

Organisation name	Europa School of English Junior Summer Centres, head office Bournemouth
Inspection date	10 August 2023
Current accreditation status	Accreditation under review
Reason for spot check	Signalled: end period under review

Recommendation

We recommend continued accreditation. The period of review may now be ended and accreditation continued until the next full inspection, which falls due in 2026.

Changes to the summary statement

An updated summary statement can now be issued.

New summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited Europa School of English in July 2022 and in August 2023. 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 residential courses in general English for under 18s, and vacation courses for under 18s.

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

Updated summary inspection findings**Management**

The provision meets the section standard. The management of the summer centres operates to the benefit of staff and students, and in alignment with the provider's goals, values and publicity. The management structure and systems are generally appropriate. There is a clear organisational commitment to continuing improvement and to quality assurance.

Teaching and learning

Overall, the provision meets the section standard. Teachers are appropriately qualified; they receive sufficient formal support and observations had been conducted. Course design is largely suitable, as is learner management. The teaching observed met the requirements of the Scheme.

Welfare and student services

The provision meets the section standard. The needs of students for security, safety, and information are met. The residential and homestay accommodation provided is suitable and appropriate systems are managed effectively. Students are given access to local events and a wide range of leisure activities is offered. The supervision of leisure activities is generally effective.

Safeguarding under 18s

Overall, the provision meets the section standard. A comprehensive safeguarding policy is in place and relevant training is provided to staff and homestay hosts. Recruitment processes are satisfactory. Students are suitably supervised during lessons and accommodation for under 18s is well managed.

Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance

D1 Sampling identified the following issue: photocopying regulations might be being breached. Photocopying guideline limits are displayed next to the photocopier, but a large number of photocopies were being used at the centre.

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	2008 (as part of year-round school)
Last full inspection	July 2022
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	N/a
Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates	Europa School of English: year-round school for adults (16+) and closed groups (10+)
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	N/a

Student and staff profile	At inspection	In peak week: <i>August</i>
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	145	149
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	13	13
Typical age range	13–15	13–15
Typical length of stay	2 weeks	2 weeks
Predominant nationalities	German	German
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	12	12
Total number of managers including academic	4	4
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	9	9

Premises profile

Address of main site	Europa School of English, Freemasons Hall, Knole Road, Bournemouth BH1 4DH
Additional sites in use	IP Exeter, Birks Grange Village, New North Road, Exeter EX4 4PQ IP Winchester, The University of Winchester, King Alfred Campus, Sparkford Road, Winchester SO22 4NR
Additional sites not in use	IP Tiverton IP Ringwood
Sites inspected	Europa School of English, Freemasons Hall, Knole Road, Bournemouth BH1 4DH

Introduction

Background

Following the compliance inspection in July 2022 the section standard for teaching and learning was not met and accreditation was placed under review, the period of review to be ended by a spot check to take place when junior group courses were running. Additionally, the school was required to provide evidence within three months to demonstrate that weaknesses in W5, W26 and S4 had been addressed.

Europa School of English Junior Summer Centres (ESEJSC), Bournemouth, was first inspected in 2008 as part of the inspection of the year-round school in the same location and has held separate accreditation since 2011. Following liquidation and financial restructuring, a new company was formed in 2021, FG Languages Ltd (trading as 'Europa School of English'), which owns the year-round Bournemouth school and the summer centre business in the UK, France and Germany.

This current inspection only covered junior summer courses, as junior courses and closed groups that take place outside this season fall under the accreditation of the year-round Bournemouth school. The last full inspection of the summer centres took place in 2016 and subsequent spot checks were conducted in May 2018 and April 2019. Junior summer centre programmes did not run in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic. In 2022 programmes ran in three centres: Bournemouth, Exeter and Winchester.

Preparation

The spot check inspectors were sent relevant documents by the Accreditation Unit and looked at the school's website. One inspector contacted the school directly prior to the inspection to check which centres were running

and to ascertain any days when staff and students may be off site on excursions. The date of the spot check inspection was not indicated.

Programme and persons present

In the week of the spot check, there were 12 teachers working on daytime classes.

The inspectors arrived at the Bournemouth school's main building at 9.15 and left at 16.15. The inspectors met the operations manager for all UK centres, the academic manager for all young learner centres, the local academic lead and the Bournemouth YL centre manager, who is also the designated safeguarding officer. They had meetings with a group of students and the teachers. They asked to see various documents, which were provided in paper form or electronically. All teachers teaching were observed.

Findings

Premises and facilities

P1–P6 The junior courses in Bournemouth are no longer located at the centre in Christchurch Road and they now use the Freemasons centre in Knode Road, Bournemouth BH1 4DH. Although the staffroom and some classrooms were seen the rest of the site was not visited so it was not possible to fully assess the suitability of the premises.

Teaching and learning

The academic manager, who is TEFLQ, is responsible for the academic leads at the different summer centres. He is based at head office but visits centres regularly to conduct formal observations and support the teaching teams. He is also in regular contact by phone and email to support academic leads.

Other findings are reported in the Action taken on points to be addressed.

Action taken on points to be addressed

Points which must be addressed within three months

Welfare and student services

W5 Most students in the Bournemouth focus group were unaware of the existence of the emergency number.

Addressed. All students in the focus group confirmed they had the emergency contact number.

W26 Three supervisors at Winchester were unaware of the requirement to take a first aid kit on excursions.

Addressed. Staff at the Bournemouth centre (Winchester was not visited) knew a first aid kit should be carried on excursions.

Safeguarding under 18s

S4 Recruitment procedures are unsatisfactory as no evidence was seen of references for homestay hosts and records had not been kept of any oral references for them. In Bournemouth there were not two references on file for most of the teachers whose records were sampled.

Addressed. The homestay hosts all had two references on file and all the teaching staff references were also complete.

Other points to be addressed

Management

M9 Some job descriptions had not been updated recently.

Addressed. Records showed that job descriptions were updated and included dates of the next review.

M10 There were not two references on file for all teachers who had been recruited. Also, many non-standard qualifications had not been fully investigated.

Addressed. References were available for all teaching staff and rationales had been prepared for teachers with teaching qualifications not fully meeting Scheme requirements.

M13 CPD workshops had not been offered to teachers in Winchester, and the teacher manual for all centres had not been updated or distributed to teachers.

Addressed. CPD workshops had been offered at Bournemouth and recorded versions were available to other centres including Winchester. An updated teacher manual had been distributed to all teachers.

M24 At the time of the Bournemouth inspection, two mini-group classes had been combined, as had two general English classes, so the stated maximum class sizes had been exceeded.

Addressed. Staff confirmed in the focus group that class numbers were in line with the maximum specified in the publicity.

M28 Teachers are described as 'qualified', and websites include the statement that: 'Teachers have special training to teach English as a foreign language (TEFL or PGCE)'. Neither of these claims accurately describe some of the teachers.

Not addressed. The website continues to make reference to 'Our qualified, enthusiastic native-Level teachers' but not all teachers hold qualifications which meet Scheme requirements.

Premises and resources

P7 Students receive a large number of photocopies, but no folders or wallets within which to put them. Several teachers had chosen to use alternative materials that were not in line with course objectives and the needs of the age group on this type of course.

Partially addressed. Alternative materials used were largely in line with course objectives, but students had no folders for storing the various handouts.

Teaching and learning

T1 Several teachers do not have a Level 6 qualification.

Addressed. The majority of teachers had a Level 6 qualification and a policy-level rationale was submitted and accepted for those who did not.

T2 The policy rationales are not accepted because a number of teachers had no teaching qualifications and were inexperienced, and required a high level of support, guidance and monitoring, which they did not receive, particularly in Winchester. There was a lack of appropriate academic support given to teachers, particularly in Winchester, and teaching limitations had not been effectively identified and rectified, as most teachers had not been observed informally or formally.

Addressed. A satisfactory policy-level rationale was submitted. The rationale was accepted in the context of this inspection because guidance to teachers was provided at induction, via mini workshops during the summer period and by observations from the TEFLQ manager. In addition valuable day-to-day support was provided by the academic lead. However, it was noted that some information in the 'policy level rationale' was not relevant, for example, reference to 'continuous improvement' and 'shadowing opportunities' which are not available to the temporary, short-contract staff on summer school.

T4 The academic manager is not TEFLQ.

Addressed. The academic manager, based at head office, is TEFLQ and conducts formal observations of teachers at different centres. Although the Bournemouth academic lead is not TEFLQ he has previous Europa experience and is supported by the academic manager. The CPD sessions the academic lead delivered together with the observation records viewed by inspectors and the feedback from teachers indicated that his support was effective and appreciated.

T7 Cover arrangements had been stretched to breaking point in both centres with senior managers having to teach in both locations, despite the use of agency staff.

Addressed. Cover systems were more robust this summer. The academic lead had only covered two lessons in the previous week and no classes had been combined.

T9 More formal support was needed in both centres, particularly in Winchester, and especially for teachers with no teaching qualifications and relatively little experience.

Partially addressed. CPD sessions were more targeted this summer and included support from staff at the adult school. Teachers commented positively on the support provided but both academic lead and inspector observations indicated that continued support was needed.

T10 Only six drop-in observations had taken place in one centre and none in the other. No formal observations had taken place in either centre.

Partially addressed. The academic lead had completed informal observations on all staff and written feedback records which showed a good understanding of teacher needs and included helpful targeted support. Some formal observations completed by the TEFLQ academic manager YL had been completed.

T13 There are no course outlines made available to students.

Partially addressed. The in-house produced student workbook has a space for daily objectives, but teachers had either not shared these or students had not used the information to complete this section.

T15 Insufficient attention is paid to helping students develop independent learning strategies.

Addressed. Specially produced A1 posters with useful EFL learning applications and tips are available in classrooms, and Friday afternoon last lesson sessions have included a focus on strategies. The new workbook also includes reflective learning activities.

T23 There was insufficient explanation and contextualisation of new vocabulary in some classes.

Addressed. Language was mostly contextualised through the use of photocopied coursebook texts and exercises.

T24 In some lessons, teachers had chosen topics and materials that were unsuitable for the students and their needs.

Addressed. The students were able to relate to the majority of topics selected and the language focus was clear.

T25 Learning outcomes were lacking in many lesson plans and not made known to students.

Addressed. Most lessons made reference to the learning objectives and outcomes.

T26 A limited range of teaching techniques was seen in a large number of lessons. Tasks were poorly explained, with some teachers not having gained the attention of students before speaking and were inadequately monitored.

Addressed. Most lessons incorporated a satisfactory range of teaching techniques.

T27 In many classes, teachers did not re-organise the seating arrangements of students to mix up friendship and nationality groups.

Partially addressed. In a couple of lessons, in the main building classrooms students were regrouped. Most classes had the maximum student numbers and regrouping students in the portacabin classrooms was challenging.

T28 Many opportunities for giving feedback were missed.

Addressed. In most segments students were encouraged to self-correct and student-to-student correction was also used.

T30 Some teachers were struggling to control their classes and needed remedial support. This was particularly noticeable in lessons where nationalities had not been mixed up and students were using their first language for non-task-related reasons. There were generally insufficient opportunities provided for students to engage in extended speaking activities with their peers. There was not a positive learning atmosphere in many classes.

Partially addressed. In the higher level classes the use of L1 was generally handled effectively and there was purposeful student engagement and a positive learning atmosphere. At lower levels there was often insufficient management of the use of L1.

Legal and regulatory compliance

D1 Sampling identified the following issue: photocopying regulations might be being breached, as there were no guidelines next to the photocopier in Winchester, and a large number of photocopies were being used in both centres.

Not addressed. Although a notice is now displayed by the photocopier a large number of photocopies were used in the classes observed.

Conclusions

The school has systematically addressed the weaknesses identified in its points to be addressed and has made sufficient progress in rectifying other points raised in the previous reports. To ensure that the progress made to date is maintained and fully embedded the school will need to: check that short contract teaching staff meet the required qualifications profile and provide systematic monitoring and support for those teachers.
