

Organisation name	ES London
Inspection date	6 November 2025
Current accreditation status	Accredited
Reason for spot check	Signalled: inspect new premises

Recommendation

We recommend continued accreditation. However, evidence must be submitted within three months to demonstrate that weaknesses in P1, S4 and S6 have been addressed.

Changes to the summary statement

The area of strength for premises and facilities can be removed.

New summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited ES London in February 2022, June 2024 and November 2025. The Accreditation Scheme assesses the standards of management, resources and premises, teaching, welfare, and safeguarding under 18s and accredits organisations which meet the overall standard in each area inspected (see www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation for details).

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

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

Updated summary inspection findings

Premises and resources

The provision meets the section standard. The premises provide students and staff with a very comfortable and professional environment for work and relaxation. A range of courses is available, appropriate to the needs of the students. Guidance on the use of these resources is provided for staff and students where needed. However, additional checks on safety and security on the premises and in residence accommodation are necessary.

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	September 2022
Last full inspection	September 2022
Subsequent checks/visits (if applicable)	June 2024
Other related non-accredited activities (in brief) at this centre	N/a
Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates	ES Camps
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	ES Dubai

Student and staff profile	At inspection	Estimate at peak: July
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	60	105
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	16	16
Typical age range	23–34	22–28
Typical length of stay	13 weeks	12 weeks
Predominant nationalities	South Korean, Brazilian, Turkish, Colombian, Saudi Arabian	South Korean, Brazilian, Turkish, Colombian, Saudi Arabian
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	7	9
Total number of managers including academic	4	4

Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	3	3
Premises profile		
Address of main site	27-28 Woburn Square, London WC1H 0AA	
Additional sites in use	N/a	
Additional sites not in use	N/a	
Sites inspected	27-28 Woburn Square, London WC1H 0AA	

Introduction

Background

This was a signalled spot check prompted by the move to new premises in 2025 and this is the main focus of the report. The building comprises two former town houses which have been converted into one single building. It was formerly used as offices for professors at University College London. It has been completely redesigned and refurbished by the owners of ES London to reflect the needs of the staff and students of the organisation. Since the last spot check inspection, the junior summer and winter vacation courses have been separately accredited under the name of ES Camps. However, ES London continues to offer adult courses to 16- and 17-year-olds, and closed group and summer vacation courses for under 18s. During the visit, the inspector also followed up on points to be addressed from 2024.

Preparation

The spot check was carried out by one inspector, who contacted the provider in advance to check if there were any dates which would not be suitable and when key staff would be present. The inspector looked at the ES London website and was sent relevant documents by the provider in advance of the inspection date.

Programme and persons present

The inspector arrived at the school at 09.45 and departed at 14.15. Meetings were held with the director, the assistant director of studies, the office manager, and the member of staff responsible for accommodation and welfare. Focus group meetings were held with a selection of students and with a group of teachers. Upon arrival and throughout the inspection, the inspector requested a number of additional documents, all of which were provided.

Findings

Premises and resources

The new premises provide a very comfortable and professional environment for both staff and students. Care has been taken to ensure that the design of teaching, relaxation and office spaces is entirely appropriate to the needs of the users. Further work is being carried out to create additional office, classroom and utilities space, as well as a garden patio area at the rear of the building, all of which will further enhance the facilities for staff and students. There are, however, issues involving the safety and security arrangements.

Premises and resources

Premises and facilities	Met
P1 Providers ensure the safety and security of students on their premises by measures appropriate to their age and background, and the location.	Not met
P2 Premises, including any external areas, are in a good state of repair, cleanliness and decoration, and provide a comfortable environment for students and staff.	Strength
P3 Classrooms and other learning areas provide a suitable study environment.	Strength
P4 Students have adequate room and suitable facilities for relaxation and the consumption of food.	Strength
P5 There is adequate signage to buildings, routes, rooms and exits, and there are facilities for the display or sharing of general information.	Met
P6 There is sufficient space for all staff, for work, meetings, relaxation and the storage of personal possessions.	Met

Comments

P1 Risk assessments are not in place for the residence used by the school and risks identified on the premises are incomplete. At the time of the inspection, it was unclear whether the fire alarm was operational and weekly checks had not been carried out.

P2 The premises are very well maintained, spotlessly clean and stylishly decorated, in keeping with the brand and typical student population. There is generous space for students to relax between lessons and ample office space for staff.

P3 Classrooms have comfortable, flexible furniture and very good natural light. They are attractively designed and are spacious and quiet.

P4 Students have access to a number of spaces for relaxation and the consumption of food, including a café area, a lounge with comfortable seating, and a large, brightly lit library for study purposes. The design of the premises encourages students to stay and socialise or engage in further study.

Action taken on points to be addressed

Management

M5 Student feedback return rates remain low.

Safeguarding under 18s

S4 One of the references on file did not include safeguarding questions and the job title and company name of the referee was not clear on several references.

S6 There is inconsistency in the information provided to students on curfew times by the school and the accommodation providers.

Conclusions

The new premises are of a very high standard and entirely suitable for the needs of staff and students for study and relaxation.

Items requiring early action

Evidence must be submitted within three months to demonstrate that weaknesses in P1, S4 and S6 have been addressed.
