

Organisation name	EF Oxford
Inspection date	26–29 March 2019

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 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.	Met

Recommendation
We recommend continued accreditation.

Summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited EF Oxford in March 2019. 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 large private language school offers courses in general English for adults (18+) and young people (16+).

Strengths were noted in the areas of strategic and quality management, staff management, student administration, premises and facilities, learning resources, academic management, course design, learner management, care of students, accommodation, leisure opportunities, and safeguarding under 18s.

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

Introduction

EF Oxford is part of the EF Education First group, established in 1965 with headquarters in Switzerland. In the UK there are nine accredited EF adult schools, one of which is an executive centre. Junior courses are offered in four of these schools. A central management team monitors and supports the UK schools; centralised policies and systems are applied across the schools.

The accredited provision includes the general English courses and IELTS courses for students on the university preparation (UP) programme. UP students also receive subject teaching as part of their course, but this provision is not eligible for accreditation.

The majority of students at the time of the inspection were following general English courses; approximately one quarter were enrolled on the UP programme. Courses are delivered on a double-banking system; students may have courses in the morning or afternoon.

Students at the nearby unaccredited EF Academy boarding school are currently taught in part of the EF Oxford premises during the academic year, although there are plans for teaching rooms to be built on the EF Academy site in the near future, alongside the existing residential accommodation.

The inspection took place over three and a half days. Meetings were held with the executive school director, the director of academics (DoA), the assistant director of studies (ADoS), the university pathways manager, the academic administrator, the director of student services, the customer support manager, the visa compliance co-ordinator, the homestay accommodation manager, the residence manager, the welfare manager, the facilities manager, the activities manager, and the UK director of academic management. Focus group meetings were held with teachers, adult students, and students aged under 18 years. All teachers were observed. The ADoS was also observed as she was substituting for an absent teacher. One inspector visited three homestays and the residential accommodation.

Address of main site/head office

Pullens Lane, Headington, Oxford OX3 ODT

Description of sites visited

The campus has two main buildings. The Lewis building is on two floors. On the ground floor there is a large reception area, a large cafeteria, offices, a teachers' room, a lecture room and three classrooms. On the first floor there are 23 classrooms and two iLabs. At the rear of the building there is a large paved courtyard with seating for student relaxation and an outdoor food outlet. The Cherwell building, also on two floors, is on the other side of the courtyard. On the ground floor there is a student lounge with comfortable furniture, a salad bar, two offices, two classrooms, an i-Lab and a fitness room. One room is used as the UP staffroom outside the summer and as an additional staffroom for general English teachers during the summer. On the first floor there are 16 classrooms and a science lab. Toilets are provided on all floors.

During the academic year the Cherwell building is used by the UP and EF Academy students; a few EF Oxford classes are held there. In summer the building is used exclusively by EF Oxford for general English classes. The on-site residential accommodation is in eight blocks behind the Cherwell building.

Course profile	Year round		Vacation only	
	Run	Seen	Run	Seen
General ELT for adults (18+)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General ELT for adults (18+) and young people (16+)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General ELT for juniors (under 18)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
English for academic purposes (excludes IELTS preparation)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
English for specific purposes (includes English for Executives)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher development (excludes award-bearing courses)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ESOL skills for life/for citizenship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments

The school offers three general English courses for adults (18+) and young people (16+). These are the basic course of 13 hours and 20 minutes (20 lessons of 40 minutes) per week offered in summer only; the general course of 17 hours and 20 minutes (26 lessons of 40 minutes) per week; and the intensive course of 21 hours and 20 minutes (32 lessons of 40 minutes) per week. Long-stay students can enrol for six, nine or 11 months on general or intensive academic year-abroad courses, which combine language learning with academic projects. All courses include general English lessons in the classroom, project sessions in the iLabs, and a weekly lecture. For all courses other than the basic course, a variable number of special interest lessons (SPINs) is included. Examination preparation courses include examination-related SPINs. An advanced diploma course in English for international affairs is an intensive general English course with SPINs on international affairs. UP students receive IELTS preparation classes of 6 hours 20 minutes (10 lessons of 40 minutes) per week during the autumn and winter terms.

Management profile

The school is managed by the executive school director. The director of academics oversees the general English and UP programmes with support from the ADoS, the UP manager and the UP ADoS. The director of student services is responsible for staff delivering customer support, visa compliance, welfare, homestay and residential services, and the activity programme. The facilities manager is responsible for staff maintaining the premises and also supervises the IT co-ordinator. All three managers report to the executive school director.

The school is part of the UK and Ireland division of EF. Head office operations managers and senior staff with areas of specific responsibility across the schools, for example academic management and homestay, oversee the local management and, in conjunction with the worldwide EF head office in Switzerland, set out the strategic development of the school and its services.

Accommodation profile

All homestay accommodation is managed by the school. It is available on a half-board basis, with either twin or single options. At the time of the inspection, 104 hosts were being used, the majority of whom had a single student. Some homestays are within walking distance of the school; others may involve one, or even two, bus journeys.

Year-round, residential accommodation is provided on site. It offers single, twin or multi (three-bed or four-bed) rooms. Only the multi rooms offer ensuite bathrooms, with a few multi rooms offering shared facilities. There is also a small stand-alone residence found immediately outside the campus boundary. Only over 18s are housed in this building. In the summer two additional off-site residences are used, both within a ten-minute walk of the school. The residential package includes half-board (breakfast and dinner) provided by the school cafeteria.

Summary of inspection findings

Management

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The management has clearly stated goals and values. Robust policies and procedures are in place for staff management and student administration. Communication and feedback procedures are effective. Induction is well managed and there is good provision for staff training and development. Some aspects of publicity are inaccurate, incomplete or confusingly presented. *Strategic and quality management, Staff management and Student administration* are areas of strength.

Premises and resources

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The premises are of a high standard and provide a very comfortable environment for both students and staff, although some classrooms are cramped when full. Teaching and learning resources are carefully structured and effectively support both teachers and students. Staff benefit from an appropriate professional environment. *Premises and facilities and Learning resources* are areas of strength.

Teaching and learning

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The academic managers are appropriately qualified and experienced. There are effective systems for timetabling, monitoring and recording student progress. Teachers are well supported. Courses and materials are carefully designed and learner management is efficiently handled. The teaching observed met the requirements of the Scheme. *Academic management, 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. There is excellent provision for the care of students in all areas of the school. Accommodation is well managed and is all of a satisfactory standard. The residential accommodation (used by the majority of students) is of a very good standard and provides a comfortable and welcoming environment. A varied and interesting programme of leisure activities is available to students, with excellent arrangements in place to ensure their safety. *Care of students, Accommodation, and Leisure opportunities*

are areas of strength.

Safeguarding under 18s

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. There is excellent provision for the safeguarding of students under the age of 18 in almost all areas of the organisation, and in the leisure activities and accommodation provided. *Safeguarding under 18s* is an area of strength.

Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance

The items sampled were satisfactory.

Evidence

Management

Strategic and quality management	Area of strength
M1 There is a clear statement describing the goals and values of the organisation, which is made known to all staff.	Strength
M2 The management has clear objectives for the future of the organisation and has realistic plans to achieve them.	Strength
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.	Strength
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.	Strength
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.	Strength
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.	Strength

Comments

M1 The organisation has clear goals and values, set out in a mission statement and communicated to staff through handbooks, at induction and at training events.

M2 A worldwide conference each year brings together managers from sales offices, the central operations team and school directors to set objectives for the organisation for the following year and clear measures are in place to monitor progress on implementation. An annual 'roadmap' for the Oxford school sets specific achievable local objectives.

M3 The management structure within the school and the wider organisation is clearly documented and well understood by staff. Staff photographs with an indication of their roles are provided at induction and in a corridor near reception.

M4 There is effective communication within the school and with the wider organisation. Regular meetings are held and are minuted. Staff also benefit from attending meetings with colleagues who work in a similar role at other EF schools. A student council meets every six to eight weeks; students have access to a personalised page on the school's online platform (MyEF). Homestay hosts receive regular newsletters and there are dedicated host pages on MyEF.

M5 The school collects student feedback effectively in a variety of ways, including initial and end-of-course evaluations, and brief mid-course evaluations every four weeks. Students also attend a first-week meeting to discuss any issues of concern and can give feedback at student council meetings; longer-stay students provide feedback at tutorials. Any negative comments are logged and follow-up action is noted. Data from evaluations is analysed and used by central management to compare performance across schools.

M6 Year-round staff provide feedback at staff meetings, at appraisals and through a suggestion box. Seasonal staff provide feedback at weekly meetings and all staff have a face-to-face exit interview. Comments and action taken are recorded and contribute to the internal review process.

M7 There is a comprehensive quality review cycle which includes internal audits, cross-company comparison, analysis and meetings at both organisation and school level.

Staff management and development	Area of strength
M8 The provider implements appropriate human resources policies, which are made known to staff.	Strength
M9 The provider specifies the duties of all staff working with ELT students, and regularly reviews these.	Met
M10 There are effective procedures for the recruitment and selection of all staff.	Met
M11 There are effective induction procedures for all staff.	Strength
M12 There are effective procedures for monitoring and appraising all staff, and for handling unsatisfactory performance or conduct. These procedures are made known to all staff.	Strength
M13 There are effective procedures to ensure the continuing professional development of all staff to meet the needs of the individual, the students and the organisation.	Strength

Comments

M8 The staff handbook, produced centrally, describes employment rights in great detail. Staff stated that they felt well supported.

M11 All staff receive a comprehensive induction based on guidelines and checklists. New staff complete a range of online training packages as part of the induction process. Staff stated that the induction system was thorough.

M12 The review process and procedures for handling unsatisfactory performance are clearly documented. Interns and short-term staff have a review towards the end of their contract. Permanent staff have a review at the end of three months; a knowledge list checks that employees are fully informed about their duties. Staff with potential are identified for possible promotion.

M13 There is an impressive range of training opportunities, both internal and external, for academic staff and administrators. There are workshops for teachers every two weeks, often led by teachers; teachers also meet to exchange teaching ideas every two weeks. Financial support is available for teachers to upgrade their qualifications. Recent training for administrators has included sessions on safeguarding, mental health and company culture.

Student administration	Area of strength
M14 Staff are helpful and courteous to students and their representatives, and provide satisfactory 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 Staff carry out enrolment, cancellation and refund procedures efficiently, fairly, and with appropriate sensitivity.	Met
M17 There are effective systems in place to maintain accurate and up-to-date records of student enrolment, payment and course details. These records are accessible at all times to authorised staff.	Met
M18 There are effective systems to maintain up-to-date and accessible records of local contact details for students, and their designated emergency contacts.	Met
M19 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
M20 All staff and students are made aware of conditions and procedures under which a student may be asked to leave the course.	Met
M21 All students and, where appropriate, group leaders and parents/legal guardians, receive information in writing about how to make a complaint.	Strength

Comments

M14 Reception and office staff provide students with the support and information they need. Regular customer service training is provided. Students spoke positively about the helpfulness of staff at the school.

M15 Almost all students enrol through EF sales offices in their own countries. In many cases this involves a face-to-face meeting in the student's first language where advice on both centre and course choice is provided. Further course information and advice is provided by the relevant staff in the school at tutorials or on request.

M21 The student handbook describes the complaints procedure in clear and accessible English. The information is reiterated at inductions. Any complaints and the action taken are logged on the student page of the database. Evidence was seen of follow-up action.

Publicity	Area of strength
M22 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

M23 All publicity and information about the provider and the services it offers is in clear, accurate and accessible English.	Met
M24 Publicity gives clear, accurate and easy-to-find information on the courses.	Not met
M25 Publicity includes clear, accurate and easy-to-find information on costs.	Met
M26 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
M27 Publicity gives an accurate description of any accommodation offered.	Met
M28 Descriptions of staff qualifications are accurate.	Met
M29 Claims to accreditation are in line with Scheme requirements.	Met

Comments

The main medium of publicity is the brochure, which is produced centrally. This is used by overseas sales offices to advise and talk through bookings with customers, and is sent out in response to enquiries. The brochure contains information relevant to all EF schools in the UK. Two pages are devoted to the Oxford school. More limited information is also available online through the EF UK website, which has a link to the web page for the Oxford school.

M22 The publicity provides a fair and accurate impression of the school. However, occasional statements are misleading, for example the website states that all courses are full time, when this is not the case.

M24 Most of the information required is provided, but in some cases this is not easily accessible or is insufficiently visible because it is only given on the enrolment information page, which is in very small print. This includes, for example, the minimum age on adult courses and the fact that classes may be held in the mornings or afternoons. The number of taught hours for each course type is stated. However, project sessions are sometimes taught and sometimes supervised sessions in the iLabs and therefore effectively constitute guided self-study. The publicity does not make clear which SPIN classes are taught and which are available only online. Times of classes are indicated in very general terms; the sample timetable in the brochure refers to the London school, which has a different timetable from that of the Oxford school. The brochure page describing the advanced diploma courses implies that all five options are taught at the Oxford school, when in fact only one is available.

M25 Overall, costs are adequately stated, although costs of accommodation supplements are not sufficiently clearly set out.

Premises and resources

Premises and facilities	Area of strength
P1 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
P2 Classrooms and other learning areas provide a suitable study environment.	Met
P3 Students have adequate room and suitable facilities for relaxation and the consumption of food.	Strength
P4 Free drinking water is available. A choice of appropriate food at affordable prices is available to students on site, if not available locally.	Strength
P5 There is adequate signage to buildings, routes, rooms and exits, and there are facilities for the display of general information.	Strength
P6 There is sufficient space for all staff, for meetings, relaxation and the storage of personal possessions, and for teachers to carry out their preparation and marking.	Strength

Comments

P1 The buildings and outside areas provide a modern, well-designed environment for students and staff. The premises are decorated and maintained to a high standard throughout. The reception area and cafeteria are spacious, stylish and welcoming.

P2 Classrooms are well decorated and have modern furniture. Some classrooms are spacious, but others are cramped when full.

P3 The large cafeteria, student lounge and attractively designed courtyard all provide excellent relaxation areas for the students.

P4 The cafeteria, snack bar and outside food outlet provide an excellent range of freshly prepared food at reasonable prices. Food can also be purchased at local shops a short walk from the school.

P5 Signage is clear and easy to follow. Noticeboards are informative and posters are well designed.

P6 The large staffroom has plenty of space for teachers to access materials, prepare materials and hold meetings. The UP staffroom in the Cherwell building is also available during the busy summer period. Lockers are available for teachers to store personal possessions.

Learning resources	Area of strength
P7 There are sufficient learning resources 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 Any facilities provided for additional or independent learning are appropriately equipped and organised.	Strength
P11 Students receive guidance on the use of any resources provided for independent learning.	Strength
P12 There is a policy for the continuing review and development of teaching and learning resources, and evidence of its implementation.	Strength

Comments

P7 The company-produced EFEKTA materials are used on general English courses. These include printed coursebooks, supplementary materials and extensive online resources. Course-specific materials are produced for the language-based SPIN classes. Commercially produced and in-house materials are available for other SPINs and examination preparation courses.

P8 There is a wide range of printed and online resources available for teachers to supplement the core materials, including listening activities, presentations, workshop cards, videos, communication activities, dictionaries and games.

P10 Standard and intensive courses include supervised self-access study using the extensive iLab materials which form part of the core EF materials. The iLab facilities and materials are available for self-study outside timetabled hours. Further online resources are also available to students during the course and afterwards for a limited period.

P11 Students are introduced to the iLab facilities during their first class. Support on how best to use the facility and the materials is available from the academic team and during supervised iLab sessions.

P12 The review and development of EF teaching and learning resources is primarily the responsibility of the central academic management team working with academic staff in the schools. Materials are revised regularly, following piloting in selected schools; a new edition of the EFEKTA materials is planned for next year. Feedback is regularly sought from teachers and there is a resources budget for commercially produced materials.

Teaching and learning

Academic staff profile	Met
T1 All academic staff have a level of education normally represented by a Level 6 qualification on the Ofqual register of regulated qualifications.	Met
T2 The teaching team has ELT/TESOL qualifications relevant to the courses they are teaching.	Met
T3 The teaching team has a range of experience, knowledge and skills appropriate to the courses offered and the needs of the learners.	Met
T4 The academic manager/academic management team has an appropriate professional profile to provide academic leadership.	Met

Comments

T1 Two teachers did not have Level 6 qualifications. Rationales for these teachers were provided and were accepted within the context of this inspection as both had undergone post-school professional training.

Academic management	Area of strength
T5 Teachers are matched appropriately to courses.	Met
T6 There are effective procedures for the appropriate timetabling of students, teachers, courses and classrooms.	Strength
T7 There are formalised arrangements, satisfactory to students and staff, for covering for absent teachers.	Met
T8 Where enrolment is continuous, explicit attention is paid to all aspects of academic management affected.	Strength
T9 There are effective arrangements, led by an academic manager, to ensure appropriate day-to-day guidance and support for all teachers.	Strength

T10 There are effective arrangements for the observation and monitoring of teachers' performance by a TEFLQ academic manager.	Strength
Comments	
T6 The complex timetable involves a double-banking arrangement as well as a wide range of SPIN classes and IELTS preparation courses for the UP students. Timetabling is managed very efficiently by the DoA, who liaises with the UP academic management team as necessary.	
T8 EF materials are designed to provide stand-alone lessons to facilitate integration. New students in need of support are guided to the online study materials. Project work is reviewed on Mondays before new students join classes.	
T9 Teachers receive support from the academic managers, at weekly meetings, and through observations and peer observations. Senior teachers provide guidance and support as required. Mentors are assigned to new teachers in the summer. Teachers in the focus group stated they were well supported.	
T10 New teachers are observed within their first two weeks at the school, thereafter up to three times per year. Written feedback with specific recommendations for development is provided. Observation records were sampled. Feedback was detailed and constructive and there was a strong focus on self-reflection. Action plans are put in place for teachers requiring additional support.	

Course design and implementation	Area of strength
T11 Course design is based on stated principles. There is a coherent and appropriate course structure described in writing for teachers' guidance.	Strength
T12 Course design is regularly reviewed in light of the different and changing needs of students and feedback from teachers and students.	Strength
T13 Written course outlines and intended learning outcomes, appropriate to the course length and type, are available to students.	Met
T14 Any activities additional to English classes, and which form part of the language curriculum, encourage the acquisition of language and the development of relevant language skills.	N/a
T15 Courses include study and learning strategies that support independent learning and enable students to benefit from their programmes and continue their learning after the course.	Strength
T16 Courses include strategies which help students to develop their language skills outside the classroom and benefit linguistically from their stay in the UK.	Strength

Comments	
T11 The EFEKTA system is based on current language learning theory and research. The principles and course structures are clearly described online and through induction and training. The materials are used by all EF schools.	
T12 The head office academic research and development team analyses feedback on courses and materials from teachers and students. Teachers are actively encouraged to provide feedback. Core EFEKTA materials are reviewed centrally on a regular cycle, new materials are trialled in selected schools, and additional materials developed in response to needs. New computer-based materials are currently being developed and trialled.	
T13 A course overview is provided in each coursebook. Weekly schemes of work are produced by teachers and checked by the academic managers, but are not currently shared with students.	
T15 Study and learning strategies to support independent learning are a core feature of the EFEKTA learning system. Suggestions for further learning are given at tutorials and through the new EF Mentor app. Students have access to online learning resources after their departure	
T16 The new EF Challenge initiative enables students to interact with the local community. The 'Culture' section of the guide books, which form part of the EFEKTA materials, contains activities to encourage interaction with the wider community outside the classroom. Teachers accompany students on occasional educational visits.	

Learner management	Area of strength
T17 There are effective procedures for the correct placement of students, appropriate to their level and age.	Met
T18 There are effective procedures for evaluating, monitoring and recording students' progress.	Strength
T19 Students are provided with learning support and enabled to change courses or classes where necessary.	Met
T20 Where relevant, students are guided to select the examinations and examination training best suited to their needs and interests.	Strength
T21 Academic reports are made available to students on request and, in the case of under 18s, to their parents/guardians.	Strength
T22 Students wishing to progress to mainstream UK education have access to relevant	Strength

information and advice.

Comments

T17 General English and academic year students are taught in separate groups where possible, although timetabling constraints or the needs of particular students sometimes mean that classes are mixed.

T18 Student progress is monitored through weekly teacher assessment, informal weekly reviews and six-weekly progress tests. There are also monthly tutorials with action plans, recorded on MyEF for student reference.

T20 Academic year students are encouraged to take a public examination during their course. Barrier tests are used to check that students' level is appropriate for their chosen examination. IELTS preparation classes are an integral part of the UP programme.

T21 Reports are detailed and professionally presented. Academic year students and their sponsors can request interim reports during the course. Students can also take a level test at the end of their course.

T22 The UP academic managers can provide detailed information and good support to any student wishing to enter mainstream UK education.

Classroom observation record

Number of teachers seen	18
Number of observations	18
Parts of programme(s) observed	General English, examination preparation, SPINs, project sessions and lecture

Comments

The ADoS was teaching during the week of the inspection to cover for an absent teacher. All 17 teachers and the ADoS were observed.

Teaching: classroom observation	Met
T23 Teachers demonstrate sound knowledge and awareness of the use of English and the linguistic systems underlying it, and provide appropriate models of both spoken and written English.	Met
T24 The content of the lessons shows that the course objectives, the learning needs and cultural backgrounds of the students have been taken into account.	Strength
T25 Lessons lead to relevant learning outcomes, made known to students and achieved through a coherent sequence of activities.	Met
T26 Teaching techniques are appropriate to the focus of the lesson and to the needs of the group and individual learners.	Met
T27 Teachers promote learning by the effective management of the classroom environment and resources.	Met
T28 Students receive appropriate and timely feedback on their performance during the lesson.	Met
T29 Lessons include activities to evaluate whether learning is taking place.	Strength
T30 Teachers demonstrate the ability to engage students and create a positive learning atmosphere.	Strength

Comments

T23 Teachers mostly had good linguistic knowledge and were able to explain grammar points and vocabulary effectively, although some teachers offered only perfunctory explanations. There was good attention to pronunciation in many classes, sometimes including use of the phonemic chart. A few teachers were not always easy to understand.

T24 Course content was relevant to the age group and background of the students. Detailed class profiles demonstrated that teachers were aware of their students' needs; students with specific learning problems were clearly identified. Most teachers understood the need to differentiate and took account of this in their plans. Higher level students were challenged with authentic materials.

T25 Aims and learning outcomes were made clear to students and lessons were carefully staged, although sometimes coherence was clearer in the plan than in practice. In the more successful lessons teachers were able to personalise materials.

T26 A good range of teaching techniques was noted including running dictations, use of visuals, online quizzes, pair work and group work. Most teachers had good elicitation techniques; in some cases quieter students were not nominated or fully included in the lesson. Many teachers had good questioning techniques, but some answered questions themselves and did not challenge students with further questions. Concept-checking questions were used well by many teachers, particularly during the setting up of activities.

T27 Most boardwork was of a reasonable standard, although some boards were smudged and teachers did not always present information clearly or logically. There was excellent use of video and audio clips, presentations, phone apps, and class sets of laptops for individualised learning. There was limited opportunity for students to

move around, particularly in rooms with large tables.

T28 Feedback was mostly effective and supportive. Students were encouraged to correct themselves and each other and were often asked follow-up questions to reinforce the learning of the target language. Some opportunities to correct pronunciation errors were missed.

T29 Evaluation was mostly through exercises and free speaking activities, including lively quizzes. Classroom technology was imaginatively used to check learning. There were many examples of useful recycling of vocabulary from previous lessons.

T30 There was good rapport and a positive learning atmosphere in the classes observed, with students engaged and motivated. Lessons were lively and challenging in almost all cases.

Classroom observation summary

The teaching observed met the requirements of the Scheme and ranged from very good to satisfactory. Most lessons were satisfactory; many were either good or very good. Generally teachers demonstrated a sound knowledge of linguistic systems. Teachers were able to identify the learning needs of their students; lesson plans were detailed and relevant in nearly all cases. A good range of effective teaching techniques was seen. There was excellent use of computer and IT resources. Feedback and the evaluation of learning were mostly well handled. Students were challenged and engaged in almost all classes.

Welfare and student services

Care of students	Area of strength
W1 Providers ensure the safety and security of students on their premises by measures appropriate to their age and background, and the location.	Strength
W2 There is a comprehensive plan to respond to any emergency. This plan is known to all staff, and relevant elements are known to students.	Strength
W3 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
W4 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
W5 Where relevant, students receive a 24-hour emergency contact number for the provider, in writing.	Met
W6 Students receive in advance information on the most appropriate forms of transport between the point of entry to the UK and the provider or accommodation, including approximate costs.	Strength
W7 Students receive advice on relevant aspects of life in the UK.	Strength
W8 Students have access to adequate health care provision.	Strength

Comments

W1 Excellent systems and procedures are in place to ensure the safety and security of students on school premises. A full range of comprehensive risk assessments has been carried out, and these are regularly updated. All staff have received fire awareness training and there are trained fire marshals; fire drills are carried out regularly and are logged. There is a single, controlled entrance to the site and entry to the on-site residences is by an electronic wristband which allows entry only to the student's own room.

W2 A very thorough EF crisis plan has been developed, and is in use across the organisation. It draws on practical experience of dealing with security incidents at a number of centres around the world. It provides a clear, structured plan for dealing with crises of various kinds, both on and off the premises. Regular trials take place to ensure that systems are known to managers and staff.

W3 Pastoral and welfare provision is of a high standard, and since the last inspection has been made the responsibility of a specific department with its own manager, rather than being part of the general student services department. Students are given a dedicated welfare phone number to access support round the clock. In the residences, a night supervisor with a specific welfare role is on duty until 03.30 each morning. A strong feature of the provision is the training undertaken by members of the welfare team in dealing with mental health issues.

W4 A wide range of policies and procedures is in place to promote tolerance and respect. All students are given a copy of the school's 'community standards', and these are backed up by appropriate training for staff. A specific 'anti-bullying' week was organised in February 2019, and it is planned to repeat this at regular intervals.

W6 All relevant information, tailored to their individual context, is provided to students before departure, and is also available on the MyEF platform, to which they have access as soon as they enrol. Transfer arrangements are thorough and responsive to events.

W7 Information provided to students is up to date and comprehensive. It is available electronically (through MyEF and electronic displays in the school), in the student handbook, and on attractively laid-out noticeboards.

W8 There is very good provision for health care for students, including a formal partnership with a local medical centre and arrangements for twice-weekly appointments for students on the school site.

Accommodation (W9–W22 as applicable)	Area of strength
<i>All accommodation</i>	
W9 Students have a comfortable living environment throughout their stay.	Met
W10 Arrangements for cleaning and laundry are satisfactory.	Met
W11 A responsible representative inspects all accommodation (for safety and suitability) before students are placed, and at least every two years after that.	Strength
W12 Students receive written confirmation of accommodation booked, giving clear and accurate information.	Met
W13 There are effective procedures for identifying and resolving any problems students have with their accommodation.	Strength
W14 Accommodation providers receive written confirmation of the rules, terms and conditions applied by the provider with respect to the provision of accommodation services.	Strength
W15 Students receive meals as agreed; these offer a well-balanced diet, taking into account any reasonable dietary requirements students may have.	Strength

Comments

W9 Residential accommodation is of a high standard and provides a very comfortable living environment; overall the homestay accommodation was satisfactory, but in some cases the students' rooms were rather cramped.

W11 Accommodation is carefully and regularly monitored. Residential accommodation is checked every week, and homestays are re-inspected every year.

W13 Both residential and homestay students have open-door access to their respective accommodation managers, and any issues are noted systematically in logs which remain open until the issue is resolved.

W14 Hosts receive comprehensive guidance and information in a handbook, and also have access to an online Hosts MyEF platform.

W15 Meals provided onsite for residential students are varied and well balanced. Excellent arrangements are in place to deal with any special dietary requirements. Feedback on homestay hosts showed that most students were very happy with the food provided.

<i>Accommodation: homestay only</i>	
W16 Homestay hosts accommodate no more than four students at one time.	Met
W17 Homestay hosts do not accommodate more than one student with the same language, unless the students, their agents, parents or legal guardians specifically request this in writing.	Met
W18 No more than two students share the same bedroom, unless the students, their agents, parents or legal guardians specifically request this in writing.	Met
W19 English is the language of communication within the homestay home.	Met
W20 Hosts ensure that there is an adult available to receive students on first arrival.	Met

Comments

All criteria in this area are fully met.

<i>Accommodation: other</i>	
W21 Students receive information about the implications of their living in private rented accommodation and advice in case of difficulties.	Met
W22 The provider monitors any other accommodation recommended, and booking and payment arrangements are clear.	N/a

Comments

The applicable criterion in this area is fully met.

Leisure opportunities	Area of strength
W23 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
W24 The content of any leisure programme is appropriate to the age and interests of the students.	Met

W25 Any leisure programmes are well organised and sufficiently resourced.	Strength
W26 There are effective systems to ensure the health and safety of students on all on-site and off-site activities.	Strength
W27 Staff supervising sporting and leisure activities on or off-site have appropriate experience and training.	Strength

Comments

W23 Information is provided about a wide range of activities; however, students living in homestay accommodation often need to make special arrangements with their hosts if they wish to take part, because of the timing of the events advertised.

W25 A dedicated leisure and activities team organises all on-site and off-site activities. They are responsive to the interests of students and are easily accessible on a day-to-day basis to interact with students and engage them with the programme. Excursions are organised by the school specifically for their students, and are well set up and managed. Student feedback in this area was very positive.

W26 Comprehensive risk assessments are drawn up for all activities, and they are regularly reviewed. Supervision ratios are high, and all staff accompanying off-site activities are first aid trained.

W27 The full-time activities manager has nearly three years' experience in role, and all activities staff have a rigorous induction; most have experience, and great care is taken to team any less experienced staff with an experienced colleague.

Safeguarding under 18s

Safeguarding under 18s	Area of strength
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 practice and the organisation's safeguarding policy.	Strength
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.	Strength
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

All under 18s are either 16 or 17. At the time of the inspection there were 108 under 18s (out of a total student body of 481); at peak last year, the proportion was higher with 530 under 18s out of 987.

S1 An extremely comprehensive and thorough safeguarding policy is in place, supported by a regular annual safeguarding risk assessment and a full range of relevant documentation for dealing with disclosure and taking appropriate action. The policy was developed with expert input.

S2 All adults in contact with under 18s have effective safeguarding training. All staff have at least basic awareness training; the designated safeguarding lead and her deputy, as well as three named safeguarding officers, are all trained to specialist level. Annual refresher training on a face-to-face basis is provided for all staff. Homestay hosts working with under 18s are encouraged to take an online training course, and guidance is provided through the online Hosts MyEF platform.

S3 Parental consent is sought but the language of the forms is rather complex for the purpose (even in translation).

S4 Great care is taken to vet all applications, and the procedures are fully in line with Scheme requirements; written references are followed up verbally.

S6 Arrangements for the supervision and safety of students outside the scheduled programme are clear and well documented. All under 18s have a separate induction focusing on school rules for out of class time; these are signed off by the students, and any breaches are followed up robustly.

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	2007
Last full inspection	October 2015
Subsequent spot check (if applicable)	N/a
Subsequent supplementary check (if applicable)	N/a
Subsequent interim visit (if applicable)	N/a
Current accreditation status	Accredited
Other related non-accredited activities (in brief) at this centre	Subject teaching on university preparation programmes.
Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates	Other accredited schools: Bournemouth, Brighton, Bristol, Cambridge, Cambridge Executive, Eastbourne, London and Manchester.
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	Worldwide network of vacation centres, international boarding schools and international business schools.

Private sector

Date of foundation	2006 (EF established 1965)
Ownership	Name of company: EF Language Schools Ltd Company number: 01043158
Other accreditation/inspection	ISI

Premises profile

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

Student profile

Student profile	At inspection	In peak week: July (organisation's estimate)
	At inspection	In peak week
ELT/ESOL students (eligible courses)		
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) 18 years and over	373	457
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) aged 16–17 years	108	530
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) aged under 16	0	0
Part-time ELT aged 18 years and over	0	0
Part-time ELT aged 16–17 years	0	0
Part-time ELT aged under 16 years	0	0
Overall total ELT/ESOL students shown above	481	987

Junior programmes: advertised minimum age	N/a	N/a
Junior programmes: advertised maximum age	N/a	N/a
Junior programmes: predominant nationalities	N/a	N/a
Adult programmes: advertised minimum age	16	16
Adult programmes: typical age range	16–50 (average 20)	16–64 (average 18)
Adult programmes: typical length of stay	23 weeks	8 weeks
Adult programmes: predominant nationalities	German, Japanese, Chinese, French, Italian	Argentinian, Taiwanese, Spanish, Turkish, Swiss
Staff profile	At inspection	In peak week (organisation's estimate)
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	17	30–35
Number teaching ELT 20 hours and over a week	16	
Number teaching ELT under 19 hours a week	1	
Number of academic managers for eligible ELT courses	2	2
Number of management (non-academic) and administrative staff working on eligible ELT courses	23	
Total number of support staff	3	

Academic manager qualifications profile

Profile at inspection	
Professional qualifications	Number of academic managers
TEFLQ qualification	1
Academic managers without TEFLQ qualification or three years relevant experience	1
Total	2
Comments	

The DoA is TEFLQ. The ADoS is TEFLI and is working towards a TEFLQ qualification. The team works closely with the UP manager and the UP ADoS, both of whom are TEFLQ. They are not included in the figures above.

Teacher qualifications profile

Profile in week of inspection	
Professional qualifications	Number of teachers
TEFLQ qualification	1
TEFLI qualification	16
Holding specialist qualifications only (specify)	0
Qualified teacher status only (QTS)	0
Teachers without appropriate ELT/TESOL qualification	0
Total	17
Comments	
None.	

Accommodation profile

Number of students in each at the time of inspection (all students on eligible courses)		
Types of accommodation	Adults	Under 18s
<i>Arranged by provider/agency</i>		
Homestay	134	30
Private home	0	0
Home tuition	0	0
Residential	221	78
Hotel/guesthouse	0	0
Independent self-catering e.g. flats, bedsits, student houses	0	0

<i>Arranged by student/family/guardian</i>		
Staying with own family	0	0
Staying in privately rented rooms/flats	18	0
Overall totals adults/under 18s	373	108
Overall total adults + under 18s	481	