

FULL INSPECTION REPORT FOR

WESTFIELD HOUSE

UKVI LICENCE No: 86GBDO97

Education oversight inspection of private further education colleges on behalf of the Home Office's division of United Kingdom Visas and Immigration (UKVI)

The overall inspection findings for this college

UKVI Standards for

courses and qualifications are	MET
teaching, learning and assessment are	MET
the cultural and moral development of students are	MET
welfare, health and safety are	MET
the effectiveness and suitability of staff are	MET
financial sustainability, leadership and governance are	MET
premises and accommodation are	MET
information and complaints are	MET

Compliance with UKVI Standards

The college meets all the UKVI Standards

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose and scope of the inspection

Mainland Education is an approved educational oversight body authorised by the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) section of the Home Office to inspect privately funded further education colleges in England, with a Steiner, Montessori or Eurythmy basis or background, or with a clear religious purpose. Inspection is designed to assess the college's compliance with the Standards for colleges agreed with the Home Office. These Standards cover the quality of education and welfare provided to all students, including those from overseas who are sponsored by the college for Tier 4 visas, and, where applicable, those who are under eighteen or are vulnerable adults. On-site student accommodation, where provided, is assessed for compliance with the Standards but is not subject to a full boarding inspection. Inspection provides objective and reliable reports on the extent to which colleges meet the Standards. By placing reports in the public domain, the information they contain is available to students, the UKVI, 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. It helps colleges, their staff and trustees, governors, and/or proprietors to recognise and build on their strengths and to identify and remedy their weaknesses in relation to compliance. The inspection also takes account of the college's financial performance over the last two years for new providers and since the last inspection for established providers. An assessment is also made of the college's financial sustainability going forward, on the basis of information provided by the college. Prospective students, their parents and agents should make their own enquiries into the financial viability of institutions before accepting a place.

Colleges are subject to a full inspection once every four years which is conducted by two inspectors over two days. In the intervening years, colleges receive an interim inspection and are kept under review. All reports state whether or not the college continues to meet the agreed Standards.

The last full inspection of Westfield House was conducted in 2016 and the last Interim inspection in 2019, both by the School Inspection Service, which Mainland Education Ltd has now replaced. This is the first full inspection of Westfield House by Mainland Education Ltd.

Education Oversight inspection of Westfield House Cambridge 3-4 October 2023

Characteristics of the college

Westfield House, the theological college of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of England (ELCE), is a small residential college located close to the centre of Cambridge. It prepares postgraduate students for ministry in the Lutheran Church either as pastors or for other church work, and offers to undergraduates a range of modular courses in the liberal arts and sciences. Thirty-seven students are expected to be enrolled at the college and online for the academic year 2023/24. All in-person students are foreign nationals over the age of eighteen years. The vast majority of students this year are attending Westfield House for one term only as part of the 'Study Abroad' programme from their home universities or seminaries in the United States, Germany or Canada, with which Westfield House has built up close and strong partnership links over a long period of time. These students have a Learning Agreement which specifies a course of full-time study for the period that they are at Westfield House, consisting of modular courses of their choice through which they earn credits with their home institutions. While in Cambridge, the students may be granted leave to attend lectures at the universities of Cambridge and also participate in a wide range of trips and study tours organised by Westfield House which are aimed at widening and developing their cultural awareness and understanding. Westfield House maintains a licence to sponsor overseas students with a Tier 4 Visa, but needs to use this facility only for the small number of postgraduate students who are in the United Kingdom for a year or more while following the Master of Divinity course. The college also makes a Certificate course available online, and it is currently being followed on a part-time basis by a small number of Lutheran church workers based overseas in Ghana, India and Sri Lanka.

Apart from the online students, all students live in the college's residential accommodation on site. The college shares this site with a Lutheran church, and this building also serves as the chapel for Westfield House.

SECTION A: Main Findings and Actions Required

Main findings

Westfield House meets all of the Standards required by UKVI. All students follow a course of full-time study, chosen from a wide range of interesting modules, and gain the credits necessary for their home university. Teaching is good and tutorial sessions are well-prepared and demanding. During their time in the United Kingdom (UK), the students are very well supported by their tutors at Westfield House both to reach their academic goals, and to increase their cultural, moral and spiritual awareness. The college has a warm and purposeful atmosphere of mutual support and inclusivity, an expression of its Christian and Lutheran ethos, in which students respect one another and make good friends. They value highly the opportunity to meet and live with young people from other countries and cultures, and the opportunities for travel organised by the college. Westfield House is well-run and managed effectively for the benefit of its students. The college's policies and procedures ensure that due attention is given to the students' welfare, health and safety, and to their comfort and wellbeing while they are studying in the UK. The premises and accommodation meet the required standards and are fit for purpose.

Overall Main Finding	Compliance	Outcome for the College
The college meets UKVI requirements.	It meets all the Standards.	It will receive interim checks and a further full inspection in four years

Actions Required

- **No action is required**

SECTION B: Detailed evaluation of the standards

Standards for courses and qualifications

The Standards for courses and qualifications are met. The courses offered are at a suitable level and students value the wide range of subjects and disciplines on offer. The course programme is lively and interesting. It draws on the Lutheran heritage in its '...pursuit of truth, knowledge and virtue' and is fully compatible with the declared ethos of the college. The programme focuses on different areas of theology including scripture, the Lutheran Confessions, Christian doctrine, philosophy of religion and historical theology. It also includes liberal arts and sciences as part of an interdisciplinary focus, with modules on Christianity and the arts, science and religion, astronomy, world music, world religions, explorations in literature, British science fiction and British life and culture. The students say that these courses, taught by subject expert tutors, provide a welcome broadening of their undergraduate education. The students who are given leave to attend University of Cambridge lectures have access to the University of Cambridge VLE (Virtual Learning Environment) and all in-person students have access to the Cambridge Theological Federation, so that they can, and do, attend lectures at the university and the federation.

The application forms which the students complete and the pre-course instructions they receive make clear what the IELTS (International English Language Testing System) requirements are for students whose first language is not English. Applicants must provide evidence of prior knowledge and academic achievement from their home institution. The college only admits students who meet these requirements. The students all follow a course programme that involves full time study and meets the study time requirement of the Standards. Westfield House is a recognized 'Study Abroad' centre for the Concordia Lutheran universities and seminaries in the USA and Canada, as well as a Lutheran university in Germany, which are the home institutions of the students. Westfield House has a formal agreement with the Concordia and German Universities to accept the college's study modules as credits towards their undergraduate and higher degree programmes. The students enter into a Westfield House Learning Agreement where they indicate their chosen modules. The agreement confirms that their home institution recognizes the modules as degree credits gained while working abroad. All the students complete the courses agreed in their Learning Agreements and pass rates are very high. The courses on offer are accredited by the British Accreditation Council (BAC), and meet the definition of an approved qualification for UKVI purposes.

Standards for teaching, learning and assessment

The Standards for teaching, learning and assessment are met. The college provides teaching of good quality. All courses are delivered by well-qualified, knowledgeable and experienced tutors, who have varied research interests, and this allows them to

innovate and develop a very broad range of courses in the liberal arts and sciences. Teaching is effective, well-planned, thoroughly researched and supported by good resources. While teaching is typically lecture-style, in the tradition of British universities, interaction takes place between tutor and students in the small groups which prevail at Westfield House, and students are also required to apply intellectual effort and undertake independent research for assignments; work with a partner or in a small group; and make presentations to the wider group as part of their study. Almost all students are native speakers of English and hail from the United States or Canada. Those who are not, come from Germany where they are also studying English and have an excellent command of the spoken and written language. The level of English language skill required is made clear to all students prior to enrolment. There are no language barriers to learning.

In recent years, the college has noticed that visiting students on the 'Study Abroad' courses approach their work in a different way from that expected in British universities, and thus the tutors have adapted their methodology accordingly by introducing shorter units of study and different styles of assessment, such as quizzes, and providing students with more frequent feedback. The college has also responded thoughtfully to students' needs by appointing a new Study Skills tutor from Trinity College to bridge the gap between students' experience of studying in their home country and the expectations of a British university. This tutor visits fortnightly and assists students specifically with their organisation, research and study skills. The tutorial system at Westfield House also contributes positively to practical support for students. The tutors regularly meet their students in a small group or on a one-to-one basis, providing excellent opportunities for them to discuss their work or seek help as required. The tutors demonstrate a commendable commitment to each student's learning and progress in accordance with their Learning Agreement. They receive formal and informal feedback throughout the course, based on the Oxbridge approach of formative assessment. Records show that, except in extreme circumstances, all students complete their assignments, pass their chosen course units, and gain the credits they need for their home institution.

Standards for cultural and moral development of students

The Standards for the students' cultural and moral development are met. Many students arrive as the solo representative of their home university, and are determined to make friends quickly, participate fully, and make the most of their study time abroad. All students live on site and interact positively with one another as a group, ensuring that everyone is included and feels valued. The college provides strong but unobtrusive pastoral care. An example of this is the 'traditional British tea' which is prepared and served by students on a rota basis each week throughout the term. This provides an informal opportunity for staff and students to meet in a relaxed setting, disseminate information, and for tutors to check on their tutees. Students confirmed that they were very happy at Westfield House. They stated that the structure of the college, its courses and tutors all help them to quickly feel at home and find their feet.

They all attend the 'British Life and Culture' seminar, which helps the students, many of whom are in the UK for the first time, to become familiar with the British way of life, institutions, such as the healthcare and transport services, and be aware of UK law. Past history shows that the students at Westfield House behave well and treat others with kindness and respect. They say that they particularly value the opportunity to be in the UK, study at Cambridge, and make friends with others from different parts of the world.

The college organises numerous trips to places of cultural interest, many of which are attached to their courses of study. For example, the astronomy students visit Jodrell Bank. While in the UK, there is strong encouragement for students to become self-reliant and independent, and organise trips and events for themselves. At the same time, the college nurtures its students and enables their self-esteem and confidence to flourish naturally through encouraging those with particular interests and talents, for example in music, to shine by performing for others or playing the organ during chapel services. Westfield House is a college with a genuinely warm and friendly atmosphere in which everyone treats each another with the utmost respect. Nonetheless, the college is aware that problems can and do occur, and all staff complete 'Prevent' and safeguarding training and are thus alert to issues which may arise and know how to handle them.

Standards for welfare, health and safety

The Standards for welfare, health and safety are met. The college has well-organized policies, procedures and practices for health and safety issues. A policy manual includes all the necessary up to date documentation. Regular risk assessments are carried out and recorded appropriately. There is a satisfactory level of fire safety which conforms to legal requirements. Fire safety signage is in place throughout the college and fire escape routes are kept clear of obstruction. Regular checks on fire safety equipment are made by college staff and an authorized contractor, and fire drills are carried out and recorded.

The staff have undertaken safeguarding training, and the college operates a strong system of pastoral care which is in line with its Lutheran and Christian ethos. The Principal regularly visits the universities, colleges and seminaries in the United States and Canada which partner with Westfield House, where she meets with tutors and former students who report the benefits of a term's study in the UK. The strong links Westfield House maintains with the students' home institutions helps to ensure that tuition and pastoral care provided by the college meets the students' needs while they are in the UK. The college takes seriously its duty to care for its students. It maintains accurate electronic admissions registers holding the necessary information about students, and attendance records are kept by the tutors. The college knows how to make a report to UKVI in the event of any student admission or attendance issues, but to date there have been no such issues at the college. As the students live on the college site, absences are rare and are easily followed up.

Standards for the effectiveness and suitability of staff

The Standards for the effectiveness and suitability of staff are met. Westfield House has a small, well-established and stable staff team who are all highly qualified and experienced tutors with a range of complementary skills. All tutors support Westfield's Christian and Lutheran ethos; and there are two qualified and practising pastors on the staff. There has been no need in recent years to make any new appointments to the full-time team, nevertheless, the college has a strong and robust recruitment policy which is in line with that of the ELCE. The files for the current Westfield staff contain evidence that on appointment the appropriate checks were made on identity, nationality, right to work in the UK, academic and professional qualifications and, where relevant, language competency. Checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service of all staff are conducted centrally by the ELCE, and the college is encouraged to note on its own files that these checks have been undertaken. The college made all records available to inspectors: there has been no disciplinary action necessary or taken against staff. The student body is all over eighteen years of age and does not contain any vulnerable adults. Westfield House does not use temporary or agency staff.

Standards for financial sustainability, management and governance

The Standards for financial sustainability, management and governance are met. There is a strong and effective working partnership between Westfield House and the Executive Council of ELCE; the College Principal providing the key personal link by serving on both bodies. Regular meetings ensure good communication and informed decision-making. The Principal maintains a high standard of professionalism and organisation in her management of the college. Policies, which are increasingly streamlined between ELCE and Westfield House wherever practical, are comprehensive, meet legal requirements, and are implemented effectively. This ensures that the learning environment and student accommodation are suitably pleasant, comfortable and well-maintained, and that resources are sufficient to support good learning. The college is dynamic and innovative in its development of new course modules, and in its willingness to adapt to changing circumstances. It is well-managed, works efficiently and provides a very worthwhile experience, especially for overseas students taking time out to study in the UK.

Financial management is effective and prudent. Westfield House does not prepare its own accounts as its finances are included in the ELCE accounts submitted to the Charity Commission each year. Nonetheless, the Principal keeps a close eye on the college's income and expenditure. The pandemic affected the college adversely, as a result of substantial losses to two of its key revenue streams: student fees and rental income. While this led to an overall deficit, the college made good use of the government furlough scheme, and has now bounced back, returning this year to a budgetary surplus, through making prudent financial decisions which maximize opportunities for increasing income, improving cash flow and using available funds

wisely. The Principal produces an annual report on Westfield House for the Executive Council. This year's report presents a clear analysis of the opportunities and challenges facing the college in the medium-term, and provides insights into how possible future business risks might be mitigated. It is highly unlikely that current students will not be able to complete their courses.

Standards for premises and accommodation

The Standards for premises and accommodation are met. The college buildings and accommodation are well maintained and fit for purpose and provide an oasis of calm in a busy urban area of Cambridge. The main teaching and administration block, an attractive and characterful Victorian house, has been adapted and extended to provide teaching spaces that are suitable for the size of classes and are well lit and ventilated. Private study and recreation areas include pleasant outdoor spaces with seating. Westfield House has a large specialist library, currently being catalogued and integrated into the Cambridge University collection so as to be more widely accessible to students as a research facility. Student accommodation, in two modern halls of residence in the grounds of the house, is of good quality, with ensuite rooms, spacious communal lounges, well-equipped self-catering kitchens and laundries. The halls are fitted with keycard and pin code entry systems and students say they feel safe and secure in their accommodation. Provision can be made, if needed, for students with special needs or disabilities.

Standards for information and complaints

The Standards for information and complaints are met. The Westfield House 'Study Abroad' programme is long established in collaboration with universities in the USA, Germany and Canada, and students are well informed about it before they arrive. Prospective students have detailed prior information about the programme through the Westfield House website and the websites of their home institutions. Students say that they also learn about the programme from tutors and from other students who have undertaken it in previous years. Good day-to-day information through meetings with staff and through regular emails helps students to readily establish a sense of belonging to the college community. Staff work hard to enable students to quickly get their bearings on what is a relatively short course programme for most of them, providing orientation visits locally and further afield, including trips to London. The small student body, all living on site at the college, meets regularly with staff for communal meals, and a daily service in the chapel adds to the sense of community. Students say that they feel well informed about their progress, through verbal feedback from tutors and written assessments. Students know that there is a complaints policy in their student handbook, which they all confirm in writing that they have seen, and they know who to speak to if they have any concerns. No formal complaints have been received in recent years.

SECTION C: COLLEGE AND INSPECTION DETAILS

Details of college

Name of college:	Westfield House
Address of college:	30 Huntingdon Road, Cambridge CB3 0HH
Email address:	enquiries@westfield.cam.ac.uk
Proprietor:	Evangelical Lutheran Church of England Trust Ltd.
Name of Principal:	Dr Cynthia Lumley
Licence number:	86GB8DO97
Type of college:	Further education and study abroad HE

Details of student body

Age range	18+
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Number on roll:		UK	International
	Full Time:	0	32 (predicted)
	Part Time:	0	5 (online students)
	Below 18	0	0

Annual fees:	variable
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Details of inspection

Type of inspection:	Educational Oversight: Full	
Inspection Team:	Reporting Inspector:	Mrs. Jane Cooper
	Supporting Inspector:	Mr. Peter Jones
Dates of inspection:	3-4 October 2023	

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