



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

LANGUAGE SPECIALISTS INTERNATIONAL (LSI PORTSMOUTH)

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Principal	Mr Lea Brophy
Proprietor	Neath Port Talbot College (NPTC)
Age Range	18+
Total number of students	103
Numbers by age and type of study	18+: 103 EFL only: 103
Inspection dates	07 November 2023

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 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 LSI Portsmouth is a private educational institution located in the centre of Portsmouth. The school was established in 1985. Its mission is to be the best English language school they can be and aims to provide students with the best experience they can have in every aspect of their stay. The day-to-day management of the school is the responsibility of the principal. In 2010 the school was acquired by the Neath Port Talbot College (NPTC) and holds charitable status. Oversight and governance are provided by the NPTC board of directors.
- 1.2 The school provides English as a Foreign Language (EFL) courses to students over the age of 18 years. General English courses are offered from beginners to advanced level, as well as specialist optional courses, examination preparation for the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and Cambridge main suite examinations. One-to-one tuition is available including an Executive programme. The school also offers University Preparation Programmes through pre-sessional classes, designed to help prepare students for all aspects of their higher academic study in the UK.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection 103 students were enrolled at the school, all of whom are over 18 years. There were slightly more male than female students and the largest nationality groups were from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Japan. English is an additional language (EAL) for all students. At the time of the visit no student was identified with language and learning difficulties or disabilities. Students are recruited throughout the year. There are three students currently enrolled on Student visas for Home Office requirements.
- 1.4 The school was previously inspected on the 12–14 October 2021 when it met all Key Standards and the quality of education was judged to exceed expectations. The recommendation from the previous report is:
 - Provide further training for teaching staff to develop their technology skills and methodology for teaching face-to-face and on-line students in hybrid classroom situations.

2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1 **The college exceeds expectations for the quality of education.** At the time of the inspection, all Standards for Educational Oversight were met and quality is excellent.
- 2.2 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is excellent. The school has clear educational aims and objectives and offers a wide range of very high-quality courses that fully supports its stated aims and objectives. Initial assessment prior to and on arrival is accurate and is highly effective in ensuring that students are placed on the right course in accordance with their language abilities. The curriculum is well-planned and is highly effective in meeting the language needs of the students at the school. Courses are appropriately aligned to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Programmes of study on offer to sponsor students meet the definition of an approved qualification, as set out in the Home Office guidance. Teaching is excellent and results in very high levels of language development across the range of courses. Teachers are experienced, well qualified and have excellent subject knowledge. Lessons are very well planned. Highly effective teaching methods ensure that students develop their knowledge and use of the English language and successfully apply it to new contexts. 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 rates are high.
- 2.3 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is excellent. Health, safety and security are very well managed and monitored, with comprehensive oversight ensuring that any issues are quickly addressed. The school's building is well maintained and provides high-quality facilities that effectively support learning. Highly effective policies and procedures reduce the risks from fire and other hazards and ensure high levels of health and safety are maintained. Fire precautions, drills and evacuations are systematically undertaken and are clearly understood by all students and staff. Student registration and attendance recording are excellent. Records are accurate, 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 high levels of support and guidance in accordance with the school's aims. Relationships between staff and students are excellent. Students report that they are very happy at the school and are well supported. Attendance rates are very high.
- 2.4 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is excellent. The board of directors is highly effective in ensuring that high levels of education, welfare, health and safety are maintained. A clear vision for the school is shared by senior leaders and staff, who work very well together for the good of the students. A detailed management structure ensures that roles and responsibilities within the school are clearly defined. Highly effective communication between leaders and other staff ensures that staff are well informed of any issues or changes. As a result, the school is well run and meets all its legal obligations. A comprehensive range of well-defined policies and procedures are introduced, implemented and monitored

appropriately. The school is highly successful in attracting and retaining highly qualified and experienced teachers and other staff. Procedures for the recruitment of staff are excellent, in accordance with legal requirements, with all appropriate checks undertaken. As a result, all required employment and suitability checks are completed on staff before their employment is confirmed.

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:
- Provide further training for teaching staff to develop their technology skills and methodology for teaching face-to-face and on-line students in hybrid classroom situations.
- 3.3 Good progress has been made against the recommendation. The school has broadened the continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities offered to teaching staff to include sessions on the methodology and technology skills needed for teaching face-to-face and online students in hybrid lessons. In these sessions, a range of techniques are discussed and teachers are invited to share their thoughts on best practice and their own experiences in teaching such classes.
- 3.4 Testing of students prior to and on arrival is excellent. The process is accurate and a comprehensive series of tests and interviews ensure that students are accurately placed on a programme of study in accordance with their language abilities. As a result, students report that they are very satisfied with their courses.
- 3.5 The quality of course provision and curriculum is excellent. Students are very well educated in accordance with the school's aims and their objectives. The curriculum is based on a clear policy statement, is very well planned and provides a comprehensive range of English language courses and levels to meet the different needs and aspirations of students. Courses are appropriately aligned to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Programmes of study on offer to students on the student visas points-based system meet the definition of an approved qualification, as set out in the Home Office guidance.
- 3.6 Teaching is excellent and is characterised by detailed planning, with considerable care taken to match tasks to individual levels of English language ability. Lessons are delivered at a lively pace and include a wide variety of teaching methods and resources to suit different learning styles and to foster interest. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge, are very enthusiastic and motivate their students to enjoy their learning and successfully apply it to new contexts. They have a clear knowledge of students' previous learning and consistently challenge even the most able to meet their learning goals. The evidence from lesson observations shows that very high levels of language development across the range of courses are being reached, and that student outcomes are high in relation to their starting points. 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.
- 3.7 Teaching effectively promotes fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths

and beliefs. It encourages respect for other people including those with the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

- 3.8 Assessment is excellent. There are clearly defined processes in place to monitor students' progress to ensure that they are successfully progressing towards their learning aim. Tutorials are held regularly and effectively support students to review their progress. However, in a very small number of cases, the recording of student progress is not consistent which reduces its effectiveness. Overall, students are very well tracked throughout their time at the school and make excellent progress given their starting points.

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 school's buildings are fit for purpose, well maintained and effectively support the students' learning experience. Health, safety and security are very well managed, monitored, with comprehensive oversight ensuring that any issues are quickly addressed. Highly effective policies and procedures reduce the risks from fire and other hazards and ensure high levels of health and safety are maintained. A detailed first aid policy is in place and regularly reviewed. Classrooms, and other areas of the school, are tidy, clean, with good lighting, heating, sound insulation and ventilation. Fire precautions, drills and evacuations are systematically undertaken, recorded and are clearly understood by all students and staff. An appropriate number of fire marshals and staff trained in first aid are in place. Free drinking water is readily available throughout the school. Due to the age of the premises, students with special needs and disabilities cannot access all areas of the school and are not recruited.
- 4.3 Systems for recording registration and attendance are excellent. Comprehensive policies and procedures are in place for the timely and accurate registration of students, the monitoring of their attendance and reporting of absence. Highly detailed and accurate records are maintained, appropriately monitored and are effectively used to track progress and course completion. Relevant staff have a clear understanding of Home Office requirements regarding the enrolment and attendance requirements for students on student visas. Attendance rates are very high.
- 4.4 Pastoral support for students is excellent. The school has successfully created a caring culture where all staff feel that it is part of their role to support students. Detailed policies and procedures support this culture and ensure that the school provides a safe and supportive environment where all students can progress quickly. On arrival students receive a comprehensive induction which is effective in helping them settle quickly in their course, the school and the local area. Relationships between staff and students, and amongst the students themselves, are excellent with a strong culture of mutual respect, integration and tolerance.

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 quality of governance is excellent. The board of directors is highly effective in ensuring that high levels of education, welfare, health and safety are maintained. Effective oversight is combined with good levels of financial support so that identified developments and initiatives to enhance the student experience are fully supported and implemented. A clear vision for the school is shared by directors, senior leaders and staff, who work very well together for the good of the students.
- 5.3 Leadership and management are excellent. A detailed management structure ensures that roles and responsibilities within the school are clearly defined. Highly effective communication between leaders and other staff ensures that staff are well informed of any issues or changes. As a result, the school is well run and meets all its legal obligations. A comprehensive range of well-defined policies and procedures are introduced, implemented and monitored appropriately. Replies to the pre-inspection questionnaire and meetings with staff show that they are highly supportive of the school.
- 5.4 Arrangements to check the suitability of staff are excellent. Staff files are well maintained, with all required employment and suitability checks completed on staff before their employment is confirmed. A comprehensive central record of appointments is effectively monitored by senior staff.
- 5.5 The complaints policy and procedure are clear and appropriate, and includes provision for outside adjudication if necessary. Students confirm that they are aware of the policy.
- 5.6 The provision of information is excellent. The school's website is clear and user-friendly. Prospective students are able to access accurate and highly relevant information to inform their study choices.
- 5.7 The school was highly responsive in providing information for the inspection in a timely manner.

6. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for further improvement

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

- Ensure that all staff record students' progress in a consistent manner.

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

Inspectors

Dr Nigel Chambers	Lead Inspector
Mr Patrick Lawlor	Team Inspector