

# **Inspection report**

Organisation name	Al Hayat Languages, Blackburn
Inspection date	22–23 October 2024

Section standards	
Management The management of the provision operates to the benefit of the students, and in accordance with the provider's stated goals, values, and publicity.	Met
Premises and resources  The premises provide students and staff with a safe, comfortable and professional environment for work and relaxation. A range of learning resources is available, appropriate to the age and needs of the students. Guidance on the use of these resources is provided for staff and students where needed.	Met
Teaching and learning The academic staff team has a professional profile (qualifications, experience and continuing professional development) appropriate to the context. Teachers receive sufficient 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 meets the requirements of the Scheme.	Met
Welfare and student services The provision meets the needs of the students for security, pastoral care, information and leisure activities. Students benefit from well-managed student services, including, where offered, out-of-class activities and suitable accommodation.	Met
Safeguarding under 18s 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.	N/a

# Recommendation

We recommend continued accreditation.

# **Summary statement**

The British Council inspected and accredited Al Hayat Languages Blackburn in October 2024. 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 <a href="https://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation">www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation</a> for details).

This private language school offers courses in ESOL for citizenship for adults (18+).

Strengths were noted in the areas of learning resources, course design, learner management, and care of students.

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

### Introduction

Al Hayat Language Centre (ALHC) was established in September 2010 as a non-profit making social enterprise, and obtained charitable status in August 2013. Courses aim to serve the needs of the local community, are government-funded, and lead to examinations which support applications for citizenship and/or the right to remain in the UK. All students are local residents with their own accommodation.

At the time of the inspection the school was undergoing a period of transition. An important funding stream had recently ceased unexpectedly and the school's activity was somewhat restricted as a result. In response to this, the board of trustees has appointed someone to write bids and seek funding from alternative sources.

In addition to these changes, the academic manager has recently retired. Current staffing comprises the chief executive officer (CEO) who is also the only teacher and the acting academic manager, plus a support worker responsible for welfare and leisure, and an administrator. There are currently no additional teaching staff - these can be hired as required from a pool of teachers who have been recruited for previous programmes. Inspectors were able to view relevant evidence relating to periods when additional teachers have been deployed.

Since the last inspection, the school has moved to new premises in the same area of Blackburn as the previous building.

The inspection took place over two half days and a part-day. Meetings were held with the CEO, the support worker, and the administrator. Two focus groups were held with students from current and previous courses. The teacher timetabled during the inspection was observed by both inspectors.

### Address of main site/head office

1st floor, Cambridge House, Randal Street, Blackburn BB1 7LJ

# Description of sites visited/observed

The new premises are on the first floor of a building in a commercial area of shops, cafés and workshops approximately ten minutes' walk from the town centre. The main entrance is reached by stairs: there is also a lift to a back entrance. At the entrance, there is a reception desk, a teachers' room/additional area with kitchen, and a small office. Adjacent are two main classrooms and an additional room with computers. Male and female toilets and a further kitchen/washing up area are next to the rear entrance and lift.

Course profile	Year round		file Year round Vacati		ion only	
	Run	Seen	Run	Seen		
General ELT for adults (18+)						
General ELT for adults (18+) and young people (16+)						
General ELT for juniors (under 18)						
English for academic purposes (excludes IELTS preparation)						
English for specific purposes (includes English for Executives)						
Content and language integrated learning (CLIL)						
Teacher development (excludes award-bearing courses)						
ESOL skills for life/for citizenship	$\boxtimes$	$\boxtimes$				
Other						
Comments	•					

All courses are ESOL and flexibly arranged to meet the needs of the students.

#### Management profile

The CEO manages all staff and reports to a board of trustees. He is currently also the acting academic manager, and is planning to undertake a Level 5 teacher training programme which, together with his additional diploma, would qualify him appropriately for an academic manager role in an FE context. In addition, the school is exploring the creation of a TEFLQ consultant role to support any future teachers.

### Accommodation profile

All students are local residents and no accommodation is offered.

# **Summary of inspection findings**

#### Management

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

#### **Premises and resources**

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The premises provide students and staff with a comfortable and professional environment for work and relaxation. Some areas of safety and security require attention. A range of learning resources is available, appropriate to the age and needs of the students. Guidance on the use of these resources is provided for staff and students where needed. *Learning resources* is an area of strength.

# Teaching and learning

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The academic staff team has a professional profile (qualifications, experience and continuing professional development) appropriate to the context. Teachers receive sufficient guidance to ensure that they support students effectively in their learning. Courses are well structured and managed to provide the maximum possible benefit to students. The teaching observed met the requirements of the Scheme. *Course design* and *Learner management* are areas of strength.

#### Welfare and student services

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. Students benefit from well-managed student services. Their needs for security, information and pastoral care are very well met. *Care of students* is an area of strength.

# Safeguarding under 18s

No students under the age of 18 are accepted.

#### Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance

The items sampled were satisfactory.

#### **Evidence**

# Management

Strategic and quality management	Met
M1 There is a clear statement describing the goals and values of the organisation, which is made known to all staff.	Met
M2 The management has clear objectives for the future of the organisation and has realistic plans to achieve them.	Not met
M3 There is a documented and clearly understood structure for the ELT operation. There are sufficient staff to manage and deliver the provision, and to ensure continuity at all times.	Met
M4 There are effective channels of communication between all involved in the ELT operation, and between the ELT operation and any wider organisation of which it is a part.	Met
M5 The provider regularly obtains and records feedback from students on all the services offered. Feedback is circulated to relevant staff and appropriate action is taken and recorded.	Strength
M6 The provider regularly seeks and records feedback from all staff on the services offered. Appropriate action is taken and recorded.	Met
M7 The provider reviews systems, processes and practices with a view to continuing improvement. Appropriate action is taken and recorded in an annual self-evaluation.	Met

# Comments

M2 Overall objectives are generally clear and set out in a five-year business plan. However, there is relatively little detail, and no indication of steps needed or taken towards objectives, or timeframes.

M5 As well as initial and end-of-course feedback forms, there is a suggestion box, and satisfaction is also checked through progress tracking systems and individual learning records. Feedback is collated and presented to the board of trustees in the form of academic reports. There was ample evidence of changes made in response to student feedback and requests.

Staff management and development	Met
M8 The provider implements appropriate human resources policies, which are made known to staff.	Met
M9 The provider specifies the duties of all staff working with ELT students, and ensures that these are up to date.	Met
M10 There are effective procedures for the recruitment and selection of all staff.	Not met
M11 There are effective induction procedures for all staff.	Met
M12 There are effective procedures for monitoring and appraising all staff, for highlighting good performance, and for handling unsatisfactory performance or conduct. These procedures are made known to all staff.	Met
M13 There are effective procedures to ensure the continuing professional development (CPD) of all staff to meet the needs of the individual, the students and the organisation.	Met

### **Comments**

M10 There is a written recruitment policy, but it is not comprehensive and does not set out procedures. Not all recent appointees had evidence of checks on previous employment on file.

Student administration	Met
M14 Staff are helpful and courteous to students and their representatives, and provide good levels of customer service.	Strength
M15 Students or their representatives receive sufficient information and advice on their course choices before arrival and during their stay.	Strength
M16 There are clear systems in place to enrol students effectively and maintain accurate information about student payment and course details. This information is readily accessible to relevant staff.	Met
M17 There are effective systems to maintain up-to-date and accessible records of local contact details for students, and their designated emergency contacts.	Not met
M18 There is a clear and effective policy on student attendance and punctuality that is known to all staff and students and is applied consistently.	Met
M19 All staff and students are made aware of conditions and procedures under which a student may be asked to leave the course.	Met
M20 All students and, where appropriate, group leaders and parents/legal guardians, receive information in writing about who to see about problems and how to make a complaint.	Met

#### Comments

M14 All staff are extremely approachable and helpful, and provide all kinds of additional personal and academic support for students. This very high level of customer service is reflected in feedback and was mentioned very positively in both student focus groups.

M15 Students receive very detailed advice and information, verbally as well as in writing, and often in student's L1. Support workers, where present, provide helpful support and advice in-course. Students in both focus groups felt that their needs had been both understood and met.

M17 There was some initial lack of clarity as to the whereabouts of contact and emergency contact details. These are kept in class files as individual entries, and are not therefore easily accessible to the relevant staff members at all times.

Publicity	Met
M21 All publicity and information is accurate, and gives rise to realistic expectations about the premises, location, and the extent and availability of the services and resources.	Met
M22 All publicity and information about the provider and the services it offers is in clear, accurate and accessible English.	Met
M23 Publicity gives clear, accurate and easy-to-find information on the courses.	Met
M24 Publicity includes clear, accurate and easy-to-find information on costs.	Met
M25 Publicity or other information made available before enrolment gives an accurate description of the level of care and support given to any students under 18.	Met
M26 Publicity gives an accurate description of any accommodation offered.	Met
M27 Descriptions of staff qualifications are accurate.	Met
M28 Claims to accreditation are in line with Scheme requirements.	Met
Comments	

The website is the main medium of publicity. All criteria in this area are fully met.

#### Premises and resources

Premises and facilities	Met
P1 Providers ensure the safety and security of students on their premises by measures appropriate to their age and background, and the location.	Not 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.	Met
P4 Students have adequate room and suitable facilities for relaxation and the consumption of food.	Met
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.	Met

#### Comments

P1 Not all risks associated with access and use of the lift have been adequately assessed.

P2 It is clear that much thought and care has gone into making the premises the best they can be; the school is very clean and well maintained throughout, classrooms are welcoming and double up as space for students to relax and socialise. There is a lift as well as access by stairs.

Learning resources	Area of strength
P7 There are sufficient learning resources for classroom use for the number of students enrolled, appropriate to their age and the level, length and type of courses offered.	Strength
P8 There are appropriate resources for teachers, which are adequate in number, accessible, and well maintained and organised.	Strength
P9 Any educational technology inside the classroom and elsewhere is well maintained with adequate technical support. Staff receive appropriate training in using the available technology to support learning.	Met
P10 Students have access to resources for independent learning, relevant to their learning aims and expectations.	Met
P11 There is a policy for the continuing review and development of teaching and learning resources, and evidence of its implementation.	Met

# Comments

P7 Learning packs and materials are tailored to support the particular needs of students on each course.

P8 The relevant published resources are allocated to teachers for each programme; there are plentiful additional resources as well as a budget for supplementary materials.

# **Teaching and learning**

Academic staff profile	Met		
T1 There is a clear recruitment and support policy for the academic team relevant to the stated course objectives			

- If I here is a clear recruitment and support policy for the academic team relevant to the stated course objectives and student profile.
- T2 The academic manager/academic management team has an appropriate professional profile to provide academic leadership.
- T3 The teaching team has ELT/TESOL qualifications, general level of education, experience, knowledge and skills relevant to the courses they are teaching.

#### Comments

The academic staff team has a professional profile (qualifications and experience) that is appropriate to the school's context. A rationale was provided for the engagement of the non-TEFLQ CEO as acting academic manager. This was accepted in the context of this inspection. The role is temporary, and the CEO has extensive, context-specific experience in both teaching and management, as well as relevant teaching qualifications.

The recruitment and support policy is effectively devised and implemented in line with the stated course objectives and the student profile.

Academic management	Met
T4 Teachers are matched appropriately to courses and there are effective procedures for the appropriate timetabling of students, courses and classrooms.	Strength
T5 There are formalised arrangements for covering for absent teachers which are satisfactory to students and staff.	Met
T6 Where enrolment is continuous, explicit attention is paid to all aspects of academic management affected.	N/a
T7 There are effective arrangements for the academic induction of new teachers appropriate to their needs.	Met
T8 There are effective arrangements, led by an academic manager, to ensure appropriate day-to-day guidance and support for all teachers.	Met
T9 There are effective arrangements for the observation and monitoring of teachers' performance by a TEFLQ academic manager based on clear standards known to teachers.	Not met
T10 There are effective procedures to ensure the continuing professional development (CPD) of all teachers to meet the needs of the individual teachers, the students, and the organisation.	Met

# Comments

T4 Timetabling is flexibly managed around student needs and commitments; this is entirely appropriate for the course and student profile and may be extended to any teachers who are engaged on a course.

T9 No arrangements for observations by a TEFLQ manager are in place.

Course design and implementation	Area of strength
T11 The course design is comprehensive and is based on the provider's stated approach to learning or educational philosophy, and is appropriate to the learning context.	Strength
T12 Courses include strategies which help students to develop their language skills outside the classroom and benefit linguistically from their stay in the UK.	Strength
T13 Course design is regularly reviewed in light of the different and changing needs of students and feedback from teachers and students.	Strength
T14 Written course outlines and intended learning outcomes, appropriate to the course length and type, are available to students and referred to in class.	Met

### Comments

T11 Courses are individually designed based on published materials and specified outcomes. Teachers are guided on resources and there is a good range of supplementary activities and resources. Schemes of work are produced and include appropriate study and learning strategies.

T12 Students are members of the local community and courses are specifically aimed at helping them function and integrate effectively in the UK.

T13 Every course is reviewed and reported on, with changes made where appropriate. Feedback from teachers and students is part of this process. For every new course, outlines and materials are reviewed to ensure students' needs and expectations are met.

Learner management	Area of strength
T15 There are effective procedures for the correct placement of students, appropriate to their level and age.	Strength
T16 There are effective procedures for evaluating, monitoring and recording students' progress.	Met
T17 Students are helped to identify their learning needs and receive support to meet course objectives.	Strength
T18 Where relevant, students are guided to select the examinations and examination training best suited to their needs and interests. Students wishing to progress to mainstream UK education have access to relevant information and advice.	Met

#### Comments

T15 Careful placement procedures include an initial interview and assessment, with an interpreter where necessary. The results of initial placement tests are confirmed or otherwise by tutors' diagnostic assessment of individuals at the beginning of the course.

T17 Students receive strong support in identifying needs and meeting their objectives. Individual learner records help to focus on these, and also track all progress and achievement information. Support workers are assigned to classes where needed.

#### Classroom observation record

Number of teachers seen	1
Number of observations	2
Parts of programme(s) observed	All

### Comments

The one teacher timetabled was observed once by each of the inspectors.

T19 Teachers produce accurate models of spoken and written English; they provide clear explanations and relevant examples of language and usage, that are appropriate to the aims of the lesson and suitable for the students' level.	Met
T20 The content of the lessons is based on the overall course objectives and takes into account the differing students' needs and backgrounds.	Strength
T21 The intended learning outcomes of lessons are made known to students, and are achieved through an appropriate sequence of activities.	Strength
T22 Teaching techniques used are appropriate to the focus of the lesson, to the context, and to the needs of the group and individual learners.	Met
T23 Teachers enhance learning by effectively managing the classroom environment and teaching and learning resources.	Met
T24 Students receive and benefit from appropriate and timely feedback on their performance during the lesson.	Met
T25 Lessons include activities for teachers and students to evaluate whether learning is taking place.	Met
T26 Teachers promote a positive and inclusive learning atmosphere and students are engaged in the lesson.	Strength

### Comments

- T19 Clear models were provided and explanations and examples were appropriate to both level and context.
- T20 Planning was careful and clear, and included useful differentiation based on good student profiles. Lessons and materials were strongly geared to the needs and profiles of learners.
- T21 Learning outcomes were clear, explicit, visible throughout and referred to during the lesson. Teaching demonstrated sensitivity to students' pace of learning.
- T22 A range of suitable techniques was observed, including clear instructions, good eliciting, and nomination.
- T23 The learning environment, including seating arrangements, was controlled effectively, and competent use was made of learning resources and classroom technology.
- T24 In general, students received useful feedback, including praise and encouragement, and some direct correction of errors.
- T25 Opportunities were provided for students to demonstrate their ability to use recently learned language, and short assessment tasks enabled teacher evaluation of learning. Reference was made to work previously covered.
- T26 A gentle, very inclusive and supportive atmosphere had been established, in which all students were able to engage fully and make their contributions. Good teacher voice projection and energy, as well as variety of activity, interaction and pace, were all instrumental in creating a very purposeful learning environment.

#### Welfare and student services

Care of students	Area of strength
W1 There is a comprehensive plan to respond to any emergency. This plan is known to all staff, and relevant elements are known to students.	Met
W2 Students receive pastoral care appropriate to their age, background and circumstances. All staff and students know the name(s) of the person or people who deal with students' personal problems.	Strength
W3 There are policies to promote tolerance and respect, and procedures for dealing with any abusive behaviour. All staff and students are aware of these.	Strength
W4 Where relevant, students receive a 24-hour emergency contact number for the provider, in writing.	N/a
W5 Students receive advice on relevant aspects of travel to and life in the UK.	Strength

W6 Students have access to adequate health care provision.	Strength	
Comments		
W2 The level of pastoral care is very good and very much appreciated by the students, as evidenced by feedback and from the students spoken to during the inspection. There is a dedicated and experienced welfare officer available at all times, and all staff are committed to providing support and advice as needed. W3 Tolerance and respect feature prominently in the organisation's ethos. Information, relevant to the students' lives both inside the school and within the community, is clear and well presented. W5 Information and advice, relevant to the particular needs of the students is readily available. Relevant and useful information about life in the UK is integrated into the curriculum. W6 Students are given information and practical assistance to ensure that they have access to appropriate health care. The language needed for health care encounters is introduced early in the syllabus.		
Accommodation (W7–W18 as applicable)	N/a	
All accommodation	. 70	
W7 Students have a comfortable living environment throughout their stay.	N/a	
W8 Arrangements for cleaning and laundry are satisfactory.	N/a	
W9 A responsible representative inspects all accommodation (for safety and suitability) before students are placed, and at least every two years after that.	N/a	
W10 Students receive written confirmation of accommodation booked, giving clear and accurate information.	N/a	
W11 There are effective procedures for identifying and resolving any problems students have with their accommodation.	N/a	
W12 Accommodation providers receive written confirmation of the rules, terms and conditions applied by the provider with respect to the provision of accommodation services.	N/a	
W13 Students receive meals as agreed; these offer a well-balanced diet, taking into account any reasonable dietary requirements students may have.	N/a	
Comments		
No accommodation is offered.		
Accommodation: homestay only		
W14 Homestay hosts comply with the agreed terms and conditions for student placements.	N/a	
W15 Homestay placements encourage students to use English.	N/a	
W16 Hosts ensure that there is an adult available to receive students on first arrival.	N/a	
Comments		
None.		
A commodation, other		
Accommodation: other  W17 Students receive information about the implications of their living in private rented accommodation and advice in case of difficulties.	Met	
W18 The provider monitors any other accommodation recommended, and booking and	N/a	
payment arrangements are clear.		
Comments		
The relevant criterion in the above area is fully met.		
Leisure opportunities	N/a	
W19 Students have appropriate information about and access to social, cultural and sporting events and activities which enhance their experience of studying in the UK.	Met	
W20 The content of any leisure programme is appropriate to the age and interests of the students.	N/a	
W21 Any leisure programmes are well organised and sufficiently resourced.	N/a	
W22 There are effective systems to ensure the health and safety of students on all on-site and off-site activities.	N/a	
	l	

W23 Staff supervising sporting and leisure activities on or off-site have appropriate experience, support and training.	N/a
Comments	

No leisure programme is offered and enrolments are all from the local area.

# Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance

D1 The organisation certifies that it operates at all times in accordance with the declarations in the *Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance*.

The Accreditation Scheme requires accredited providers to comply with all applicable laws and regulations. Providers must take steps to ensure that they are aware of, and comply with, all existing and new legal requirements.

On initial application and annual renewal of accreditation, providers are required to confirm that they are complying with all applicable laws and regulations.

Inspectors will check a random sample of items during inspection, in relation to criterion D1; if they find evidence of a breach of statutory or other legal requirements, the provider will be required to submit evidence of compliance confirmed by the appropriate regulatory body.

Any breach of the law or regulations will be viewed seriously by the Scheme and may result in the withdrawal or withholding of accreditation.

Any sustained breach of the law or regulations which an accredited provider fails upon reasonable notice to remedy will result in accreditation being withdrawn.

# Comments

D1 The items sampled were satisfactory.

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	2010
Last full inspection	2024
Subsequent checks/visits (if applicable)	N/a
Current accreditation status	Accredited
Other related non-accredited activities (in brief) at this centre	Secure English Language Test
Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates	N/a
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	N/a

#### Private sector

Date of foundation	September 2010
Ownership	Name of company: Al Hayat Languages Ltd Company number: 7388525 The school is a registered charity. Charity number 1152346.
Other accreditation/inspection	N/a

**Premises profile** 

Details of any additional sites in use at the time of the	N/a
inspection but not visited/observed	
Details of any additional sites not in use at the time of	N/a
the inspection	

Student profile	At inspection	Estimate at peak
ELT/ESOL students (eligible courses)	At inspection	October
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) 18 years and over	N/a	N/a
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) aged 16–17 years	0	0
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) aged under 16	0	0
Part-time ELT aged 18 years and over	6	6
Part-time ELT aged 16–17 years	N/a	N/a

Part-time ELT aged under 16 years	N/a	N/a
Overall total ELT/ESOL students shown above	6	6
Adult programmes: advertised minimum age	18	18
Adult programmes: typical age range	21–35	21–35
Adult programmes: typical length of stay	12 weeks	12 weeks
Adult programmes: predominant nationalities	Pakistani, Indian	Pakistani, Indian
Junior programmes: advertised minimum age	N/a	N/a
Junior programmes: advertised maximum age	N/a	N/a
Junior programmes: typical length of stay	N/a	N/a
Junior programmes: predominant nationalities	N/a	N/a

Staff profile	At inspection	Estimate at peak
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	1	3
Number teaching ELT 20 hours and over a week	0	
Number teaching ELT under 20 hours a week	1	
Number of academic managers for eligible ELT courses	1	1
Number of management (non-academic) and administrative staff working on eligible ELT courses	1	
Total number of support staff	2	

Academic manager qualifications profile

Profile at inspection	
Professional qualifications	Number of academic managers
TEFLQ qualification and at least three years' full-time relevant teaching experience	0
Academic managers without TEFLQ qualification or three years' relevant experience	1
Total	1
Comments	

A rationale was provided for the CEO as acting academic manager.

Teacher qualifications profile

Profile in week of inspection	
Professional qualifications	Number of teachers
TEFLQ qualification/profile	0
TEFLI qualification	1
ATEFL portfolio in progress	0
Non-ELT-related qualified teacher status only (for short courses for under 18s)	0
Holding specialist qualifications only (for ESP/CLIL)	0
Alternative professional profile	0
Total	1
Comments	

At inspection, the CEO was the only teacher.

**Accommodation profile** 

Number of students in each at the time of inspection (all students on eligible courses)			
Types of accommodation	Adults	Under 18s	
Arranged by provider/agency	N/a	N/a	
Homestay	0	N/a	
Private home	0	N/a	
Home tuition	0	N/a	

Residential	0	N/a
Hotel/guesthouse	0	N/a
Independent self-catering e.g. flats, bedsits, student houses	0	N/a
Arranged by student/family/guardian		
Staying with own family	6	N/a
Staying in privately rented rooms/flats	0	N/a
Overall totals adults/under 18s	6	N/a
Overall total adults + under 18s	6	

# Items requiring early action

Evidence must be submitted within three months to demonstrate that weaknesses in P1 have been addressed, with an update on progress towards addressing T9. The required evidence was subsequently submitted.