

Organisation name	English in Margate
Inspection date	9 July 2021
Current accreditation status	Accredited
Reason for spot check	Unsignalled: following a failure to submit documents

Recommendation

We recommend in view of the unsatisfactory findings that accreditation be placed under review. The period of review to be ended by the submission of all late documentation and a spot check focusing on W1 and checking action on points to be addressed from the 2018 inspection and this spot check.

Changes to the summary statement

The summary statement has been withdrawn and should not be used.

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	1999
Last full inspection	June 2018
Subsequent spot check(s) (if applicable)	N/a
Subsequent supplementary check(s) (if applicable)	N/a
Subsequent interim visit(s) (if applicable)	N/a
Other related non-accredited activities (in brief) at this centre	Award bearing teacher training courses
Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates	N/a
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	International Language Homestays, Leo Languages Abroad

Student and staff profile	At inspection	In peak week: July 2021
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	42	42
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	11 (advertised) 19 (actual)	11 (advertised) 19 (actual)
Typical age range	20–24	20–24
Typical length of stay	3 weeks	3 weeks
Predominant nationalities	French	French
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	3	3
Total number of managers including academic	2	2
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	1	1

Premises profile

Address of main site	The Towers, Hawley Square, Margate, Kent CT9 1PH
Additional sites in use	N/a
Additional sites not in use	N/a
Sites inspected	The Towers, Hawley Square, Margate, Kent CT9 1PH

Introduction

Background

English in Margate (EiM) offers a range of year-round courses to adults and young people (16+). The school also offers closed group courses of one or two weeks for under 18s (11+) and adults. Course programmes are tailored to the requirements of each group. The school was last inspected in June 2018.

This was an unannounced spot check carried out at the discretion of Manager Accreditation UK, triggered by failure to submit an annual declaration. Despite multiple reminders and the owner's promise to send them, the annual declaration and additional information requested by the Accreditation Unit had not been received by the time of the spot check. The Assistant Manager Accreditation UK had informed the inspector, following a telephone call with the school, that they had no bookings.

Preparation

The inspector was sent all of the email communication between the Assistant Manager Accreditation UK and the school owner. The inspector viewed the school's website, read EiM's most recent inspection report and the action plan on points to be addressed submitted by the school (2019).

Programme and persons present

This spot check inspection took place on the morning of Friday, 9 July. At the beginning of his visit, the inspector showed his letter of authorisation to the owner and managing director and explained he was conducting a spot check due to the late submission of documentation.

During his visit, the inspector spoke individually with the owner, the general and academic manager, who was also teaching, two other teachers and a social assistant. One of the teachers was also a homestay host. Two students from each class were also briefly interviewed in their classrooms. The principal gave the inspector a tour of the premises and the latter subsequently visited the three classrooms in use to conduct interviews during class breaks.

Findings are reported in the following section.

On arrival at the school, the inspector discovered that a closed group of 42 French adult students were studying in three TOIEC preparation classes and staying in local homestays. The students were at the end of the third week of a course that combined remote and in-person study. During the first week of their course, the students studied online while quarantining with their homestay hosts in the local area. They also had three Covid-19 tests during this week. Some of the students had been vaccinated and some not. The second and third weeks of the course consisted of morning and afternoon lessons in three classes in the school (15, 15 and 12 students in each class). In the final week of the course, students were due to receive online lessons when back in France. According to a member of staff, two more groups were planned after this one, following a similar programme.

During his visit, the inspector focused on discussing with the owner the late submissions of documentation and investigating the Covid-related safety measures that were in place for the current group.

The owner agreed that he had been late in submitting the required documentation and agreed to submit it by the end of the following working week.

The students spoken to were happy with their lessons, the course structure, their homestays and the safety arrangements in place. However, it was unclear what precise instructions had been given to them pre or post arrival. One of the students showed the inspector an email from the school outlining what the school arrangements were.

During the inspection, it became apparent that a new academic manager had been appointed before the first national lockdown in 2020, following the departure of the previous academic manager. The Accreditation Unit had not been notified of this change; information received after the inspection confirmed that the new academic manager is TEFLI. The teachers were happy with the course syllabus designed by the new academic manager, the teaching and learning resources and the support he was giving them.

A number of Covid-related safety measures were in place including sanitisers in toilets and elsewhere, the staggering of lessons and breaks, windows and doors open in classrooms to ensure adequate ventilation, the removal of most tables and desks from classrooms, students sitting in the same seats for all lessons and the cleaning of rooms.

However, it became clear through talking with staff that they were not all aware of recent written or oral risk assessments having been conducted, and some of them were unaware of any written Covid-related instructions for staff or students. No sanitisers were in place at the entrance of the building and class sizes were similar or larger than those normally in operation. (The maximum class size for open enrolment adult courses is 12 and there were 15 students in two of the closed group classes). The wearing of face coverings was optional and no one was wearing them. Although lesson and break times were staggered with each group starting 15 minutes apart, there were two 15-minute periods during the morning when two classes breaks overlapped.

In a brief round-up the inspector confirmed that the principal had agreed to send the late documentation to the Unit in the following week. The inspector stated the urgency and importance of conducting an up-to-date Covid risk

assessment and for its contents to be shared with staff. He also advised that the risk assessment should include a review of the maximum number of students studying in any classroom. The owner also agreed to send the inspector a number of documents including information sent to homestays, current students (pre-course email sent to students containing Covid-related information), and a student safety document on a noticeboard dated 2020.

On Saturday, 10 July, the day after his visit, the inspector wrote a follow-up email to the owner outlining the agreement to send the missing documentation in the following week and also reiterating the need to review risk assessments (W1) and where to obtain detailed advice about conducting relevant risk assessments. He also repeated his request to receive information specified during the round up.

No documentation was sent to the inspector or the Accreditation Unit in the following week. However, on Friday, 16 July, the owner wrote emails to the inspector and to the Assistant Manager Accreditation UK explaining that he had not been able to send any documentation due to the absence from the school that week of the academic/general manager, who was off sick. He wrote that he would send the documentation the following week. The Assistant Manager Accreditation UK replied to the principal on the same day answering his queries about the documentation. She also requested that all outstanding documentation be sent by the end of Monday morning, 19 June.

At the time of writing this report (15.00, Monday, 19 July) no documentation had been received by the inspector or the Assistant Manager Accreditation UK and the online annual declaration had not been completed.

Addendum

The inspector subsequently received three documents later that afternoon entitled:

Homestay Covid Update June 2021

Student Safety Advice updated July 2021

English in Margate Covid 19 measures

These documents refer to a range of measures; some of these were seen to be in operation at the time of the spot check, but some were not, and, therefore, cannot be confirmed by the inspector to be in place. The school's Covid-19 measures document refers to students keeping one metre apart, which was not the distance of all of the chairs and the students in the classrooms at the time of the visit. The measures outlined in documentation do not include any reference to a risk assessment specific to the school or to a review of class sizes.

Conclusions

Despite numerous reminders, the annual declaration and some of the other documentation requested by the Accreditation Unit had not been submitted at the time of writing this report. Documents from the school related to Covid-19 measures taken have been received referring to a range of measures and meet the need to provide written evidence of such guidelines. However, staff were unaware of any Covid-related risk assessments having been conducted, and measures to ensure the health and safety of students and staff were seen to be only partially implemented. The school was unable to provide evidence of compliance with government requirements concerning public health in place at the time.
