



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

**MALVERN HOUSE LONDON**

**(33848072)**

Full Name	<b>Malvern House London</b>		
Address	200 Pentonville Road, London, N1 9JP		
Parent Company Name	AEC Education PLC		
Telephone Number	020 7520 0470		
Email Address	malvern@malvernhouse.com		
Website	www.malvernhouse.com		
Principal/ Academic Director	Ms Jean Daruvala		
Proprietor	AEC Education PLC		
Age Range	16+		
Total number of students	161		
Numbers by age and type of study	16 – 18:		11
	18+:		150
	EFL only:		161
Inspection dates	<b>2-4 February 2016</b>		

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the Framework for Educational Oversight of private further education colleges and English language schools. The inspection consists of a three-day team inspection of the institution's educational provision.

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.

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### **INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

## 1. CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT

- 1.1 Established in 1999, Malvern House London is a private English language school located close to Kings Cross in central London. Since 2009 the school has been owned and governed by AEC Education PLC, a private education company based in Singapore, with schools also in Dublin and Cyprus. In December 2015 the strategic decision was taken by the AEC board to operate Malvern House London as an autonomous unit, while retaining close links with Dublin and Cyprus. Leadership is provided by the principal, who reports to the board of directors.
- 1.2 The school's mission is to provide students from all over the world with the tools to express themselves with confidence in an English-speaking environment. It aims to create a positive and encouraging learning environment that has the individual's learning experience at heart and is supported by state-of-the-art technology.
- 1.3 The school offers general English language courses from beginner to proficiency, together with a range of examination preparation courses, including International English Language Testing Service (IELTS) and Trinity Graded Examinations in Spoken English (GESE). Business English, young professional programmes, as well as more specialist English language courses are also provided.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection there were 161 students. There are slightly more female than male students and nearly all are over 18 years. They come from a wide range of countries and English is an additional language (EAL) for all students. The school has not identified any students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- 1.5 When an individual applies to join a course, the school checks their suitability through the use of a pre-course application form, an interview and assessment on arrival. The school offers accommodation in two residences. Students are recruited throughout the year.
- 1.6 The school was last inspected on the 3 February 2015 when it met all Key Standards and the quality of education was judged to exceed expectations.

## 2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1 **The language school 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. Students are extremely well educated in accordance with the school's aims and their objectives. The school offers a wide range of very high quality courses that fully meet the language needs and aspirations of the students and provides clear routes to further study. Courses on offer to Tier 4 students meet the definition of an approved qualification, as set out in the Home Office guidance. Testing of students prior to and on arrival is excellent and accurately places students on the right course in accordance with their abilities and language skills. Teaching is outstanding and ensures that high levels of progress are maintained. Teachers have comprehensive subject knowledge and use a wide range of highly effective teaching methods to engage and keep the interest of their students. Feedback on students' written work is thorough, timely and clearly identifies suggestions for improvement. Students make excellent progress.
- 2.3 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is excellent. The schools' buildings are very well maintained and provide a comfortable environment which effectively supports learning. A comprehensive range of health and safety policies and procedures are implemented effectively. As a result, the school provides a safe and secure learning environment for students and staff. A high level of fire safety is maintained. Fire precautions, drills and evacuations are systematically undertaken and are clearly understood by all students and staff. Student registration and attendance records are accurate. They are very well managed and are highly effective in monitoring attendance and taking necessary action. Procedures for reporting to the Home Office are highly secure. Pastoral care is excellent and provides a high level of support and guidance for students. Relationships between staff and students are excellent. Arrangements for the safeguarding of students under the age of 18 are excellent and comply with official guidance. Students report that they are very well supported and feel safe and secure at the school. Residential accommodation is of a good standard, secure and well maintained.
- 2.4 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is excellent. Leaders provide comprehensive oversight and discharge their responsibilities extremely well for financial planning and investment in the future. Welfare, health and safety of students are taken very seriously and all appropriate legal permissions are in place. Leadership and management are excellent. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and there is highly effective communication between managers and other staff. Well-defined policies and procedures are introduced, implemented and monitored appropriately. Mechanisms to monitor quality are excellent. Self-assessment is well-developed and used effectively to ensure the necessary resources are in place to meet the needs of the school. Performance data is available but is not always summarised sufficiently to ensure key issues are highlighted for leaders

and managers. Student feedback is regularly sought and trends analysed and used effectively to improve the quality of the student experience. The school successfully attracts experienced teachers and managers. Procedures for the recruitment of staff are excellent and staff files very well maintained.

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

#### **3.(a) Assessment of students prior to or on arrival**

- 3.1 The assessment of students prior to, and on, arrival is excellent. Detailed entry criteria are set and used very effectively to provide accurate and appropriate advice and guidance to prospective students. On arrival, effective testing and one-to-one interviews ensure students have the appropriate level of initial language skills and capabilities for their selected programme of study. The process is accurate and students are highly satisfied with their course placements. The continuous enrolment system is very well managed and allows students to apply and join classes at any time.
- 3.2 Initial course reviews and tutorials clearly identify if the course is of an appropriate level. Excellent use is made of this information by teachers to guide their planning. Detailed advice is provided to students if they wish to change or move between classes.
- 3.3 High quality information, advice and guidance are made available to students through the school's website. The website is detailed, professional and includes accurate information about the curriculum and other facilities on offer. Students confirm that they are highly satisfied with the pre-enrolment advice they receive from the school. However, a small minority of students who are recruited through agents, report that they do not receive all necessary documents before arriving in the UK.

#### **3.(b) Suitability of course provision and curriculum**

- 3.4 The suitability of course provision and curriculum is excellent. Students are extremely well educated in accordance with the school's aims and objectives. The curriculum is broad, carefully planned and meets the different needs and aspirations of students. The highly flexible nature of the provision enables a programme of study to be provided that is effectively tailored to students' individual language needs. As a result, retention on all courses is high, with almost all students completing their programme of study. The range of courses and levels available provide students with good progression opportunities in line with Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR).
- 3.5 Student evaluation is very well integrated into all courses and the school makes effective use of student feedback to inform planning and assessment. Courses on offer to Tier 4 students meet the definition of an approved qualification, as set out in the Home Office guidance.
- 3.6 Courses match those listed on the website and in other marketing materials.



### **3.(c) The quality of teaching and its impact on learning**

- 3.7 The quality of teaching and its impact on learning is excellent. The large majority of the teaching is outstanding. Comprehensive planning and an extensive understanding of the needs of their students allows teachers to successfully adapt lessons to meet individual learning needs and effectively challenge students. Teachers use a wide range of effective learning activities and resources which engage and motivate students. As a result, students make excellent progress in relation to their ability and starting points.
- 3.8 Teachers are very well qualified, highly experienced and have an excellent understanding and knowledge of linguistic systems. Relationships at all levels are extremely productive, with teachers and students working collaboratively to enhance learning and progress. Lessons are well paced and provide excellent opportunities for students to participate and practice their language skills. Teachers ask searching questions that prompt students to think and respond successfully. Students work extremely well in groups, showing excellent co-operative learning.
- 3.9 Teachers readily offer individual help and support to ensure high levels of skills, knowledge and understanding are developed. Lessons address the needs of students through tasks designed to meet their varying abilities. The high expectations of teachers ensure that all students are consistently challenged and well supported to meet their learning goals. The use of technology to enhance learning in the classroom is highly developed and is used well to stimulate students to explore ideas and develop their language skills.
- 3.10 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, accurate and clearly identifies areas for improvement. Students are encouraged to continue their learning outside of lessons, with regular setting of homework and extension activities. As a result, most learners develop their confidence and independence.
- 3.11 Arrangements for tracking students' progress are excellent. The progress of each student is very carefully tracked, allowing managers and teachers to monitor their progress effectively. Tutorials are held regularly and effectively support students to review their progress in relation to tests, homework and teachers' observations.

### **3.(d) Attainment and progress**

- 3.12 Progress and attainment are excellent. In classes, students quickly master and build confidence in their English language skills, demonstrating skills as confident, independent users of the language. The evidence from lesson observation and scrutiny of work shows that overall, learners are able to acquire new knowledge and make very good progress in the four skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking.

- 3.13 Students report that they are very happy with the progress that they are making. The results students who sit examinations are very good and attendance levels are high.

## **4. STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **4.(a) Health, safety and security of the premises**

- 4.1 Arrangements for the health, safety and security of the premises are excellent. Comprehensive and detailed policies and procedures ensure that the health and safety of students and staff are effective, and the premises are secure. Excellent investment in the premises has resulted in a well-resourced learning environment which enhances the students' education. The premises are very well maintained. Classrooms are spacious, light and well furnished. All electrical equipment is tested regularly as required. Toilet facilities are adequate in number and are extremely well maintained. Security arrangements are excellent. Consequently, students report that they feel safe, secure and comfortable.
- 4.2 All necessary measures are taken to reduce risk from fire and other hazards. These conform to requirements. A comprehensive health and safety policy is in place with clearly allocated responsibilities. Up-to-date general and fire risk assessments are carried out with clear follow-up actions. These are regularly reviewed. Detailed individual risk assessments are carried out for organised off-site activities. An appropriate number of trained fire marshals and first aiders are in place as well as first aid kits and accident books. Fire action notices are clearly displayed and fire exits are well signposted. Fire protection equipment is properly sited and regularly checked. Regular fire drills are carried out which are well recorded. Staff and students are aware of their responsibilities and have received appropriate health and safety training.
- 4.3 Proper provision is made for students who are ill or injured. The school is fully accessible by wheelchair users or students with mobility difficulties.

### **4.(b) Student registration and attendance records**

- 4.4 Arrangements for student registration and the recording of attendance are excellent. Comprehensive admission procedures are in place and properly observed. A central register is accurately maintained and individual student files contain all required information.
- 4.5 Daily attendance is accurately recorded and closely monitored, with unexpected absence effectively followed up. Communication between administrators and academic tutors is excellent and effectively identifies students who are late or who fail to show for specific sessions. Students are made aware that regular absence may seriously disrupt educational progress and where appropriate will be reported to the Home Office. The policy on punctuality is clear and known to staff and students, resulting in a minimum of disruption to classes by those arriving late.
- 4.6 Management and administrative staff have a clear understanding of Home Office requirements regarding the enrolment and attendance requirements for Tier 4 students and adhere to them rigorously. Accurate records of all these matters are recorded on the school's database and in students' individual files.

- 4.7 Clear policies and procedures are in place for the collection and refund of student fees and deposits. The policy is fair and applied consistently.

#### **4.(c) Pastoral support for students**

- 4.8 Pastoral support for students is excellent. Comprehensive oversight and co-ordination of the welfare and pastoral support, together with an effective system of tutorials, ensures that individual students' personal and academic development is reviewed regularly. Staff have an open door policy and students feel confident about approaching members of staff for help if needed. Any problems that arise are addressed promptly and to the satisfaction of students. A detailed and useful induction, supported by an informative handbook, allows new arrivals to settle into their courses quickly.
- 4.9 Relationships between staff and students and amongst the students themselves are excellent, with a strong culture of mutual respect, integration and tolerance. A comprehensive range of policies and procedures is in place to reinforce this culture and the expectations of behaviour and conduct. Students of different ages and from many different countries study and socialise effectively together, and are well supported by staff. Clear anti-bullying and harassment policies and procedures are in place, and students report no instances of such behaviour. Replies to the pre-inspection questionnaire and meetings with students show that they feel that the school is providing them with a safe and comfortable environment which effectively meets their learning needs. Nearly all would recommend the school to others.
- 4.10 Effective careers advice ensures that students are very well prepared for further study choices and life beyond the school. Students value and regularly participate in a wide range of high quality enrichment and social activities and excursions, which effectively enhances their learning.

#### **4.(d) Safeguarding for under 18s**

- 4.11 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 in place who is appropriately trained. All staff are subject to Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks prior to or on appointment, and accurate records are maintained by the school in a centralised register of appointments.
- 4.12 A range of suitable policies is in place and effectively implemented. Staff are made aware of safeguarding issues through appropriate training.

#### **4.(e) Residential accommodation**

- 4.13 The quality of residential accommodation is good. Facilities are of a good standard and students report that they are satisfied with their accommodation. Detailed risk assessments of residential accommodation are carried out, and students are

regularly asked for feedback. Appropriate evening activities are arranged and students appreciate this greatly.

## **5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

### **5.(a) Ownership and oversight**

- 5.1 Governance and oversight are excellent. The school has a well-developed educational purpose that is effectively supported by all staff. The board of directors, through their senior management team, have a clear oversight of the operation, strategic direction and management of the school. The focus of governance and leadership is forward looking, with a clear emphasis on supporting staff and students and maintaining very high academic standards. Relationships between the board of governors and the senior leadership team are excellent.
- 5.2 Comprehensive governance ensures that the school meets its obligations with regard to safeguarding, health and safety and fire safety, including all statutory duties in respect of students under the age of 18. Financial management is highly effective and ensures that excellent teaching and learning resources are in place. All necessary legal permissions are in place for the use of the premises, including relevant insurances and licenses.

### **5.(b) Management structures and responsibilities**

- 5.3 Management structures and responsibilities are excellent. The quality of leadership and management is excellent. Self-evaluation is rigorous and provides an accurate account of the school's key strengths and areas for development. The leaders are highly successful in sharing the organisational vision and development plans with staff. As a result appropriate action is taken with regard to course development, maintenance of the school's premises and student welfare. A culture of caring for students is successfully embedded throughout the whole organisation and this ensures that all decisions and actions consider student experience and meet students' needs.
- 5.4 A clear management structure promotes effective systems to initiate and implement policies to meet the school's needs, and to monitor their operation. The structure operates very smoothly and successfully, because it provides clearly defined roles and responsibilities and excellent lines of communication. Relationships between the senior leadership team and the teaching staff are excellent. Replies to the pre-inspection questionnaire and meetings with staff show that they are very happy and extremely supportive of the school.
- 5.5 The school is highly successful in securing and retaining well-qualified staff. A comprehensive system of staff review is in place and is used to ensure staff are well qualified for the work they do, and appropriately supported by the management team. An excellent programme of staff development is in place to ensure that staff are appropriately trained for their roles.

**5.(c) Quality assurance including student feedback**

- 5.6 Quality assurance including student feedback is excellent. There is a strong culture of improvement in the school, with self-assessment regularly undertaken. Student feedback is collected systematically through questionnaires and discussions with students. This feedback is analysed, shared with staff and managers and used regularly to inform teacher development, academic action planning and the identification of school priorities. End-of-course questionnaires are analysed by senior academic managers and changes are implemented if appropriate. Performance data is available but is not always effectively summarised to ensure key issues are highlighted for leaders and managers.
- 5.7 The complaints procedure is clear and appropriate. Complaints are handled and reported on effectively which has a direct impact on quality assurance and improvement planning.
- 5.8 Appropriate arrangements for the protection of student fees are in place.

**5.(d) Staff recruitment, qualifications and suitability checks**

- 5.9 Staff recruitment, qualifications and suitability checks are excellent. Very well-qualified staff are secured through a thorough and efficient staff recruitment policy. All required recruitment checks have been carried out in a timely manner and appropriately recorded. The process to validate references and qualifications is excellent and the audit trail is clear with due regard to statutory requirements. A central record of appointments is monitored by senior staff.

**5.(e) Provision of information**

- 5.10 Provision of information is excellent. The website is clear and user-friendly. Prospective students are able to access accurate information to inform their study choices. The school were 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 language school should:

- Summarise performance data to ensure key issues are highlighted for leaders and managers.
- Ensure students who are recruited through agents receive all necessary documents before arriving in the UK.



## 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. 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 school.

### Inspectors

Dr Nigel Chambers	Lead Inspector
Ms Christine-Reba Edge	Team Inspector
Mr Chris Evans	Team Inspector
Mr John Rooney	Team Inspector