BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

INTERIM AND SUPPLEMENTARY INSPECTION
CHANGE OF MANAGEMENT/STAFFING/PREMISES
(College)

INSTITUTION: Newcastle International School

ADDRESS: Unit 37A
                            Blandford Square
                            Newcastle-upon-Tyne
                            NE1 4HZ

HEAD OF INSTITUTION: Mr Fadi Salman

ACCREDITATION STATUS: Accredited

DATE OF INSPECTION: 6 October 2020

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE: Continued accreditation, 28 January 2021

PART A – INTRODUCTION

1.   Background to the institution

Newcastle International School (NIS/the Institution) is a privately owned institution offering general English language tuition and examination preparation. Tuition is also offered in Modern Foreign Languages (MFL). The Institution was registered as a limited company in October 2017. Teaching began in May 2018.

NIS occupies premises opposite the Discovery Museum in the centre of Newcastle, close to Newcastle Central Station and the Metro.

NIS aims to ensure that students receive more than a traditional education. It prides itself on creating a unique and exciting environment that embraces all types of students and promotes growth both academically and personally.

The sole shareholder is the Managing Director. Academic leadership and day-to-day management are undertaken by the Academic Manager, who is supported by an administration and teaching team.

Teaching began in May 2018 and continued until March 2020 when all classes were suspended. Classes have now resumed. Summer schools for junior students aged from 10 years, which were introduced in the summer of 2018, were also suspended during the summer of 2020. A new Academic Manager was appointed in early 2020.

2.   Brief description of the current provision

NIS provides English language tuition, from beginner to advanced levels. It offers English language examination preparation for the International English Language Testing Service (IELTS) and the Cambridge suite of examinations up to advanced level.

Tuition is also offered in MFL, including Spanish, French, Italian, Arabic, Chinese and Greek. The summer schools provide students with English language tuition alongside cultural excursions and local area visits.

At the time of the inspection, NIS was delivering face-to-face taught classes in general English at intermediate level and preparation for IELTS. Five students were enrolled on the programme. The majority were male and aged between 18 and 49 years. They came from Columbia, Italy, Palestine, Libya and Turkey.

The programmes on offer are available on a 10-week rolling basis and students can enrol at any time either through the online enrolment system or in person at the Institution. All applications include an initial assessment and, as part of the induction process, students participate in an additional assessment of their English speaking and listening skills.

Some students attend on an ad-hoc basis as required to improve their English skills.

3.   Inspection process

The inspection was conducted remotely over one day by one inspector. The inspector had discussions with the Academic Manager, the administrator and teaching staff. Documents and electronic records were scrutinised, and discussions were undertaken with the enrolled students, teachers and other staff. The premises were also inspected. The Institution was highly supportive of the inspection process and made available all relevant information.

4.   Background to the supplementary inspection

The supplementary inspection was carried out because of a change of premises and the appointment of a new Academic Manager.

5.   Inspection history

Inspection type	Date
Full Accreditation	29-31 May 2019

PART B – JUDGEMENTS AND EVIDENCE

The following judgements and comments are based upon evidence seen by the inspector during the inspection and from documentation provided by the institution.

1.	**Significant changes since the last inspection**

A new Academic Manager was appointed and the Institution moved to new premises in spring 2020

2.	**Response to action points in last report**

There were no action points identified in the previous inspection report.

3.	**Response to recommended areas for improvement in last report**

It is recommended that the Institution collates and analyses the informal student feedback to contribute to the self-assessment process.

The Institution now collates and analyses all formal and informal student feedback on a weekly basis. The feedback is acted upon immediately if appropriate and is used to carry out the Institution's self-assessment and support the quality improvement processes.

The Institution should consider contacting previous students to collect information on their achievement in external examinations to provide additional useful data to monitor student success.

The Institution now maintains contact with many ex-students, mainly through social media, and examination successes are celebrated within this group of former students. Examples of successes are used to motivate and inspire current students to achieve success.

It is advised that the Institution creates a more formal reminder for certification renewals for example for Gas Safety certificates in home-stay accommodation.

This has now been implemented and all the requirements for the home-stay accommodation, including health and safety and certification renewals, are identified on a spreadsheet. Formal reminders are sent to the home-stay accommodation at the appropriate times.

4.	**Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements**

4.1	Management, Staffing and Administration (supplementary inspection)

The numbers below refer to the standards as presented in the college scheme document and main full inspection report

1.	**The institution is effectively managed**		
1.1	The management structure is clearly defined, documented and understood, including the role and extent of authority of any owners, trustees or governing body.	☒ Yes	☐ No
1.2	The head of the institution and other senior managers are suitably qualified and experienced, understand their specific responsibilities and are effective in carrying them out.	☒ Yes	☐ No
1.3	There are clear channels of communication between the management and staff.	☒ Yes	☐ No

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

The Academic Manager is well qualified and experienced in English language teaching and academic leadership, having worked in a number of English language schools. The Academic Manager had a comprehensive introduction to the Institution and received a two-week induction from the outgoing postholder. The Managing Director supports the Academic Manager as required to make the operational decisions within the Institution.

The delegation of responsibility is clearly recorded in the organisation chart, supported by full job descriptions, and is well understood by all staff. There is regular and effective performance monitoring, ensuring that there is clarity over roles and responsibilities.

There are outstanding levels of communication across the Institution. Communication methods make good use of centralised systems and other electronic document services. Staff have regular, scheduled meetings and effective use is made of information-sharing and discussions in the main office, resulting in prompt and effective support for staff and students.

2. The administration of the institution is effective

2.1	Administrators are suitably qualified or experienced and understand their specific responsibilities and duties.	☒ Yes	☐ No
2.2	The size of the administrative team is sufficient to ensure the effective day-to-day running of the institution.	☒ Yes	☐ No
2.3	The administrative support available to the management is clearly defined, documented and understood.	☒ Yes	☐ No
2.4	Policies, procedures and systems are well documented and effectively disseminated across the institution.	☒ Yes	☐ No
2.5	Data collection and collation systems are effective.	☒ Yes	☐ No

This standard is judged to be:　　　　　　☒ Met　　　☐ Partially Met　　☐ Not Met

Comments

Administration is undertaken by the Academic Manager and a member of staff who also teaches at the Institution. Staff are experienced and well qualified in their areas of responsibility and undertake administrative work effectively.

The systems and the size of the administration team are appropriate for the size and scope of the business and are well organised and effective. Roles are clearly defined and well understood by all staff.

Administrative policies are shared with staff and students, in line with the sharing and dissemination policy in the staff and student handbooks. The Institution's online system and every area of the business have a central file containing hard copies of the relevant policies and procedures. As a result, staff have easy access to these documents.

Data collection is well managed and provides managers with regular and timely information and data that effectively support oversight of the Institution.

3. The institution employs appropriate managerial and administrative staff

3.1	There are appropriate policies and effective procedures for the recruitment and continuing employment of suitably qualified and experienced staff.	☒ Yes	☐ No
3.2	Experience and qualifications claimed are verified before employment.	☒ Yes	☐ No
3.3	There is an effective system for regularly reviewing the performance of staff.	☒ Yes	☐ No

This standard is judged to be:　　　　　　☒ Met　　　☐ Partially Met　　☐ Not Met

Comments

There is a clear staff recruitment policy that encompasses safe recruitment principles and practices.

All pre-employment checks are undertaken, including verification of qualifications, two professional references, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, and records and evidence of relevant training. There is an accurate centralised record to facilitate and effectively manage staff recruitment.

Staff performance management is appropriate and carried out in accordance with the Institution's policy. Records of performance management conversations and outcomes are accurate and well maintained.

4. **Publicity material, both printed and electronic, gives a comprehensive, up-to-date and accurate description of the institution and its curriculum**

4.1	Text and images provide an accurate depiction of the institution's location, premises, facilities and the range and nature of resources and services offered.	☒ Yes ☐ No
4.2	Information on the courses available is comprehensive, accurate and up-to-date.	☒ Yes ☐ No

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met ☐ Partially Met ☐ Not Met

Comments

All publicity materials provide an up-to-date reflection of NIS and its services.

Course information is comprehensive, and the enrolment and initial assessment processes are clear and effectively support students to choose the right course to meet their needs.

The website has not yet been updated to reflect the change in senior management and there are some minor typographical errors.

5. **The institution takes reasonable care to recruit and enroll suitable students for its courses**

5.1	Entry requirements for each course are set at an appropriate level and clearly stated in the course descriptions seen by prospective students.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ NA
5.2	A formal application process ensures that students meet the entry requirements and any claimed qualifications are verified.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ NA
5.3	Students are properly briefed on the nature and requirements of the courses for which they apply, and all application enquiries responded to promptly and appropriately.	☒ Yes ☐ No
5.4	Any overseas recruitment agents are carefully selected, briefed, monitored and evaluated.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
5.5	Students receive a proper initial assessment, which includes language ability to confirm their capability to complete the courses on which they are enrolling.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met ☐ Partially Met ☐ Not Met

Comments

The courses start at beginner level and there are no formal entry requirements for the students.

The recruitment and application processes are thorough and well monitored for effectiveness. Students understand the level of tuition and receive support from staff to answer any queries during the application and enrolment process.

Recruiting agents are trained by either the British Council or the International Consultants for Education and Fairs (ICEF) organisation. They are recruited through online interviews. The Institution consistently confirms the importance of enrolling good-quality students to the agents. NIS ensures that agents understand its range of courses, the United Kingdom (UK) education system and Home Office regulations.

Information packs for the agents contain good levels of information and support to ensure that students receive the correct advice by telephone, e-mail or in printed literature. Students apply through the NIS website and local students can apply directly at the NIS premises.

Applications are well managed, with timely responses to enquiries and sufficient information sent in advance of the course start dates.

The initial assessment process successfully places students at the correct language level for the courses for which they have applied.

6. **There is an appropriate policy on student attendance and effective procedures and systems to enforce it**

6.1	There is an appropriate, clear and published policy on student attendance and punctuality.	☒ Yes	☐ No
6.2	Accurate and secure records of attendance and punctuality at each session are kept for all students, collated centrally and reviewed at least weekly.	☒ Yes	☐ No
6.3	Student absences are followed up promptly and appropriate action taken.	☒ Yes	☐ No

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

Student attendance requirements are clearly stated and shared with students and staff in the attendance policy included in the relevant handbook. Attendance and punctuality monitoring for all students is thorough and is especially highly controlled and managed for students under 18 years of age during summer schools.

Registers are accurate and are analysed weekly to determine trends in unauthorised absences.

Student absences are quickly identified, monitored and effectively managed. Remedial action is timely and appropriate and consequently attendance levels are consistently high.

7. **The institution regularly obtains and records feedback from students and other stakeholders and takes appropriate action where necessary**

7.1	The institution has effective mechanisms for obtaining feedback from students and other stakeholders (such as staff, partner institutions and employers) on all aspects of the institution's provision, including formal student representation where appropriate.	☒ Yes	☐ No
7.2	Feedback is obtained, recorded and analysed on a regular basis.	☒ Yes	☐ No
7.3	The feedback is reviewed by management and action is taken where necessary.	☒ Yes	☐ No
7.4	There is a mechanism for reporting on the institution's response to the feedback to the student body.	☒ Yes	☐ No

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

There are robust systems and methods for collecting, collating and analysing student feedback.

Students complete an evaluation form for every lesson and their views are actively sought through discussion, and formal and informal processes. The resulting information is used to measure the quality of lessons, as well as supporting students to self-assess their learning outcomes from every lesson. Students can comment anonymously by placing comments in suggestion boxes in the Student Zone in the Institution's premises.

The Institution collates and analyses all formal and informal student feedback on a weekly basis. The student feedback is reviewed, and any issues raised are identified and dealt with in a timely fashion. The feedback is also used to contribute to the Institution's self-assessment and quality improvement processes.

Feedback from parents, accommodation partners and host families is regularly collected and analysed. As a result, the feedback from a wide range of stakeholders successfully contributes to the Institution's self-assessment process and quality improvement planning.

8. The institution has effective systems to review its own standards and assess its own performance with a view to continuing improvement

8.1	There are effective systems for monitoring and periodically reviewing all aspects of the institution's performance.	☒ Yes	☐ No
8.2	Reports are compiled at least annually, which present the results of the institution's reviews and incorporate action plans. Reports include analysis of year-on-year results on student satisfaction, retention, achievement, examination results and completion rates.	☒ Yes	☐ No
8.3	Action plans are implemented and regularly reviewed, with outcomes reported to the management.	☒ Yes	☐ No

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

There is an effective range of systems to monitor and review the performance of the Institution.

Staff review lessons and provide feedback on the outcomes through the quality improvement process and in performance management discussions. This ensures that issues are dealt with promptly and lessons remain relevant and appropriately focused on students' needs.

There are regular course reviews and classroom observations. Student feedback is collected regularly and their views are actively sought informally on an ongoing basis. The quality of the resulting information is good. Students feel they can be honest about what they think and this impacts positively on the good relationships between the students and all staff members.

All aspects of performance are effectively analysed. Appropriate targets for improvement are set and these are well monitored by the Academic Manager.

Self-assessment reporting is used well by managers to plan and implement improvements. Information is shared with staff as appropriate, which ensures that there is an inclusive approach to the improvement planning cycle.

4.2   Teaching, Learning and Assessment (spot check)

The standards are judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

The Academic Manager and the teachers are professionally qualified and experienced subject specialists. They work very well as a team to plan and deliver consistently high-quality lessons with excellent outcomes for students. The lessons are interesting and motivating and help to widen students' cultural understanding and awareness.

Students confirmed that they were highly satisfied with their lessons and found them enjoyable.

Classes are planned to ensure consistency in the allocation of teachers and classrooms. This supports student confidence and skill development effectively.

All courses are supported by appropriate course books and schemes of work. In addition to the formal curriculum, lessons are appropriately referenced to British values and culture. This effectively supports both an interest and understanding of living in the local area and in the UK.

Lessons are planned to provide useful examination preparation and appropriate support for students to achieve the attainment levels in formal external examinations. All assessment is linked to the students' individual target level. The tracking of students' progress is thorough and, in the vast majority of cases, students achieve timely progress towards their target levels.

Lessons focus on supporting student independence and autonomy and consequently students are highly engaged, fully active and make excellent progress in their lessons. Teachers regularly take students out into the local community so that they can practise their speaking and listening skills in supervised and supportive conditions. They take them to places such as the public library, local cafeterias and shops as well local transport settings. The lessons and practise sessions are highly valued by students, who consider that they significantly improve their skills and confidence.

All students are members of Newcastle City Library and make excellent use of its resources and services.

Classroom observations happen regularly and frequently. The observation process is collaborative, enabling staff to reflect and effectively discuss their self-assessment and the classroom observations with the Academic Manager.

The teaching staff performance management process results in professional development action plans. The Academic Manager sets appropriate targets and professional development opportunities are collaboratively identified.

4.3   Student Welfare (spot check)

The standards are judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

The Academic Manager is trained appropriately to provide welfare support to meet the students' needs. The teachers are also appropriately trained. Posters with the photographs and names of the people to speak to on any welfare issues are prominently displayed in the Institution. Students confirmed they know whom to go to for any welfare or personal concerns.

International students receive appropriate information prior to their arrival in the UK, including 24-hour contact details and emergency support. Induction is comprehensive. It includes anti-bullying and discrimination information and references the Institution's policies on welfare.

The Academic Manager is trained appropriately in safeguarding and is the named member of staff responsible for safeguarding. There are clear safeguarding procedures that are well disseminated, and effective systems to ensure that all students are safe and well cared for.

There is a comprehensive policy to prevent radicalisation and extremism and all staff have received appropriate training to identify and manage the associated risks. As part of their training, staff are made aware of the need to constantly risk assess and take appropriate action.

Home-stay accommodation is chosen for its location and transport links, as well as its comfort and safety. University residences are also used by overseas students. The accommodation facilities are reviewed on a regular basis by the Academic Manager.

Students are provided with a wide range of information on local leisure attractions and facilities. Most lessons include a social aspect, such as visits to the library, shops and cafeterias in the city centre. These lessons are planned to stimulate language generation and confidence in speaking in authentic situations and contribute well to excellent learning outcomes. These visits are appreciated by the students.

Students always carry NIS contact details, in case they need to contact the school.

Students are aware of the Institution's complaints procedures and understand the process they need to follow if they wish to make a complaint.

4.4   Premises and Facilities (supplementary inspection)

The numbers below refer to the standards as presented in the college scheme document and main full inspection report

24.   The institution has secure possession of and access to its premises

24.1	The institution has secure tenure on its premises.	☒ Yes	☐ No	☐ NA
24.2	Where required, the institution has access to suitable external premises for academic or non-academic purposes of a temporary or occasional nature.	☐ Yes	☐ No	☒ NA

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

The premises are secured by an appropriate formal contract with the landlord.

The Institution does not require additional premises for academic or non-academic purposes as it has adequate space in the new premises. Nevertheless, the Institution can hire working space at Newcastle City Library if required when students are visiting the library.

25.   The premises provide a safe, secure and clean environment for students and staff

25.1	Access to the premises is appropriately restricted and secured.	☒ Yes	☐ No	
25.2	The premises are maintained in an adequate state of repair, decoration and cleanliness.	☒ Yes	☐ No	
25.3	There are specific safety rules in areas of particular hazard (e.g. science laboratories), made readily available to students, staff and visitors.	☐ Yes	☐ No	☒ NA
25.4	General guidance on health and safety is made available to students, staff and visitors.	☒ Yes	☐ No	
25.5	There is adequate signage inside and outside of the premises and notice boards for the display of general information.	☒ Yes	☐ No	
25.6	There is adequate circulation space for the number of students and staff accommodated, and a suitable area in which to receive visitors.	☒ Yes	☐ No	
25.7	There are toilet facilities of an appropriate number and level of cleanliness.	☒ Yes	☐ No	
25.8	There is adequate heating and ventilation in all rooms.	☒ Yes	☐ No	

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

The Institution provides a safe and secure working and learning environment. It is self-contained, with appropriately controlled access.

The premises are maintained in a very good state of repair. They are clean, bright and airy with good natural light.

Good-quality information on health, safety and well-being is on display in various areas throughout the Institution for the benefit of staff, students and visitors. Fire exit routes are clearly marked.

There is good circulation space for students and staff. There is a reception area with space to accommodate visitors.

There are sufficient toilet facilities that are clean and well maintained.

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26.   Classrooms and other learning areas are appropriate for the courses offered

26.1	Classrooms and other learning areas provide adequate accommodation in size and number for the classes allocated to them.	☒ Yes	☐ No
26.2	Classrooms and/or any specialised learning areas (e.g. laboratories, workshops, studios) are equipped to a level which allows for the effective delivery of each course.	☒ Yes	☐ No
26.3	There are facilities suitable for conducting the assessments required on each course.	☒ Yes	☐ No

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

There are five good-sized and well-ventilated classrooms that provide a spacious and comfortable learning environment. The classrooms provide students with plenty of room to circulate as part of their lessons.

The Student Zone provides additional space for students to meet with their teachers in private, or in small discussion groups.

The classrooms are suitable and appropriate for the level and type of assessment that takes place at the Institution.

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27.   There are appropriate additional facilities for students and staff

27.1	Students have access to sufficient space and suitable facilities for private study, including library and IT resources.	☒ Yes	☐ No	
27.2	Teaching staff have access to sufficient personal space for preparing lessons, marking work and relaxation.	☒ Yes	☐ No	
27.3	Students and staff have access to space and facilities suitable for relaxation and the consumption of food and drink where appropriate.	☒ Yes	☐ No	☐ NA
27.4	Students and staff have access to storage for personal possessions where appropriate.	☒ Yes	☐ No	☐ NA
27.5	There are individual offices or rooms in which academic staff and senior management can hold private meetings and a room of sufficient size to hold staff meetings.	☒ Yes	☐ No	
27.6	Administrative offices are adequate in size and resources for the effective administration of the institution.	☒ Yes	☐ No	

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

Students have access to a good-sized Student Zone, where they can undertake private study and have social interaction. There is also a small library of books and other learning resources that students can use.

All students are members of Newcastle City Library in the city centre. This library has additional space and information technology equipment that can be hired by the Institution as required.

There are designated workspaces and areas for teachers to meet and work together or alone.

The Student Zone provides a comfortable environment for students to interact or study. This space is used by students for relaxation, eating and socialising.

NIS is situated in an area with shops and cafeterias and these facilities are also very well used by students. An area on the ground floor of the building is being developed into an onsite cafeteria.

There is an area in the staff office for students to store their possessions securely if necessary.

The office provides sufficient space for the administration function and there is also space for staff to work or meet in private. There is a large room available for staff meetings.

4.5   Compliance Declaration

Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.   ☒ Yes   ☐ No

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

STRENGTHS

Excellent communication and good professional relationships ensure that there is a clear focus on appropriate priorities and effective control of the provision.

Professionally qualified and experienced teachers deliver well-structured, high-quality lessons and provide excellent feedback to students, resulting in good learning outcomes.

Weekly assessments successfully allow students to measure their own progress and acknowledge their achievements.

Excellent use is made of local facilities, services and amenities to enhance the students' learning experience, including their acquisition of language skills and effective understanding and knowledge of cultural life in the UK.

ACTIONS REQUIRED

| None | ☐ High | ☐ Medium | ☐ Low |

RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT *(to be reviewed at the next inspection)*

The website needs to be updated to reflect the change in senior management and to correct the typographical errors.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS – FURTHER COMMENTS, IF APPLICABLE