



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

GREENE'S TUTORIAL COLLEGE

Full Name of College	Greene's Tutorial College
Address	45 Pembroke Street, Oxford, OX1 1BP
Telephone Number	01865 248308
Email Address	senior.tutor@greenes.org.uk
Principal	Mr Matthew Uffindell
Proprietors	Mr Matthew Uffindell & Mr Christopher Upton
Age Range	7 – 55 yrs
Total Number of students	143
Numbers by Age and type of study	
	16-18: 72
	19+: 29
	Pre 16: 42
	FE only: 92
	EFL and FE: 9
Inspection dates	29th November – 1st December 2011

PREFACE

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

The ISI is an approved educational oversight body authorised by the UK Border Agency to inspect privately funded further education colleges in England and Wales offering courses on the Qualifications and Credit Framework, and English language colleges.

ISI inspections are required to:

- Report on the extent to which colleges comply with the published Standards for private colleges;
- Assess and report on the quality of educational outcomes and provision;
- Where applicable, make recommendations to colleges 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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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COLLEGE

- 1.1 Greene's Tutorial College is a private company, limited by guarantee which occupies two adjacent buildings in the centre of Oxford. The college was founded in 1967 with the aim of providing individually designed programmes of study which are flexible and tailored to the needs and aspirations of each student. This is delivered through a mixture of one to one and/or small group tuition. The college is governed by the directors of the company which owns it. It is managed and administered by 16 full time staff, with 157 self-employed subject tutors available for tuition. Only a small proportion of tutoring takes place within the college. The majority takes place in tutors' homes or other premises.
- 1.2 The college caters for students of all ages and is able to make provision for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). When individuals apply to join a course, the college checks that they are suitable for the course they have chosen through interviews, previous examination results and school reports. International students also complete a language assessment and tests in one or more of their A-level choices.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection there were 143 students. Ages ranged from 7 to 55; although the majority of students are between 16 and 20 years old and are preparing for A-level examinations and university entrance. The majority of students are male. Nine students are from overseas; from China, Albania, Russia and Ukraine. The college offers a wide range of International Baccalaureate, A-level, GCSE and IGCSE courses and a number of KS2, KS3, common entrance and undergraduate studies programmes. Language support is provided for international students.
- 1.4 Students may enrol on one of two academic programmes; a self-management programme which is chosen by most of the part time students taking supplementary tuition or an academic support programme (ASP) where students are allocated a personal tutor. The personal tutor provides help in planning a course of study, the monitoring and discussion of progress and support in maintaining enthusiasm and focus. This is selected by nearly all the full time students.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE COLLEGE

2.(a) Executive Summary

	Section of the Standards	Grade awarded 1-4
3.	The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievement	2 Meets Expectations
4.	Students' welfare, including health and safety	2 Meets Expectations
5.	The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management	2 Meets Expectations

- 2.1 Greene's Tutorial College meets expectations. It successfully provides an individual programme of study to meet the needs and aspirations of each student and delivers this mainly through one-to-one tuition. Students believe courses are well matched to their needs and they are confident of success. Good quality teaching provides strong support for the effective progress students make. The best teaching is fast paced and challenging, students develop as independent learners and tutors use a range of methodologies and resources appropriate to the learning styles of each individual. Every student receives clear feedback about their progress both informally during tutorials and in writing. This allows them to reflect upon their progress and motivates them towards further improvement. The college has a very large number of tutors who plan and deliver courses. The planning is not always consistent. The majority of students achieve their target grades and move on to university.
- 2.2 The college provides a safe and secure learning environment. Where other premises are used for tuition they are checked to ensure they meet the required standard. Health and safety policies are in place although they are not always effectively implemented. The college fully complies with health and safety regulations and with the requirements for safeguarding students under the age of 18. Full time students are effectively supported by personal tutors and part time students have a mentor with whom they can discuss problems or difficulties. Students reported that they were not aware of any harassment or bullying and believed the college environment to be friendly and well managed. Inspection findings support this. Due to the isolating nature of the one-to-one programme the students do not know each other well. The college currently does not set aside any space where students can relax and socialise between sessions.
- 2.3 Leadership and management meet requirements. The senior management team have a clear vision for the college and work closely with the administrative staff and tutors to ensure clear direction and high expectations are communicated. Strategic planning and day to day decision making is effective and remains the responsibility of the owners. They plan to distribute these responsibilities more widely as the college grows and diversifies and staff are trained and then empowered to act. Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the college overall are largely informal and underdeveloped. For example, no formal system exists for observing the work of tutors. The monitoring and evaluation of student progress is however very well developed and effective. Outcomes for students are positive.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with standards for Private Colleges

2.4 At the time of the inspection, the college met all the key requirements of the standards for private further education colleges and quality is good. **The college meets expectations for the quality of education.**

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.5 The college is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Ensure in-service staff development needs are effectively assessed and met.
2. Ensure key policies and procedures are fully understood and implemented by staff and students.
3. Provide a balanced careers education programme that not only provides students with advice about further education but prepares them for their working lives.
4. Ensure that detailed risk assessments of all areas of the college premises are undertaken and their recommendations acted upon.
5. Improve quality assurance systems to ensure a consistent approach to planning and delivery of courses.
6. Provide an appropriate space to allow students to relax and interact between tutorial and private study sessions.

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

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

- 3.1 The registration of students, assessment of their needs and abilities and the admissions process at Greene's College is very well managed. This aspect exceeds expectations.
- 3.2 Students are very carefully and accurately assessed by senior academic staff prior to their acceptance. All full time students are interviewed, their academic history is checked and references are taken up from previous schools. Both full and part-time students receive very good guidance about the suitability of a programme of study and this is precisely tailored to meet their needs and aspirations. At this stage each student receives a costed course outline, a personal study plan, an examination strategy and advice about further education opportunities.
- 3.3 On admission students undertake sample tutorials to ensure they have made the correct choices. The college is responsive to the few instances when students feel that they need to change to another course or level. International students undertake a language assessment on entry to ensure that they are provided with the appropriate level of language support. They are also assessed in one or more of their subject choices. As a result, support is very effective and few students leave their courses early.
- 3.4 Data generated by these processes is stored online and is available to all tutors. Students and their parents are also able to access data relating to assessment.

3.(b) Suitability of course provision and curriculum

- 3.5 Courses are very accurately matched to the needs and aspirations of each student. This is because the college has access to a pool of around 200 part-time and self-employed tutors who between them can offer around 180 courses. Thus the college is able to meet its primary aim of putting the academic requirements of each student first. This includes a range of SEND students. The highly personalised curriculum together with the flexibility provided by one-to-one tuition means that the college exceeds expectations in the provision of a suitable curriculum for each student.
- 3.6 Students are fully involved in the planning of their courses and the college prides itself on being ultimately flexible and is prepared to offer any course that may be required provided a suitably qualified and approved tutor can be found. Senior academics work with each student to ensure the mix of subjects is appropriate to their needs. Most tutors work from home or from other approved premises and the college takes great care in matching student to tutors, ensuring that travel arrangements are manageable and that tutorial time is equably spread across the week. There is the opportunity for students to enrich their academic curriculum, for example through study skills workshops, access to work experience, Oxbridge interview practice and a range of general interest courses.
- 3.7 Full time students, including those on study visas receive at least 15 hours of tuition and supervised study in each week and most significantly exceed this figure. Hours of tuition are carefully tracked and recorded for each student. The majority of students complete the courses they are registered for.

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

- 3.8 The quality of teaching and its impact on learning meet requirements. The majority of lessons observed were good and occasionally outstanding. None were unsatisfactory.
- 3.9 Tutors are very well qualified, have an excellent knowledge of their subject, and teach only within their specialist area. In almost all lessons tutors have a good awareness of students' prior attainment and build upon this. However, the setting of learning objectives and the formal planning of tutorial sessions is not consistent. Teaching methods contribute positively to the development of students' reasoning skills and confidence. They demonstrate good levels of knowledge, understanding and skill and are able to apply their learning. As a result, progress is good. In the best tutorials there is an effective balance of questioning and response from both tutors and students. Learning is led by the student, resources such as video clips and models are used well and high levels of challenge and strong pace are in evidence. Where learning was only satisfactory teaching methods lacked variety and tutors did not always exhibit an awareness of when additional help was required. In most cases students prepare well for tutorials and are expected by the college to undertake three hours of preparation and self-study for each one hour tutorial. Conversations with students indicate they are clear about how important the one-to-one tutorial sessions are in helping them achieve their learning goals and they have a high level of trust and confidence in the support provided by tutors.
- 3.10 Students receive very good informal feedback about their progress within the one-to-one sessions and detailed written feedback about their attendance, punctuality, attitude to work, learning and next steps within 24 hours of the end of each session. These feedback reports are copied to personal tutors and are available online to all academic staff, students and parents. This is a particularly good feature of provision that assists students to reflect on their work and tutors to carefully track progress. Marking of written assignments is accurate and provides detailed guidance to students about how they might improve. Regular monthly tests have recently been introduced which provide good information about progress over time.
- 3.11 Provision for students with English as an additional language (EAL) is good. EAL students are not disadvantaged by language or cultural assumptions about their learning and language courses are provided in such a way that they can be easily accessed by students on the full-time programme. Workshops are held daily before the start of other sessions and reading and writing skills are addressed through individual tutorials. There are opportunities for students to personalise new language by talking about their own cultures and experiences. Appropriate schemes of work exist and students have individual learning plans based on previous examination scores and diagnostic tests. They are given target IELTS scores for progression to university.

3.(d) Progress and attainment

- 3.12 The progress and attainment of students meet expectations. Observation of lessons, conversations with students and scrutiny of their work all show that the majority make good progress over time. Most reach their target grades enabling them to proceed to their chosen universities. The college requirement that students should undertake at least three hours of private study and homework for each hour of tutorial time is carefully tracked by the online system and students who fail to meet this target are given additional support and advice by tutors. This provides an effective stimulus for progress.

- 3.13 Progress for most students is good. In a small minority of cases less positive attitudes to learning, disorganised study habits or lack of confidence affects progress. Tutors work hard to overcome these difficulties but as a result progress can be affected.
- 3.14 Students' work indicates that with careful marking and good formative comments students are able to make good progress. They are able to speak confidently and analytically about their work and are clear about what they need to do to improve.
- 3.15 Student progress is very carefully tracked and evidence is reviewed from a number of sources. These include the tutorial reports prepared by tutors and submitted online after each tutorial, regular monthly test results, feedback from personal tutors who coordinate progress across each student's course choice and regular weekly academic progress meetings.

4. STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY

4.(a) Health, safety and security of the premises (in line with expectations of educational institutions)

- 4.1 Health, safety and security arrangements are satisfactory. Despite being housed in old, listed buildings with an eccentric arrangement of rooms, passageways and staircases the college has a satisfactory level of fire safety which conforms to legal requirements. Tutorial rooms are fit for purpose ranging in size from adequate to very large. They are light, well ventilated and sufficiently heated. The two laboratories are appropriately equipped and wash room facilities are adequate in both buildings. Provision can be made for SEND students. Insufficient formal risk assessment of the buildings is carried out.
- 4.2 Security is a key priority and both buildings have entry controlled by a receptionist. Occupants of the building and visitors are required to sign in and out.
- 4.3 Overall health and safety procedures are secure. The accident book and fire log are up to date and fire evacuation notices are prominent with exits clearly labelled. The college has adequate numbers of first aiders and first aid kits are present and well stocked. Fire apparatus is appropriately sited and regularly maintained. Current fire inspection and electrical test certificates are in place.
- 4.4 Premises outside the college used for tuition are carefully checked to ensure they are suitable. Checks include details of other occupants, health and safety issues and whether appropriate insurance cover is in place. A number of tutorials in premises outside the college were observed and found suitable for the conduct of tutorial sessions.
- 4.5 The college has in place key policies relating to health, safety and welfare. However, response to questionnaires and conversations with tutors and students indicate that these are not effectively communicated or fully understood. A scrutiny of staff and student handbooks indicate that key policy documents are not included.
- 4.6 When questioned, all students knew they could go to their personal tutor if they had any academic or personal problems. International students say they are well looked after by their host families and included in family activities. Students feel that the college offers a good programme of social activities based on their interests gathered through a questionnaire at admission.

4.(b) Student registration and attendance records

- 4.7 The maintenance of student registration and attendance records is excellent. The college has a highly effective management of information system which holds all student registration and progress data and tracks both attendance and punctuality carefully. Senior staff effectively monitor attendance and immediate investigation and action is taken after any unplanned absence. Staff are fully aware of the UKBA reporting requirements.
- 4.8 The fees structure is carefully laid out on the website. Before admission to the college each student and their parents are given a fully costed proposal so fees and charges are transparent and there are no hidden costs. A clear and fair remissions policy is in place. Financial records for each student are carefully maintained by a member of the administrative team.

4.(c) Pastoral support for students

- 4.9 Pastoral support for students meets requirements. A combination of good guidance from academic staff and careful induction ensures that students settle quickly into their chosen courses and rarely ask for changes. Students' learning needs and career aspirations are carefully considered and because of the extensive curriculum and the use of one-to-one tutoring students speak confidently about their future and are well motivated to succeed.
- 4.10 All students on the ASP are provided with a personal tutor who will discuss with them not only their academic progress but look at issues such as extensions to the curriculum, work experience, study habits, time management, work/life balance and social or recreational activities. Personal tutors also take some responsibility for the emotional wellbeing of their charges. Although personal tutorials follow a set pattern the student is fully involved in the planning, review and evaluation processes and in decision making about next steps. Most part time students are either adults or young people who live at home and are in full time education at local schools. Nevertheless they are allocated a mentor who they may call or e-mail for advice and support.
- 4.11 The college has appropriate policies in place relating to bullying, harassment and grievances. Relationships between tutors and students are strong and positive. However, due to the nature of one-to-one tuition students do not know each other well. They report that there are limited opportunities during the college day to relax and socialise together and would welcome a space where they can do this. Students were not aware of any harassment or bullying and believed the college environment to be harmonious.
- 4.12 Guidance and support for university entrance is well developed but other careers advice is limited and only provided when the opportunity arises in personal tutorials. Formal careers guidance is not provided.

4.(d) Child protection

- 4.13 Child protection arrangements meet requirements. Safeguarding arrangements are very well managed. All staff who have contact with students under the age of 18 have enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks. The college holds a single central record for all staff detailing the CRB check, together with identity and where appropriate residency checks. A curriculum vitae and copies of references and qualifications are also held.
- 4.14 Policies and guidance relating to child protection are in place but these are not fully understood by all staff. Few staff have received child protection training. Senior managers are clear about the action they should take if a learner reports abuse.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) Ownership and oversight

- 5.1 Ownership and oversight are satisfactory. The college is well led and managed by the proprietors who together ensure that appropriately qualified staff are appointed, development priorities are recognised and day to day decisions are made which ensure the college runs smoothly and the academic needs of students are met. Financial planning is efficient and deployment of resources supports learning well.
- 5.2 The proprietors are also members of the senior management. As a result of their additional roles they have a clear insight into the day-to-day working of the college and are enabled to identify and address areas for improvement. Oversight of the college's monitoring and quality assurance systems is not effective enough. The work of tutors is not formally monitored to assure consistent quality of provision across the very wide range of courses offered.
- 5.3 The proprietors have acted on some of the recommendations from the last inspection report. However the induction process for tutors and students and the information contained in the student and staff handbooks is still insufficient to ensure that key policies and frameworks are properly communicated and understood.
- 5.4 The proprietors place safeguarding, health, safety and security as high priorities and monitor their implementation. All legal permissions and licences are in place and the college is fully compliant with appropriate legal requirements such as electrical tests and fire inspections.

5.(b) Management structures and responsibilities

- 5.5 Management structures and responsibilities meet requirements. Managers who support the day to day running of the college are both efficient and effective and ensure that policies, particularly those related to safeguarding and health and safety are effectively implemented. The proprietors, through their roles within the senior management team, provide clear strategic direction and close oversight which results in the college effectively discharging its aim to meet the specific learning needs of each student. The co-owners recognise that as the college continues to grow and diversify a more distributive leadership model will be required. To this end new staff have been appointed to the core team but systems are not yet well enough developed to support and include others in the leadership function.
- 5.6 Relationships between members of the senior management team and the owners are strong and positive. The staff are loyal, hardworking and committed. They support and maintain the aims and ethos of the college well and whilst the main focus is on the academic leadership and management they also support the social and emotional wellbeing of students.
- 5.7 Planning for strategic development is effective with clear priorities for improvement being identified. Timescales and costs are realistic. Self-evaluation is secure. However, there is no formal process in place to ensure that all strengths and areas for development are identified.

- 5.8 The college is successful in attracting and retaining highly qualified and experienced tutors. A staff development policy is in place but is not linked to key college priorities. Tutors are responsible for identifying and addressing their own training needs. Not all tutors are confident in applying the child protection policy.

5.(c) Quality assurance including student feedback

- 5.9 Quality assurance, including student feedback, meets requirements. Academic progress is monitored carefully and systems are in place to provide effective remedial support for underperforming students. Self-evaluation is mostly accurate and forms the basis for effective action planning which sets challenging targets for improvement. However the process is unstructured and is not secure. Personal tutors regularly review course suitability with each student.
- 5.10 No formal processes for gathering feedback from students or parents are in place. A well structured complaints procedure is in place which allows for external arbitration. Complaints are few and the satisfaction of students, their parents and tutors is high. When a complaint is received it is generally addressed informally by personal tutors.
- 5.11 In response to the pre-inspection questionnaires all students felt they were on the right courses and the majority felt they were making good progress. Most acknowledged the good support they received from their tutors. The majority felt the college supported their social and emotional well-being but they lacked confidence in their understanding of key policies.

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

- 5.12 Staff recruitment arrangements, including matters of checking quality and suitability, exceed expectations. The college attracts and retains very highly qualified and experienced tutors who are subject to a rigorous appointment process. Every tutor is separately interviewed by the proprietors and all checks, including CRB, identity, qualification and, if appropriate, premises are carried out. References are taken up and copies placed on file. All staff have detailed contracts of employment and specific terms of engagement.
- 5.13 Personnel records are carefully maintained, regularly updated and held securely. These records include copies of the CRB certificate, qualifications, passport, references and curriculum vitae.

5.(e) Provision of information

- 5.14 Provision of information meets expectations. The college website contains detailed and comprehensive information for prospective parents and students. It has links to key policies including those relating to health and safety, complaints and SEND. There is appropriate information about the range of courses on offer but this cannot be definitive as the college prides itself on creating an individual curriculum for each student. The website does not contain details of previous examination outcomes.
- 5.15 The information required by the inspection team both before and during the inspection was promptly provided, of good quality and well organised.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons both within the college and on external premises, conducted formal interviews with students and examined samples of students' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff, the co-owners and tutors. The responses of staff and students to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the college.

Inspectors

Mr Chris Penter	Lead Inspector
Ms Dawn Hart	Team inspector