

Organisation name	Cambridge Academy of English
Inspection date	17 July 2025
Current accreditation status	Accredited
Reason for spot check	Signalled: inspect new or additional premises

Recommendation

We recommend continued accreditation. The next inspection falls due in 2027; there are no grounds for bringing this forward.

Changes to the summary statement

An area of strength can be added for Premises.

New summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited Cambridge Academy of English (CAE) in July 2023, October 2024 and July 2025. The Accreditation Scheme assesses the standards of management, resources and premises, teaching, welfare, and safeguarding under 18s and accredits organisations which meet the overall standard in each area inspected (see www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation for details).

The 2023 inspection was compliance-only inspection; the inspectors focused only on whether inspection criteria were met or not met. Inspectors did not evaluate the extent to which requirements were exceeded and no strengths were awarded. No new summary statement issued; please refer to the last inspection report for any areas of strength previously awarded. The 2025 spot check, primarily to assess the suitability of new premises, found that these were highly satisfactory; *Premises and facilities* is an area of strength.

The inspection report stated that the organisation met the standards of the Scheme.

Summary inspection findings

Management

The provision meets the section standard. The management of the provision operates to the benefit of students and in accordance with the provider's stated goals, values, and publicity. Student administration is handled effectively.

Premises and resources

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The premises provide students and staff with comfortable relaxation areas and a very good professional environment for work. There are effective measures in place to ensure the safety and security of staff and students. *Premises and facilities* is an area of strength.

Teaching and learning

The provision meets the section standard. The academic staff team has a professional profile appropriate to the context. Teachers receive guidance to ensure that they support students effectively in their learning. Courses are structured and managed to provide the maximum possible benefit to students. The teaching observed met the requirements of the Scheme.

Welfare and student services

The provision meets the section standard. The provision meets the needs of the students for security, pastoral, care, information and leisure activities. Students benefit from well-managed student services, including out-of-class activities and suitable accommodation.

Safeguarding under 18s

The provision meets the section standard. There is appropriate provision for the safeguarding of students under the age of 18 within the organisation and in any leisure activities or accommodation provided.

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	2012
Last full inspection	2023
Subsequent checks/visits (if applicable)	2024

Other related non-accredited activities (in brief) at this centre	N/a
Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates	N/a
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	N/a

Student and staff profile	At inspection	Estimate at peak: July
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	30	30
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	10	10
Typical age range	10-17	10-17
Typical length of stay	2 weeks	2 weeks
Predominant nationalities	Slovakian, Spanish, French	Slovakian, Spanish, French
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	4	4
Total number of managers including academic	4	4
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	1	1

Premises profile	
Address of main site	Stamford School, Southfields House, St Paul's Street, Stamford, PE9 2BQ
Additional sites in use	N/a
Additional sites not in use	N/a
Sites inspected	Sixth form campus, two nearby boarding houses, Wothorpe Sports Centre

Introduction

Background

This was a signalled spot check with a focus on a change of premises. CAE's summer school took place previously in Bedford School but in 2025 relocated to Stamford School in Lincolnshire, a co-educational independent school. CAE is located in the school's sixth form site, the former Stamford High School founded in 1536, which has been transformed into a bespoke sixth form campus. It has two residences close by and is a short walk from two school sports centres. CAE has offices and classrooms in the school's central block and accepts students aged eight to 17 years.

Preparation

Prior to the visit, the reporting inspector contacted Cambridge Academy of English (CAE) to confirm key staff would be available during the target week. The date of the inspection was not disclosed until shortly before the chosen day.

Programme and persons present

The inspection was carried out by one inspector and lasted for half a day. During the week of the inspection the summer centre was in its first week. The inspection began at 11.00 and concluded at 15.15. Meetings were held with the two company directors, the director of studies and the Stamford School head of commercial services.

Documents were viewed prior to, during and after the inspection. The website was also checked.

Findings

Findings are reported in the following section and in the Action taken on points to be addressed.

Premises and resources

Premises and facilities	Area of strength
P1 Providers ensure the safety and security of students on their premises by measures appropriate to their age and background, and the location.	Met
P2 Premises, including any external areas, are in a good state of repair, cleanliness and decoration, and provide a comfortable environment for students and staff.	Strength
P3 Classrooms and other learning areas provide a suitable study environment.	Strength
P4 Students have adequate room and suitable facilities for relaxation and the consumption of food.	Strength

P5 There is adequate signage to buildings, routes, rooms and exits, and there are facilities for the display or sharing of general information.	Met
P6 There is sufficient space for all staff, for work, meetings, relaxation and the storage of personal possessions.	Strength

Comments

P2 The premises are in an excellent state of repair, clean and recently decorated. They are spacious, quiet and well-equipped and provide an excellent environment for CAE's activities.

P3 Classrooms are large, flexibly furnished, quiet and well equipped.

P4 The dining area is large and comfortably seats CAE staff and students; there are several lounges and other meeting spaces for relaxation.

P6 There is a large room for teachers to prepare in with an adjoining kitchen and a large lounge.

Accommodation (W7–W18 as applicable)	Area of strength
<i>All accommodation</i>	
W7 Students have a comfortable living environment throughout their stay.	Strength
W8 Arrangements for cleaning and laundry are satisfactory.	Met
W9 A responsible representative inspects all accommodation (for safety and suitability) before students are placed, and at least every two years after that.	Met
W10 Students receive written confirmation of accommodation booked, giving clear and accurate information.	Met
W11 There are effective procedures for identifying and resolving any problems students have with their accommodation.	Met
W12 Accommodation providers receive written confirmation of the rules, terms and conditions applied by the provider with respect to the provision of accommodation services.	Met
W13 Students receive meals as agreed; these offer a well-balanced diet, taking into account any reasonable dietary requirements students may have.	Strength

Comments

Accommodation for students and staff is provided in three boarding houses all within a short walk of the sixth form site. The rooms range from single en-suite to multi-bed rooms with up to five beds and shared bathroom facilities. There are kitchens and large common rooms in each block.

W7 The boarding houses are recently renovated and furnished. They are clean and comfortable. Provision is made for students arriving early.

W13 Meals were seen to be of a high standard with a wide range of dishes catering for varying student preferences. Portions were ample and the food was appetizing and attractively presented.

Action taken on points to be addressed

Points from the previous full inspection and/or subsequent spot checks or interim visits with comments (in bold) to indicate how far these have been addressed.

M5 Feedback is obtained from students via initial and end-of-course feedback forms, but actions are not recorded. **Partially addressed. Student feedback is regularly obtained, results are collated and some actions recorded. However, not all actions taken in response to feedback have been recorded.**
Addressed. Initial feedback had been collected, synthesized and acted upon by day four of the course.

M6 Staff feedback is mostly informal, but actions are not recorded, and staff reported that their recommendations were often overlooked. **Partially addressed. There are no systems in place to record staff feedback or evidence of actions taken in response to informal feedback.**
Not addressed. Plans were in place for recording staff feedback but the spot check was on day four of a four week course.

M12 There are no records of appraisals or performance review meetings. **Partially addressed. Although staff exit interviews take place there are no written records of such meetings.**
Permanent staff are not appraised other than on completion of their probationary period.

Not addressed. Plans were in place for performance review but the spot check was on day four of a four week course.

New points to be addressed arising from 2024 spot check

T15 (2024: part of T11) Learner strategies are not systematically covered in course design documents.

Not addressed. Learner strategies are not included in course design documents.

Not addressed.

W26 (2024: W22) Written risk assessments are not used prior to excursions or activities, and therefore these documents are not updated at any point.

Partially addressed. Risk assessments are made known to all supervisory staff prior to an activity or excursion but do not include sufficient detail on potential risks that may be encountered.

Addressed. Risk assessments were now sufficiently detailed and were viewed as 'live' documents under constant review.

Conclusions

The new premises are of an excellent standard and wholly suitable for CAE's purposes. Most points to be addressed that could have been addressed had been.

Items requiring early action

None
