

Organisation name	English in Chester
Inspection date	21–23 May 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 English in Chester in May 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 private language school offers courses in general and professional English for adults (18+), for young people (16+) and for closed groups of adults and under 18s, and vacation courses for under 18s.

Strengths were noted in the areas of strategic and quality management, staff management, student administration, publicity, premises and facilities, learning resources, academic staff profile, 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

English in Chester is a well-established privately-owned school, which offers a range of different course types in its own premises year round, and an off-site teens course during the summer. Notable features of the school are the number of long-serving staff on both the academic and non-academic sides of the school, and the investment that has been made in sophisticated management software, extending into all areas of the school's work.

The inspection lasted two and a half days with two inspectors. During this time the inspectors had meetings with the principal, the director (and owner), the academic manager, the student services manager, the marketing manager, the administrative manager, the operations manager, the course director, the summer course centre manager, the groups co-ordinator, the administrative assistant in charge of residential accommodation, and the social programmes organiser. Focus group meetings were held with three separate groups of students and with the teachers, and one inspector visited four homestays and three residences. All teachers timetabled during the period of the inspection were observed.

Address of main site/head office

9–11 Stanley Place, Chester CH1 2LU

Description of sites visited

The school occupies three buildings on Stanley Place. The main building comprises two terraced houses which have been converted into a single unit, and is on four floors with an external patio seating area at the rear. Reception and office space for the principal, the student administration team, and the academic managers are on the ground floor, as is a staff lounge, a meeting room, a staff kitchen, a computer room for students, a server room and one classroom. The first floor contains a staffroom for teachers, a student common room, a coffee room for students, a self-access centre and two classrooms. There are seven classrooms on the second floor, an additional teachers' room and a study corner. The third floor contains the remaining four classrooms. This building is used for the general English courses. Next to the main building is Durwen House (7 Stanley Place), which accommodates the marketing and finance offices. The third building, the Language Training Centre [LTC] (2 Stanley Place), is on the opposite side of the small square and is used for 25+ and 50+ courses and for one-to-one tuition. It is on three storeys and there is a basement which is used for storage. The ground floor comprises a large student lounge and coffee bar and has one classroom at the back. On the other two floors are five further classrooms, a staffroom and a computer room. All three buildings were in use at the time of the inspection.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher development (excludes award-bearing courses)	<input checked="" 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

At the time of the inspection there were eight groups following morning general English classes (16+), with the cohort split up into varying numbers of afternoon option groups on different days of the week. These students had a programme of 21 hours per week. There were five open-enrolment groups of students following the 25+ programme, and three groups following the 50+ programme. Students on both of these follow a needs/interest-based programme, with the 25+ students having 22.5 hours a week with additional optional one-to-one classes, and the 50+ students having a morning language development programme (15 hours) with an afternoon programme of activities and excursions. In addition, there were two closed groups of under 18s following their own programmes of language activation, social activities, and visits.

In the summer period (late June to early August) an off-site programme is run for individually-enrolled or 'mini-group' students aged 13–16. This has 15 hours a week of language development with a programme of social activities and visits.

Management profile

The principal is responsible for all aspects of the running of the school except marketing, which is supervised by the director and the marketing manager. A senior management team has been formed, comprising the director, the principal, the academic manager, the administrative manager, the marketing manager, and the finance and operations manager. A summer courses centre manager is responsible for the off-site juniors programme.

The academic manager works closely with the principal and is supported by a course director, who has particular responsibility for closed-group programmes.

Accommodation profile

The vast majority of students are in homestay accommodation, which is managed by the school. The school also offers accommodation in a number of student residences. Two of these offer ensuite rooms in shared apartments, one offers studio apartments, and the third offers both studio and shared apartments. All of the residences are managed by external providers. In addition, the school recommends a number of hotels, which it has arrangements with.

Summary of inspection findings

Management

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The school has produced a clear statement of its goals and values and these influence all aspects of the provision. Self-evaluation and the promotion of quality are embedded within the school culture. Excellent systems and procedures are in place to ensure the effective management and development of staff, and student administration is of a very high standard. Publicity is clear and attractively presented, and provides accurate information on all aspects of the school's work. *Strategic and quality management, Staff management and development, Student administration, and Publicity* are areas of strength.

Premises and resources

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The premises are in a good state of repair and are clean and well furnished. They provide students and staff with a very comfortable and thoroughly professional environment for work and relaxation. A wide range of up-to-date learning resources is available, entirely appropriate to the age and needs of the students. Clear guidance on the use of these resources is provided for staff and students where needed. *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 staff team is highly qualified overall and has a professional profile, in terms of experience and professional development, appropriate to the range of courses. Teachers receive skilled guidance to ensure that they support students effectively in their learning. Courses are well structured and professionally managed to provide the maximum possible benefit to students. The teaching observed met the requirements of the Scheme. *Academic staff profile, 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. The welfare and security of students is ensured in a thoughtful and meticulous manner; accommodation is of a good standard and very well managed. The leisure programme is well designed to cater to the diverse age groups within the school. *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 are detailed and effective policies and procedures in place to safeguard students under the age of 18. *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 There is a clear statement of the goals and values of the organisation, which is integral to its work. Staff were involved in the original formulation and the coverage has recently been extended to recognise the contribution of external stakeholders such as homestay hosts and other contractors.

M2 A comprehensive rolling three-year development and quality improvement plan is in place, setting out clear, staged objectives and identifying responsibilities for action. Progress is monitored and reviewed regularly at meetings of the senior management group.

M3 The management structure is clearly documented and well understood by staff and, where relevant, by students. There is an explicit focus on continuity and cover by ensuring that members of the different teams are fully involved in aspects of one another's work and are familiar with the systems used in different areas of the operation.

M4 Communication throughout the organisation is excellent. This is achieved through regular meetings, close and open working relationships, and specific measures such as a staff newsletter.

M5 Collection and analysis of student feedback is thorough and systematic. Feedback is obtained regularly, carefully analysed, and shared with all stakeholders. Issues arising and action taken are carefully logged and reviewed by the senior management team. Additional feedback is collected from regular student focus groups.

M6 Staff reported that their views are actively sought and are valued. This is supported by an annual staff survey, leaving questionnaires and interviews with departing staff, and the annual appraisals, which include discussion of the way in which the school can better support staff.

M7 The process of reflection and self-evaluation is thoroughly embedded in the work of the school. A comprehensive self-evaluation in relation to Accreditation Scheme criteria is maintained and reviewed on an ongoing basis.

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.	Strength
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 Human resources policies are clear and comprehensive. Staff commented on the supportive and compassionate way in which the policies are applied. All policies are now available in digital form, and work is underway to make them all easily accessible to staff through a digital hub.

M10 The school has clear recruitment policies and well embedded processes for the safe recruitment of new staff, supported by thorough documentation. The principal and academic manager renewed training in safer recruitment in November 2018.

M11 All new appointees follow a thorough and carefully structured induction process. There is an effective 'buddy' system in place, and new teachers are given specific guidance relating to the type of course on which they will initially be working.

M12 Procedures for monitoring and appraising staff are well established. All permanent staff have an annual appraisal with their line manager, and all teachers who have worked more than 12 weeks are appraised by the academic manager. Appraisals are signed off by the manager and the appraisee, and include agreed targets and identification of continuing professional development (CPD) needs. Short-term employees have a less formal review meeting.

M13 The school offers excellent opportunities for CPD, generated in part from appraisals and observation, and also from consideration of the strategic needs of the school. The latter has led to current funding for three more teachers to obtain diploma level qualifications. Full records of CPD undertaken by individuals are maintained online.

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.	Strength
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.	Strength
M20 All staff and students are made aware of conditions and procedures under which a student may be asked to leave the course.	Strength
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 Students and group leaders commented on the helpful and friendly support they receive from all staff. This was verified by the inspectors as they observed staff-student interactions.

M15 Exemplary pre-enrolment and pre-arrival documentation is provided for students, containing full information about the courses on offer. Any queries arising during a student's stay are dealt with speedily and efficiently by the student services team or the academic team. General English students have regular tutorials throughout their stay in the school to support and advise them, and longer-term students also have meetings with the academic manager and/or the principal.

M16 The school has comprehensive written procedures, and deals with refund requests fairly in line with the school's terms and conditions. New staff receive full training in this area as part of their induction.

M19 The school has a very clear punctuality and attendance policy, with an expected minimum of 90 per cent attendance for the general English courses. Unexplained absence is followed up quickly. Evidence was seen of persistent absence being followed up sensitively but firmly.

M20 The conditions and procedures under which students may be asked to leave the course are fully set out in the student handbook, in group leader information, and in individual student arrival packs. There is an effective, staged process which gives the opportunity for improvement but makes explicit the possibility of expulsion.

M21 Great care is taken to ensure that the complaints procedure is made known to all relevant stakeholders. It is clearly displayed on noticeboards around the school, and is also set out in the student handbook and on the website. A link is included in all booking confirmation letters to the policy on the website. A full record is kept of complaints made and action taken.

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.	Strength
M23 All publicity and information about the provider and the services it offers is in clear, accurate and accessible English.	Strength
M24 Publicity gives clear, accurate and easy-to-find information on the courses.	Strength
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.	Strength
M27 Publicity gives an accurate description of any accommodation offered.	Strength
M28 Descriptions of staff qualifications are accurate.	N/a

M29 Claims to accreditation are in line with Scheme requirements.	Met
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Comments

Publicity consist of a website and a brochure. The website is the main medium. Careful use is also made of a number of social media to report on and document the student experience in the school.

M22 Publicity gives rise to entirely accurate and thoroughly realistic expectations about the school. There are very clear descriptions or pictures of all features of the provision.

M23 The publicity is presented in extremely clear and accessible English, and the website is also available in translation into 11 languages.

M24 Information on the courses is full, accurate and extremely easy to find.

M26 Comprehensive information on the care and support available to students under 18 is available. The website has a dedicated page on welfare and safeguarding, which includes a section on pastoral care and a link to the school pastoral care policy. There is also a link to Information for parents or guardians of students under 18 years old accepted on to a General English course as either an individual or as part of a group.

M27 There is a full description of the types of accommodation available on a dedicated page of the website.

M28 There is no specific reference to staff qualifications in the publicity.

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.	Met
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.	Met

Comments

P3 There are very good facilities for relaxation and the consumption of food. Both teaching buildings have attractive lounge/common room areas, and the main building also has a specific coffee/drinks area and a recently renovated external patio seating area with tables.

P4 Free drinking water is readily available. There are a number of excellent food outlets close to the school offering a wide range of options. Discounts for students at the school have been negotiated at many of these.

P5 Signage within both teaching buildings is very clear and effective. It has been carefully designed to enable new students and visitors to find their way around a complex layout of rooms, especially in the main building, which was originally two separate houses. There are good facilities for the display of general information, including a number of electronic displays.

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.	Met
P12 There is a policy for the continuing review and development of teaching and learning resources, and evidence of its implementation.	Met

Comments

P7 There is an excellent range of print and online resources, including the school's own learning portal with pre- and post-course access. This is under development to provide access to work linked to specific coursebooks.

P8 A wide range of coursebook and supplementary material is available, including a large amount of in-house material custom made for the specific courses offered. Access to video and audio resources is available wirelessly throughout the school.

P10 There is a well-equipped self-access centre in the main building, as well as a 12-position computer room which is also available for self-access. Smaller, but appropriate facilities are available in the LTC. A major development in this area has been the adaptation of the school's *e-chester* learning portal to facilitate access from mobile phones.

Teaching and learning

Academic staff profile	Area of strength
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.	Strength
T3 The teaching team has a range of experience, knowledge and skills appropriate to the courses offered and the needs of the learners.	Strength
T4 The academic manager/academic management team has an appropriate professional profile to provide academic leadership.	Strength
Comments	
T2 The teaching team is very well qualified with a substantial majority having TEFL qualifications at diploma level.	
T3 There was clear evidence within the teaching team of substantial experience and expertise in teaching the specific levels and specialisms offered by the school.	
T4 The academic manager and the course directors have a strong professional profile, based on significant experience in a range of contexts.	

Academic management	Area of strength
T5 Teachers are matched appropriately to courses.	Strength
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.	Strength
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.	Met
Comments	

T5 Arrangements for matching teachers to courses are systematic and effective, supported by a sophisticated software package (Staff planner) which records previous teacher deployment. Teachers' experience, levels of qualification, preferences and availability are taken into account. There are opportunities for teachers wishing to move into different areas to observe peers.

T6 Timetabling is carried out efficiently and sensitively. It is a complex task since general English courses have enrolment each week and offer a range of different afternoon options; closed group and specialist courses also have frequent start dates. The timetable takes effective account of the religious or other requirements of specific groups of students.

T7 There is excellent provision for cover. Where absence is pre-arranged, a cover teacher shadows the teacher before their leave and is given detailed handover notes. Where absence is not pre-arranged, the principal or academic manager can contact a pool of local teachers, whose availability is indicated on Staff planner. If none is available, the course director will cover the class.

T8 Comprehensive arrangements are in place to deal with continuous enrolment. There is useful guidance in the teachers' handbook. On general English courses, teachers do not introduce new language on a Monday. There is a grammar catchup session for new students on the first Tuesday as well as a regular grammar workshop option and support in making use of online self-access resources for catch up where needed.

T9 The academic manager co-ordinates a full and varied programme of CPD for teachers, and this is supported by effective measures to provide day-to-day support and guidance. The academic manager arranges regular class visits to review student placement, and offers feedback to teachers where appropriate. All new teachers, and those working on a new course, have a nominated 'buddy' to support them, and peer observation is actively encouraged.

T10 There are systematic arrangements for observing and monitoring teachers. All teachers have an annual formal observation by a TEFLQ academic manager. They receive detailed feedback orally and in writing and points to be addressed are identified. New teachers are observed within their first two weeks. It was noted that no time frame or specific follow-up action was identified in relation to the points to be addressed.

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.	Met
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

T12 Feedback from students and staff is systematically used to develop course design as part of the school quality development cycle. Working groups are regularly formed to review different aspects of course provision.

T15 Study and learning strategies are an important focus on all courses. General English and 25+ students have a study skills session at induction where they are issued with a ring binder and encouraged to file their worksheets and record new vocabulary. Files are inspected and vocabulary is regularly reviewed. Teachers are trained in the use of the phonemic alphabet and use it systematically in class. The development of study skills is an explicit focus of lesson observations.

T16 All courses systematically exploit the school's location in Chester to help students to develop their language outside the classroom in authentic situations. There has been a recent project to produce resources to support this through the Linking language to the local environment (LLTTLE) initiative. Class visits are made to venues such as the law courts, and students follow up their work in the local environment by creating blogs.

Learner management	Area of strength
T17 There are effective procedures for the correct placement of students, appropriate to their level and age.	Strength
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.	Met
T22 Students wishing to progress to mainstream UK education have access to relevant information and advice.	Met

Comments

T17 There are efficient procedures both before and at students' arrival to place them in the appropriate class. The assessment procedure varies for each course and is well suited to the different types of students. It covers all relevant areas and links levels to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). Staff involved in testing are well qualified and trained.

T18 Procedures for monitoring student progress are systematic and thorough. The programme for general English includes a test at the end of each week and there is a monthly progress test that includes speaking and writing elements. Formal online tutorials take place for students every four weeks except during the summer, when it is every six weeks. Long-stay students have 12-weekly meetings with the principal or academic manager to review progress and plans.

T20 Excellent guidance is available for students wishing to take examinations. The school offers preparation for a range of general English examinations and for IELTS. The academic manager ensures that guidance is up to date. There is detailed and helpful information about each of these exams on the website. Normally, students are sent pre-tests in advance of their arrival and all are given a diagnostic test on arrival.

Classroom observation record

Number of teachers seen	21
Number of observations	21
Parts of programme(s) observed	General English; closed group under 18s; 25+; 50+; one-to-one

Comments

None.

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.	Strength
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.	Met
T30 Teachers demonstrate the ability to engage students and create a positive learning atmosphere.	Strength

Comments

T23 Almost all teachers demonstrated an appropriate knowledge and awareness of the use of English and provided appropriate models for their students.

T24 It was clear that the course objectives, the learning needs and the cultural backgrounds of the students had been taken into account. There were some examples of very good personalisation of activities for the individuals in the group, and classes for the under 18s made good use of activities involving movement.

T25 In all cases observed, lesson aims had been written on the board. Many lesson plans showed an explicit link between student profiles and the content of lesson.

T26 Teaching techniques were generally appropriate to the focus of the lesson and the needs of the students. However, there were noticeable differences in the range of techniques used by individual teachers. In some cases, teachers in one-to-one classes were using techniques more suited to whole-class work.

T27 Teachers generally managed the classroom environment and resources effectively. In some classes the seating arrangements had been adapted to promote interaction in pair- and groupwork. Use of the whiteboard varied greatly with some examples of very clear and effective use, and others where the layout of what was written was not helpful to learners and legibility was an issue.

T28 In most cases students received timely and appropriate feedback on their performance, and there were some examples of principled and consistent error correction using a good range of techniques. However, there were a number of instances where errors were ignored or overlooked, and correction consisted simply of the teacher giving the right answer or the correct form.

T29 Most lessons observed contained activities that led students to produce language or demonstrate skills that enabled evaluation of learning.

T30 All the teachers clearly knew their students well and were able to engage them in their classes; it was clear that the teachers themselves were also fully engaged. This created a positive learning atmosphere in the classes observed.

Classroom observation summary

Teaching met the requirements of the Scheme and ranged from excellent to satisfactory, with the majority of lesson segments observed being judged good. In general teachers had a sound understanding of the language systems; lesson content was relevant to the needs and interests of the students, and was in some cases effectively personalised. In many cases, the delivery of the lessons was supported by a good range of teaching and classroom management techniques; sometimes the range of techniques used was limited, and some teachers worked with one-to-one students in ways more appropriate to whole-class teaching. Overall, feedback to students on their performance was satisfactory, with some examples of good practice, and opportunities were created for the

evaluation of student learning. Students were fully engaged and there was a positive learning atmosphere in 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.	Met
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 A comprehensive range of measures is in place to ensure the safety and security of students on the premises. Full premises and fire risk assessments are carried out regularly; fire alarm tests and evacuations are logged, and training is provided for fire marshals. There is a single entry to both sets of premises, controlled by a key pad, and monitored by reception staff.

W2 The school has a comprehensive plan for dealing with on- and off-site emergencies, and staff are trained in implementing it. There is a school emergency management team, and the student services manager has attended external emergency and crisis management training.

W3 The school has a very detailed pastoral care policy. The policy contains a high level of differentiation for the various age groups within the school. This is supported by an online tutorial system, which immediately alerts the student services manager if there is a welfare concern. The welfare team have received external training in student services management and mental health support.

W4 Accessible policies are in place, and the core values of the school are widely displayed in handbooks noticeboards, and on the website. Policies are regularly highlighted in the 'policy of the week' section of the staff newsletter, and all staff evidenced a good awareness of policies and procedures.

W7 The student handbook provides relevant and up-to-date information, and is attractively presented. In addition, students complete a 'British life' quiz during their induction.

W8 The school has a high ratio of first aiders on the staff, and well-established contact with a local doctor. Information regarding accessing health care provision is displayed on TV monitors as well as in the handbook. All U18s are accompanied on visits to the doctor or hospital, and older students are offered the same service.

Accommodation (W9–W22 as applicable)	Area of strength
<i>All accommodation</i>	
W9 Students have a comfortable living environment throughout their stay.	Strength
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.	Strength
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 All students are provided with clean and comfortable accommodation during their stay. Professional students in homestays are placed with specific hosts, and usually with a private bathroom. All students choosing residence accommodation in studios or shared apartments, also have private bathrooms. Wi-Fi access is available in all accommodation.

W11 Detailed inspection reports were seen with information on not only the accommodation itself, but also the local area in terms of safety and transportation. The school has exclusive use of the majority of its homestays.

Accommodation records are kept on a database, and contain health and safety records, feedback, and inspection dates. Reports are regularly run to alert staff to reinspection requirements.

W12 Personalised profiles are provided with photos of both the host and the accommodation, along with a detailed and personalised written description. Students contact hosts before arrival.

W13 Efficient feedback procedures are in place. Initial feedback is sought on a face-to-face basis at induction, and followed up immediately. All feedback taken is recorded on the accommodation profile, and provided to each host at the end of every year. Hosts also receive certificates of achievement in response to consistently good feedback.

W14 Homestay hosts' responsibilities are made clear from the initial application form through to the detailed agreement, and is reviewed with them on an annual basis. The school has created a 'homestay hub' on their website, where hosts can access this and other information. An extensive survey was carried out with homestay hosts last year, which allowed both the school and the hosts to review and improve their procedures.

W15 The school provides particularly valuable support to all hosts in the form of a food section on the homestay hub. This provides suggestions and recipes, particularly for specific dietary requirements. Feedback from students has consistently improved over the last few years and is now very good. All hosts spoken to had a flexible approach to meal provision and students were usually given a choice of what to eat.

Accommodation: homestay only

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 the section are fully met.

Accommodation: other

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.

Met

Comments

All criteria in the section are 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.

Strength

W24 The content of any leisure programme is appropriate to the age and interests of the students.

Strength

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 Students are provided with detailed information and strong support in order to access events and activities whilst studying in the UK. The school social programme has a 'do it yourself' section, which encourages students to access social and cultural activities in the local area. There are also weekend trips available, some run by the

school and some with an external bus tour company. The school books the trips with the external provider, which provides a discount to their students.

W24 The school goes to great lengths to ensure that the different groups within the school are offered a leisure programme to suit their needs and interests. The school runs separate programmes for their general English, closed group, teenager, and 50+ courses. The programmes are often designed to complement the course content.

W25 Regular student focus groups have had significant input into the drawing up of the general English social programme, and both the group and 50+ programmes are negotiated with the students and group leaders. Most trips are led by the school's teachers, and many exploit the local knowledge or interests of particular staff members.

W26 Thorough risk assessments for activities are regularly updated by the teacher leading them, and all contain a practical off-site emergency procedure. Students attending activities with the external provider are given plenty of information, including being shown a photo of the bus driver to further ensure their security. The school is currently trialling a new app that they have developed; this enables the activity leader to hold all of the above information on a telephone, along with student contact details, and next of kin information.

W27 The social programme organiser has good previous experience of working with students, and has attended a wide range of training on the safety aspects of the provision. In addition, she has also had the opportunity to share best practice with other organisers within the school's network.

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.	Strength
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.	Strength
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

At the time of the inspection, there was one student under 18 on an adult course. There were closed group courses running with students ranging from 10–12 in one, and 12–16 in the other. During the busier summer months, under 18s can account for two thirds of the student body. These students might be at the main school, either in closed groups or enrolled in the adult classes, and also on their teenage summer programme off site.

S1 There is a comprehensive safeguarding policy in place, with excellent differentiation regarding the range of age groups within the school. The policy is supported by a full range of relevant and practical documents such as 'concern forms'.

S2 Effectively differentiated information is provided to various stakeholders from staff, to hosts, to contractors. The safeguarding team meets several times a year, and the policies and procedures are regularly updated as a result. All changes are highlighted to staff via the school newsletter, and all new staff complete a quiz on the policy. Besides the two named persons, who have received specialist safeguarding training, there are three more members of staff trained to advanced level. The school has provided targeted safeguarding training to both homestay hosts, and drivers from the taxi company.

S4 Well-thought-out safer recruitment procedures are in place. A number of relevant staff members have attended safer recruitments training. All references for new homestay hosts are taken over the phone and logged, and the school has regular contact with the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

S5 Procedures for ensuring the supervision and safety of students during scheduled lessons and activities are thorough and are consistently and effectively applied. The school has allocated a specific section of the main school building to junior groups, and they have different break times so as not to mix with the general English students. The summer course for teenagers is run on a separate campus. The school provides different social programmes for the different age groups.

S6 Great care is taken to consider the safety of students outside the scheduled programme. All hosts and external contractors have signed to show their agreement to the safeguarding policy. This includes clear codes of conduct for the different age groups. All under 18s attend a separate safeguarding meeting during the induction process. S7 Effective procedures are in place to provide entirely suitable accommodation for students. The accommodation hub contains a lot of useful information regarding safeguarding, relevant to their situation. All hosts spoken to were fully invested in their role within the school's overall culture of safeguarding.

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	1984
Last full inspection	August 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	N/a
Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates	N/a
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	N/a

Private sector

Date of foundation	1976
Ownership	Name of company: English in Chester Ltd Company number: 1886535
Other accreditation/inspection	N/a

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	University of Chester Queens Park campus Queen's Park Road, Chester CH4 7AD

Student profile

ELT/ESOL students (eligible courses)	In peak week: July (organisation's estimate)	
	At inspection	In peak week (9/7/18)
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) 18 years and over	62	93
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) aged 16–17 years	3	102
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) aged under 16	25	81

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	90	276
Junior programmes: advertised minimum age	13	13
Junior programmes: advertised maximum age	16	16
Junior programmes: predominant nationalities	Mexican, Polish	Italian, Spanish, Argentinian, Omani
Adult programmes: advertised minimum age	16	16
Adult programmes: typical age range	17–74	16–70
Adult programmes: typical length of stay	5 to 6 weeks	3 to 4 weeks
Adult programmes: predominant nationalities	Korean, Swiss, Brazilian, Japanese	Italian, Japanese, French, Swiss

Staff profile	At inspection	In peak week (organisation's estimate)
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	21	33
Number teaching ELT 20 hours and over a week	14	
Number teaching ELT under 19 hours a week	7	
Number of academic managers for eligible ELT courses	2	4
Number of management (non-academic) and administrative staff working on eligible ELT courses	11	
Total number of support staff	4	

Academic manager qualifications profile

Profile at inspection	
Professional qualifications	Number of academic managers
TEFLQ qualification	2
Academic managers without TEFLQ qualification or three years relevant experience	0
Total	0
Comments	
None.	

Teacher qualifications profile

Profile in week of inspection	
Professional qualifications	Number of teachers
TEFLQ qualification	14
TEFLI qualification	7
Holding specialist qualifications only (specify)	0
Qualified teacher status only (QTS)	0
Teachers without appropriate ELT/TESOL qualification	0
Total	21
Comments	

Two of the TEFLI teachers on the list are completing TEFLQ qualifications.

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	48	28
Private home	0	0

Home tuition	0	0
Residential	6	0
Hotel/guesthouse	3	0
Independent self-catering e.g. flats, bedsits, student houses	0	0
<i>Arranged by student/family/guardian</i>		
Staying with own family	2	0
Staying in privately rented rooms/flats	3	0
Overall totals adults/under 18s	62	28
Overall total adults + under 18s	90	