

Organisation name	New College Group, Manchester (young learner centre York)
Inspection date	1 August 2017

BACKGROUND

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	October 2015 (spot check for extension of Manchester school accreditation)
Last full inspection	October 2016
Subsequent spot check (if applicable)	N/a
Subsequent supplementary check (if applicable)	N/a
Subsequent interim visit (if applicable)	N/a
Other related non-accredited activities (in brief) at this centre	N/a
Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates	NCG Manchester Ltd
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	N/a

Current accreditation status and reason for spot check

Current accredited status	Accredited
Reason for spot check	Signalled: inspect new or additional premises

Premises profile

Address of main site	9 Portland Street, Manchester M1 3BE
Details of any additional sites in use at the time of the inspection	New College Group (NCG) Liverpool, Graeme House, Derby Square, Liverpool L2 7ZH
Details of any additional sites not in use at the time of the inspection	N/a
Sites inspected	<p>Queen Ethelburga's College, Thorpe Underwood Hall, Thorpe Green Lane, York, YO26 9SS.</p> <p>QEC is a co-educational day and boarding school and host school for NCG summer courses for young learners. The site is extensive with multiple buildings, sports facilities and grounds. The site is shared with several other users including a nursery, another language school and a summer camp provider.</p> <p>NCG uses a number of buildings across the site. There is a dedicated course office and display boards in the accommodation building. The NCG dedicated space occupies the ground floor of a block with separate accommodation wings for male and female staff and students. A course office and a student common room with soft seating, together with a display area with noticeboards, are also on the ground floor. Access to eight classrooms and a teachers' resource room are in a separate building a short walk away. In addition, the school has a designated social activities centre which is booked out for several afternoons per week. NCG have shared access to the playing fields, swimming pool and a table-tennis room. There is a booking system for shared areas. All meals are taken in the main school</p>

	canteen with specific times for different summer school user groups.
--	--

Student and staff profile	At inspection	In peak week July
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	43	142
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	11	11
Typical age range	11–17	11–17
Typical length of stay	2 weeks	2 weeks
Predominant nationalities	Russian, Saudi Arabian, Chinese, Japanese	Italian, Spanish
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	3	8
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	5	15

INTRODUCTION

Background

This was a spot check to inspect the new young learner premises of NCG Manchester. Previously facilities at Salford University campus were used for young learner courses. The Queen Ethelburga's College (QEC) site opened to students on 2 July 2017.

Preparation

The spot check was carried out by one inspector. The inspector contacted the main Manchester school to check if there were any dates which would not be suitable. It was agreed that, to ensure that the centre would be running with students and that key staff would be present, the inspection should take place in August and not on a Wednesday. The Accreditation Unit sent relevant documents and the 2016–2017 printed brochure, with details of the Manchester school and Salford university campus. The inspector looked at the NCG Manchester website. As enrolments had closed by August, the QEC brochure details on the website were inaccessible but a hard copy of the QEC brochure was provided on site at the inspection. No information was given about the exact date of the spot check.

Programme and persons present

The inspector arrived at 13.30 and left at 17.45. She had meetings with the centre manager, the activity co-ordinator and the senior teacher. She also briefly met the NCG Manchester principal who happened to be visiting the same day, and the host school liaison person. Separate meetings were held with a group of students, a group of teachers and some of the group leaders. There were no formal observations of teachers but the inspector watched the activities in action to see how the premises and facilities were used. All relevant documents for the inspector were provided.

FINDINGS

The new summer centre facilities at QEC provide NCG with excellent purpose-built premises and facilities on an extensive campus which is suitable for young learners.

NCG had liaised with the host school to ensure that appropriate fire safety checks and procedures, health and safety measures had been taken. NCG had completed their own premises risk assessment to identify any potential risks for their body of international students. Procedures are in place for continuing compliance in relation to legal, and health and safety matters. (W1)

NCG has a designated course office on the ground floor of the accommodation block. Male students and staff are accommodated along one wing and female staff and students along another. A different summer school provider offering summer camp activities occupies the same block but they only use the first floor and have a separate entrance. The NCG classrooms are based in a large separate building that also houses the swimming pool and sports hall. Some of these facilities are shared with other summer school users. NCG also has use of an activity centre and the theatre. There is a booking system and the extensive space and facilities available enables several user groups to use the site for their own activities independently.

Teachers and students in their respective focus group meetings commented positively on the premises and the facilities available to them. The group leaders were also very positive about the facilities made available to themselves and their students.

The brochure gives an accurate and realistic description of the extensive facilities and the services available. The only exception is a photograph of the main school building on the front of the brochure which is a little misleading. This building is only used on very rare occasions.

Premises and facilities

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
R1 Adequate space	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
R2 Condition of premises	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
R3 Classrooms and learning areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
R4 Student relaxation areas and food	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
R5 Signage and display	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
R6 Staffroom(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments

These comments relate to the York centre only but the standard of premises and facilities at the main school is also very high.

R1 The premises are of an exceptionally high standard. The sports facilities, teaching rooms, breakout areas and communal spaces, including the activity centre, are all spacious and have been designed not only for comfort but also to maximise learning and the activity experience. The grounds are extensive and very well maintained.

R2 The premises, both internally and externally, are in a very good state of repair, cleanliness and decoration, which adds to the value of the residential learning experience.

R3 The provider has access to eight classrooms over two floors. Only three classrooms were in use at the time of the inspection. The rooms are well presented and furnished, although the student tables are fixed which limits the flexibility of the layout.

R4 There is a large dining hall offering a good standard of hot and cold food and drinks. Mealtimes are scheduled to allow each of the different summer school organisations to have their own mealtime period. Vending machines with soft drinks and snacks are also available in one of the activity centres. Water dispensers are available across the site.

R5 QEC is a very large site but NCG use a simple branded arrow signage system to help students navigate their way around the buildings they use. There are noticeboards in the accommodation block with helpful, clear information displayed.

R6 Staff have access to comfortable facilities which include a kitchenette area and soft seating. Individual safes are available in the accommodation.

Resources and environment summary

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The premises offer a very comfortable environment which supports and enhances the studies of students and offers a very professional environment for staff. The external sports facilities are extensive and the grounds are very well maintained. *Premises and facilities* is an area of strength.

Teaching and learning

This section was not specifically inspected. However, it was noted that at the time of the inspection, at the end of the summer period 11–17 year-olds were taught in the same class contrary to the split of ages advertised in the publicity where it states that students will be taught in groups of 11–14 and 15–17 year-olds. In the first four weeks of the summer students were taught in age groups as outlined in the publicity.

Welfare and student services

The welfare, accommodation and leisure opportunities section was not specifically inspected. However, it was noted that the facilities available to staff and students are very good. Group leaders and students commented very positively on the pastoral care and support they received, the accommodation and the sports and activities available.

Care of under 18s

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
C1 Safeguarding policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C2 Guidance and training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

C3 Publicity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C4 Recruitment procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/a	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C5 Safety and supervision during scheduled lessons and activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C6 Safety and supervision outside scheduled lessons and activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C7 Accommodation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C8 Contact arrangements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/a	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments

At QEC all the students attending the courses are under 18, which differs from the main school. Manchester NCG accepts some 16 and 17 year-olds on adult courses but they account for a very small percentage of total student numbers (see the 2016 full inspection report). The comments below relate specifically to the York centre.

C1 The school has a clear and comprehensive safeguarding policy. The documentation explaining the policy and the needs for implementation is clear and accessible to all. There are no gaps in the information and advice given.

C3 The level of care is clearly stated in the separate QEC publicity. The measures in place, for example, colour-coded lanyard system, noticeboard displays of information, staff checks and training were all seen to be working effectively.

C5 The leisure programme is well thought through and appropriate to the age of the students. Staff are appropriately qualified and student supervision ratios are good. Group leaders also assist in supervision but are in addition to the ratios set by the school.

C8 Contact details are checked and recorded, with information easily available to all those that may need it.

Care of under 18s summary

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. Provision for the care of the small number of 16 and 17 year olds on adult courses at the main school is satisfactory (see full report) and provision on the young learner courses in York is very good. *Care of under 18s* is an area of strength.

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. Only points reviewed during this spot check are included here. Any points outstanding will be checked at the next full inspection.

C3 There is very little care and safety information in publicity.

Addressed. Detailed information is now available on the website for 16 and 17 year-olds enrolled on adult courses in Manchester, and there is a separate brochure for the QEC summer centre.

Points to be addressed arising from this visit

None.

CONCLUSIONS

The new summer school premises for young learners are excellent and provide an appropriate environment for students and staff. The premises and facilities and the care of under 18s fully meet the Scheme requirements.

RECOMMENDATION

The next inspection falls due in 2020; there are no grounds for bringing this forward.

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Changes to summary statement

An area of strength can be added for Care of under 18s.

Summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited New College Group Manchester in June 2016. The Accreditation Scheme assesses the standards of management, resources and premises, teaching, welfare, and care of under 18s and accredits organisations which meet the overall standard in each area inspected (see www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation for details).

This private language school offers courses in general and professional English for adults (16+) and vacation courses for under 18s.

Strengths were noted in the areas of staff management, student administration, quality assurance, premises and facilities, teaching, care of students, accommodation, and leisure opportunities.

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

Amended summary statement (August 2017)

The British Council inspected and accredited New College Group Manchester in June 2016 and August 2017. The Accreditation Scheme assesses the standards of management, resources and premises, teaching, welfare, and care of under 18s and accredits organisations which meet the overall standard in each area inspected (see www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation for details).

This private language school offers courses in general and professional English for adults (16+) and vacation courses for under 18s (in York).

Strengths were noted in the areas of staff management, student administration, quality assurance, premises and facilities, teaching, care of students, accommodation, leisure opportunities, and care of under 18s.

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