

Organisation name	Berlitz Manchester
Inspection date	13 February 2025
Current accreditation status	Accreditation under review
Reason for spot check	Signalled: end period under review

Recommendation

We recommend continued accreditation. The period of review may now be ended, and accreditation will continue with a supplementary inspection in summer 2025 to assess the summer junior vacation course.

Changes to the summary statement

An updated summary statement can now be issued.

New summary statement

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

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

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

Updated summary inspection findings

Management

Overall, the provision meets the section standard. The provision operates in accordance with the providers' stated goals and values. Job descriptions did not reflect additional duties and responsibilities of some staff members and staff absence and changes of staff compromised some aspects of provision during the summer. Publicity is satisfactory.

Premises and resources

The provision meets the section standard. The premises generally provide a suitable environment for teaching and learning although there is a lack of appropriate relaxation space for students and staff at Westminster House. 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 where needed.

Teaching and learning

Overall, the provision meets the section standard. The academic staff team has a professional profile appropriate to the context and the recruitment and support policy is devised and implemented in line with the stated course objectives and the student profile. Course design and review is satisfactory; however, learning outcomes are not shared systematically with students. The teaching observed met the requirements of the Scheme.

Welfare and student services

The provision meets the section standard. The needs of students for security, pastoral care and accommodation are met. However, some information about access to NHS services is out of date. The leisure programme is responsive to student need and is delivered safely.

Safeguarding under 18s

The provision meets the section standard. The safeguarding policy and related training is good, and measures in the plan ensure the safety of students under the age of 18. References and DBS checks are on file for all staff.

Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance

The items sampled were satisfactory.

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	July 2003
Last full inspection	August 2024
Subsequent checks/visits (if applicable)	February 2025
Other related non-accredited activities (in brief) at this centre	N/a
Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates	Berlitz franchises under a different company owned separately by the same proprietor in London, and under a different company and different ownership in Oxford.
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	The managing director/proprietor also owns Berlitz Dublin. International Business College Manchester (IBCM) operates from the same premises in Manchester. These are separate legal entities wholly owned by the managing director of Berlitz Manchester. There are worldwide Berlitz franchises.

Student and staff profile	At inspection	Estimate at peak: July
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	69	200
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	16	4
Typical age range	17–30	4–30
Typical length of stay	4–12 weeks	4–12 weeks
Predominant nationalities	Saudi Arabian, Kuwaiti, Mauritanian	Saudi Arabian, Kuwaiti, Libyan
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	6	10–12
Total number of managers including academic	3	3
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	5	5–6

Premises profile

Address of main site	Westminster House, 11 Portland Street (Minshull Street entrance), Manchester M1 3HU
Additional sites in use	N/a
Additional sites not in use	Seasonal Summer Centre: University of Salford, 43 Crescent, Salford M5 4WT
Sites inspected	Westminster House, 11 Portland Street (Minshull Street entrance), Manchester M1 3HU

Introduction

Background

Berlitz Manchester is a privately owned language school and is a franchise of the wider Berlitz organisation, which has schools in various locations around the world. The school offers general and business English courses to adults aged over 16, and a summer vacation course for younger learners on the main site and on seasonal premises at the University of Salford.

This was a signalled spot check to end a period under review due to weaknesses in Safeguarding and Publicity.

Preparation

The spot check was carried out by two inspectors, both of whom had been involved in the previous inspection in 2024. The inspector contacted the provider in advance to check if there were any dates which would not be suitable and when key staff would be present. The Accreditation Unit sent the inspector relevant documents. Both inspectors looked at this documentation and the Berlitz website.

Programme and persons present

The inspectors arrived at 09.15 and left at 13.15. They visited the main school site in Westminster House. Face-to-face meetings were held with the director of studies (DoS) and the operations manager, and a remote meeting was held with the managing director/proprietor. One class was briefly observed. Focus group meetings were held with students and teachers. Upon arrival, the reporting inspector requested several documents, all of which were provided.

Findings

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

Management

The points to be addressed in the area of *Publicity* were responded to by the provider in communications with the Accreditation Unit in early 2025. These were mostly addressed, although there were still outdated accreditation marques on display in classrooms and on some documentation. There is no information available prior to enrolment on the website or in brochures indicating the level of care offered to students under the age of 18. There is no longer a need for improvement in *Publicity*.

Welfare and student services

The points to be addressed in the area of *Leisure opportunities* were responded to in communications with the Accreditation Unit in early 2025, and their application was checked during the spot check.

Safeguarding under 18s

Staff records show that suitability checks are complete for all adults in contact with under 18s. This was confirmed by the staff files sampled during the inspection. There are consistently applied systems in place for following up late arrival of students aged under 18, and there is clear guidance in place for what students aged under 18 can safely do when not participating in school organised activities. Contact information for individual students aged under 18 was readily accessible. There is no longer a need for improvement in *Safeguarding under 18s*.

Management

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.	Not 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.	Not met
Comments	
Publicity consists of the website and several brochures.	
M22 Although the website is generally written in language understandable at the B1 level, some small sections are written in a higher level of English, and there were a few errors in language usage.	
M25 There is no information on the website or in the school brochures outlining the level of care and support given to students under the age of 18.	
M28 There are signs throughout the school which use an out-of-date accreditation marque. This was remedied during the inspection and is no longer a point to be addressed.	

Welfare and student services

Leisure opportunities	Met
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.	Met
W21 Any leisure programmes are well organised and sufficiently resourced.	Met
W22 There are effective systems to ensure the health and safety of students on all on-site and off-site activities.	Met
W23 Staff supervising sporting and leisure activities on or off-site have appropriate experience, support and training.	Met
Comments	

All criteria in this section are met.

Safeguarding under 18s

Safeguarding under 18s	Met
S1 There is a safeguarding policy which specifies procedures to ensure the safety and well-being of all students under the age of 18. A named member of staff is responsible for implementing this policy and responding to child protection allegations.	Strength
S2 The provider makes the policy known to all adults in contact with under 18s through their role with the organisation and provides guidance or training relevant to its effective implementation.	Strength
S3 The provider has written parental/guardian consent reflecting the level of care and support given to students under 18, including medical consent.	Met
S4 Recruitment procedures for all roles involving responsibility for or substantial access to under-18s are in line with safer recruitment good practices and the organisation's safeguarding policy.	Met
S5 There are suitable arrangements for the supervision and safety of students during scheduled lessons and activities.	Met
S6 There are suitable arrangements for the supervision and safety of students outside the scheduled programme.	Met
S7 There are suitable arrangements for the accommodation of students.	Met
S8 There are suitable arrangements to ensure contact between the provider and parents, legal guardians or their nominated representatives concerning the welfare of students.	Met

Comments

The school enrolls mostly adult students through the year, with a smaller number of 16- and 17-year-olds joining the adult general English programme. In the summer months, the school offers a separate junior programme for students aged 12 to 17, delivered at separate premises at a local university, and also some junior provision on the main school premises. At the time of the inspection two of the 69 students registered were aged under 18.

S1 The safeguarding policy is comprehensive and is reviewed annually by the safeguarding team. The policy is supported by relevant documents including codes of conduct and incident-reporting documentation.

S2 The policy is shared effectively with staff and other stakeholders through handbooks, induction, briefings and training. All staff and any homestay hosts accommodating students under the age of 18 are appropriately trained. Four current members of staff are trained to specialist level, and a further member of staff to advanced level.

Action taken on points to be addressed

Points from the previous full inspection and/or subsequent spot checks or interim visits with comments (in bold) to indicate how far these have been addressed. Only points reviewed during this spot check are included here. Any points outstanding will be checked at the next full inspection.

Management

M10 A number of references were missing from staff files and the recruitment policy currently only refers to teaching staff.

Partially addressed; a full record of references was seen and the sampled entries all had appropriate references. However, the recruitment policy still only refers to teaching staff.

M17 Some of the records sampled did not have up-to-date local contact details and not all indicated the relationship of the emergency contact to the student.

Addressed: the records sampled had up-to-date contact details and indicated the relationship of the contact to the student.

M18 Although the school has a policy on attendance made known to students, the policy was not being implemented and students seemed unsure of it.

Addressed: inspectors saw the attendance policy being implemented, and staff and students were both aware of attendance procedures.

M21 There was no mention of the junior courses run year-round on the website.

Addressed: the new website includes information about junior courses.

M23 Both the website and the brochures stated a confusing range of minimum enrolment ages. The maximum class size is stated as 15 but classes observed had more than 15 students in some cases.

Addressed: minimum enrolment ages are now consistent, and the maximum class size has been changed to 16 and is consistent across all media of publicity. This was checked with the proprietor as part of this inspection.

M27 The junior course brochure states "all of our teachers are native, accredited", and elsewhere "Berlitz teachers are highly qualified". These claims are inaccurate.

Addressed: this wording has now been removed from the junior course brochure.

M28 The website still states that Berlitz Manchester is “accredited by English UK”, a point raised in the 2019 inspection. An incorrect Accreditation Scheme marque was used throughout the school.

Addressed: the new website claims accreditation appropriately. However, an incorrect accreditation marque is still used throughout the school. This was remedied during the inspection and is no longer a point to be addressed

Welfare and student services

W22 Risk assessments for leisure activities do not include measures for responding to critical incidents. The emergency plan is also not shared with the main external provider of full-day excursions.

Addressed: critical incident information has been added to activity risk assessments, and details of the emergency plan have been shared with the external provider of full-day excursions.

Safeguarding under 18s

S4 At the time of the inspection, two references were not on file for some teaching staff working with students aged under 18.

Addressed. Staff records show that suitability checks are complete for all adults in contact with under 18s. This was confirmed by the staff files sampled during the inspection.

S5 Absence and lateness of students under the age of 18 is not consistently followed up.

Addressed; there are clear systems in place, both staff and students were aware of them, and they were witnessed being carried out during the inspection.

S6 Clear guidance about what students aged under 18 can safely do outside the scheduled programme is not in place. Students aged under 18 studying on the adult programme do not receive separate guidance on safety and the law appropriate to their age.

Addressed: clear guidance is now in place as part of student induction for students under the age of 18, and students sign to show they have understood. There are new procedures for safely managing individual under 18 student visits to other cities.

S8 Contact information for individual students on the junior and adult programmes is not consistently recorded and is not generally readily available to the emergency phone holder.

Addressed: computer-based records of this information are now kept centrally, and emergency phone holders can log in to access this information out of hours if required.

Conclusions

Publicity is satisfactory. The provider has improved the procedures that it has in place for safeguarding and leisure activities, and the students benefit from a safe and secure environment. Implementation of these improvements and the response to points to be addressed specific to summer provision will need to be verified when summer courses are running.
