation is not accredited by BAC.

Sunningdale School occupies a 26-acre site and the Provider hires it for a total of three weeks to run its summer school. The address in Hammersmith, London is the company's registered office. It is also where some of the administration work is carried out.

2. Brief description of the current provision

The Provider offers a two- or three-week residential summer school for international students, who are aged seven to eleven. The additional third week is targeted at students aged between seven and thirteen. The summer school uses a combination of academic, social, cultural and sporting activities to match the abilities and interests of the young people who attend. In the mornings, the students cover academic subjects including academic English lessons, focusing on the study of literature.

These morning activities are combined with a range of complementary activities, in the afternoon, including film making and play acting. In addition, there are excursions to places such as Oxford, Windsor and Eaton. These day trips involve activities such as treasure hunts, picnics and water sports. There is also a range of extra-curricular enrichment activities, which also help to develop skills such as leadership and teamwork. Some of the activities are themed. One example is based on the theme of science and involves developing robots and hot air balloons. Another theme is myths, monsters and magic. The activities are designed for enjoyment and also to develop the students' English language skills.

For those students whose English language skills are less well developed, the Provider offers more traditional English language courses focusing on spoken and written English. These also follow different themes such as

British culture and the Royal Family. The newly introduced third week is also themed, for example, around story-telling. The aim is to help the students to progress to the next level of English language skill.

At the time of the inspection, there were 37 students enrolled on the two-week course. Eight of those were staying on for the third week and seven new students were joining them for the third week. The majority of the students are boys. The students come from a wide range of countries such as Hong Kong, South Korea, Singapore, China, Greece and Spain.

3. Inspection process

The inspection was carried out by one inspector over half a day. The inspector met with one of the three Directors, two activity leaders, a housemistress, a group of students and a group of teachers. A short section of a teaching session was observed. The inspector had a tour of the premises and scrutinised documentation. The Provider co-operated very well with the inspector.

4. Inspection history

Stage 2 inspection:	19 January 2015
Stage 3 inspection:	23 July 2015
Interim inspection:	26 July 2016

PART B – JUDGMENTS AND EVIDENCE

The following judgments and comments are based upon evidence seen by the inspector(s) during the inspection and from documentation provided by the provider

1. Significant changes since the last inspection

The student numbers have risen and, as a result, the number of staff has increased. There are now two dedicated activity managers.

A third week has been added to the previous two-week course. This was requested by the students’ parents to extend and deepen the two-week course. Students attending the two-week course can stay on for the third week. The third week can also be attended as a standalone course for those who only want to attend for one week.

The summer school programme now consists of more course options. This has been facilitated by dividing the students into groups by age and adding additional themes.

2. Response to actions points in last report

There were no action points in the last report.

3. Response to recommended areas for improvement in last report

There were no recommendations in the last report.

4. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements

4.1 Management, Staffing and Administration (spot check)

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments				
<p>The Provider is well managed. The Directors have good experience in teaching on and running similar programmes to the summer school. The activity leaders and teachers report that the senior managers are supportive, approachable and listen to their views and make changes to the provision as a result. Consequently, the staff work well as a team to ensure the effective running of the programme.</p>				
<p>The staff handbook, which is reviewed and updated annually, is provided to staff on arrival. It is detailed and contains relevant information including about student registration, setting up the lessons, staff training and induction, staff responsibilities and the staff code of conduct. In addition, the teachers receive good information and support before they arrive at the school. As a result, the staff are aware of what is expected of them and are able to carry out their duties effectively.</p>				
<p>The performance of teachers is monitored appropriately. Other staff members’ performance is monitored informally throughout the programme. This is appropriate as they are only working for the Provider during the short summer school. However, more formal written performance feedback at the end of the course would be useful to motivate staff and identify any improvements for the future.</p>				

Written feedback is obtained from the students at the end of the course. This is discussed at team meetings and relevant improvements are made as a result. In addition, the Directors review the effectiveness of the programme and make changes to improve this. One example of this is a recent change whereby the students are now put into groups based on their age to ensure greater consistency in the ability levels of the class groups. This change has been welcomed by the teachers.

4.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment (spot check)

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments				
<p>The teaching staff are suitably experienced in delivering programmes that are similar to the summer school. The Provider is able to successfully retain previous teachers for the programme to help with consistency from year-to-year. Teachers use clear lesson plans, which include written work to develop the students' English language skills.</p> <p>The students report that they enjoy their lessons and that the activities are suitably varied. They say that they are learning new information and that their English language skills are improving. As a result, they are gaining in confidence. Inspection findings confirm this view.</p> <p>The Directors sit in on the classes to observe the teachers and provide them with useful feedback. These observations and the feedback are not formally recorded to ensure the effective sharing of good practice from course to course.</p> <p>The teachers meet the parents on the first day of the course. They receive written guidance from the parents with regard to any specific learning needs that the children may have so that these can be taken into account in the delivery of the sessions. In addition, the teachers identify, on the first day, any children who may struggle with the course and can refer them for additional support.</p> <p>The students have access to excellent resources and materials throughout the programme and have a work folder which they take home.</p> <p>The parents receive a report on what their children have done on the course, including the academic and enrichment activities. The reports also include some personal information about their child's performance. The reports are written by the teachers and course directors. As a result, the parents can see the benefits that their children have gained from attending.</p>				

4.3 Participant Welfare (spot check)

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments				
<p>Senior staff, including the housemistresses, are well qualified and experienced in providing pastoral support. The students reported that they know the staff well and would know who to go to if they needed any personal support for example relating to homesickness.</p>				

The arrangements for safeguarding are good. The safeguarding policy is appropriate and references the latest national guidance. The handbooks for staff and parents contain suitable information relating to safeguarding. There is a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who is appropriately trained, as are the housemistresses. The DSL trains and updates the other staff and ensures that they read and are familiar with the safeguarding policy. All staff have undergone appropriate safeguarding checks and a central register is appropriately maintained to ensure these are maintained up-to-date.

The staff handbook includes appropriate information about preventing radicalisation and extremism. A risk assessment has been carried out and staff have undergone suitable awareness training.

The students are accommodated on-site. The accommodation is comfortable and clean and students can have a separate room for more privacy if they wish. There are separate floors for boys and girls. There is good supervision of the students when they are in the accommodation. The students said that they like the accommodation and that it adds to their enjoyment at the school.

4.4 Premises and Facilities (spot check)

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments				
<p>The premises provide a secure and clean environment for staff and students. There are good classrooms and other activity spaces, which provide an excellent learning environment for the students. Both staff and students confirmed they like the premises and the environment that they provide.</p> <p>There is good guidance on health and safety provided to staff and students. The staff handbook contains suitable policies on health and safety. The students have a tour of the premises on their first day, which includes information about fire exits and the assembly point. A fire drill is carried out early on in the programme and the students were able to confirm what they should do in the event of a fire emergency.</p>				

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

STRENGTHS
<p>The summer school is very well managed with the students’ safety and enjoyment as high priorities.</p> <p>The teaching and other staff are very committed to providing the students with a high-quality learning experience.</p> <p>The Sunningdale School constitutes a highly effective environment to ensure the Summer Academy meets its aim to provide the students with an exceptional boarding experience.</p>

ACTIONS REQUIRED	Priority H/M/L
None	

RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT
<p>The Provider is recommended to provide written performance feedback to staff at the end of the programme so that the staff know how they have performed and any improvements can be made for the following year.</p> <p>The Provider should consider recording the outcomes of lesson observations and the feedback provided to teachers in order to share best practice.</p>

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS	
Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.	YES
Further comments, if applicable	
<p>It is recommended that all staff undertake external safeguarding training at the appropriate level to meet best practice.</p>	