

Organisation name	Excel College Manchester
Inspection date	15 August 2016

BACKGROUND
Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	October 2008
Last full inspection	February 2016
Subsequent spot check (if applicable)	N/a
Subsequent supplementary check (if applicable)	N/a
Subsequent interim visit (if applicable)	N/a
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	UKEC (United Kingdom Education Central), a sister company also owned by Xinlung Group, which runs business English programmes.

Current accreditation status and reason for spot check

Current accredited status	Accredited
Reason for spot check	Signalled: check course not running at inspection

Premises profile

Address of main site	St James' Building, 89 Oxford Street, Manchester M1 6FQ
Details of any additional sites in use at the time of the inspection	N/a
Details of any additional sites not in use at the time of the inspection	N/a
Sites inspected	Oxford Street

Student and staff profile

	At inspection	In peak week <i>April</i>
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	65	92
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	16	16
Typical age range	16–46	16–44
Typical length of stay	2–24 weeks	4–24 weeks
Predominant nationalities	Saudi Arabian, Spanish, Kuwaiti	Saudi Arabian, Spanish, Kuwaiti
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	7	9
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	4	5

INTRODUCTION

Background

Excel College Manchester is part of the Xinlung Group, which consists of six different companies, mostly engaged with the provision of services to Chinese students in the UK. The college was inspected in February 2016 and subsequently lowered its minimum age to 16. The purpose of this inspection was to check provision for under 18s.

Preparation

The school was aware that a spot check would take place but had no details and no advance warning. Accreditation Unit provided the inspector with copies of relevant correspondence.

Programme and persons present

The inspector arrived at 1045 and left at 1355. Meetings were held with the principal, the academic manager and the student welfare officer. The accommodation and student services officer was not in the college. A focus group was held with teachers, and another with students, and a short meeting took place with one of the three under 18 students. A range of paperwork was viewed.

FINDINGS

There have been no significant changes to provision since the last inspection. The roles of the previous full-time student services officer and part-time accommodation officer have been merged into one full-time position. One new teacher has been appointed to replace one leaving. The main change has been the lowering of the minimum age to 16. Publicity changed on 4 July and the first two bookings were received shortly afterwards. Since then, one further under 18 student has enrolled, making a total of three since the policy changed. All three students were enrolled on courses on the day of the inspection, although only one was present in the college. Five or six under 18s are expected in September, and the college has introduced a range of systems to respond to the presence of under 18s.

On the day of the inspection, two 16 year old boys had failed to attend class. The college procedures were followed throughout the morning, beginning with the alert from their teacher to the student welfare officer, and a call to their host who confirmed that they had left, albeit late. As the two boys did not answer their mobile phones the principal was in touch with emergency contacts in the UK, and the boys' parents were also contacted. Fellow students were asked to call in case the boys were disinclined to answer calls from the school number. Eventually contact was made with them and they made their excuses. As classes had finished by this time, it was agreed that they would not come to the college that day, but would attend early the next morning and a meeting would be held with the principal. Overall the incident was a useful test of new systems and procedures, which were implemented effectively.

Care of under 18s

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
C1 Safeguarding policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C2 Guidance and training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C3 Publicity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C4 Recruitment procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/a	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C5 Safety and supervision during scheduled lessons and activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C6 Safety and supervision outside scheduled lessons and activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C7 Accommodation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C8 Contact arrangements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/a	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments

The college has recently begun to accept under 18s and three have joined courses so far – all were enrolled at the time of the inspection. Further enrolments are expected from September.

C1 The safeguarding policy is clear and comprehensive. The principal is the designated safeguarding lead and is clearly proactive in this area. His role is known to all staff although his job description has not yet been updated to

include this responsibility.

C2 All staff have received basic safeguarding training as a minimum. For teachers, this has been delivered in-house by the academic manager, who has advanced training, as does the student welfare officer. The principal, as the designated safeguarding lead, has specialist training. Hosts for under 18s also receive training and an adapted version of the safeguarding policy. They sign to say they have received and read this and are aware of the rules. An addendum covering safeguarding and the Prevent strategy has been inserted into the staff handbook, and staff have signed to say that they have read and understood this. Teachers were clearly aware of the implications of having under 18s in their classes, and knew who they were and what procedures should be followed.

C3 The website and the brochure give clear descriptions of the level of care available, and the parental consent forms also indicate the adult context in which under 18s are studying.

C4 Recruitment documentation has been updated in line with the safeguarding policy. All staff have suitability checks and hosts cannot be allocated under 18s until checks are complete; two have so far been cleared in this way, and the rest are in progress.

C5 Premises are secure, with a staffed reception in the main building and sign-in procedures at the reception desk in the college, which all visitors have to pass to gain entry to other areas. Visitors are issued with lanyards and asked to read safety information on arrival; this includes reference to under 18s and expected conduct. All students' ages appear on registers and there is a clear and strictly enforced attendance policy. Under 18s wear lanyards and have a weekly welfare meeting with either the academic manager or the student welfare officer. Risk assessments for buildings and trips have been updated and identify specific risks for under-18s, although there are no guidelines for teachers or other staff accompanying trips.

C6 Rules and procedures for under 18s are clear and made known to all staff as well as hosts and parents. Hosts sign to say they understand these rules and parental consent forms are completed for all under 18s. Students are informed of rules through their handbook and at induction, and weekly welfare meetings, recorded on specific forms, offer an opportunity to reinforce rules and to pick up any welfare issues.

C7 At the time of the inspection, two of the under 18s were staying in homestay accommodation found and arranged by the agent. Parental consent forms had been completed and risk assessments carried out. The third student was staying in a student residence, and was due to move into one of the college homestays after a week or so. Again parental consents were in place, although no risk assessment had been carried out in this case. These arrangements had been necessary because the college checks on homestays were not all complete when students enrolled. Welfare meetings and daily checks allow the college to monitor the situation.

Care of under 18s summary

The provision meets the section standard.

POINTS TO BE ADDRESSED

Only points reviewed during this spot check are included here. Any points outstanding will be checked at the next full inspection.

Management

M18 Students only provide limited feedback at the end of their course, other than on accommodation.

Not yet addressed. Some work on this area is in progress.

Resources and environment

R5 Classroom display space is limited.

Not yet addressed.

R6 There is insufficient space in the staffroom for storage of personal possessions.

Not yet addressed.

Teaching and learning

T12 The absence of a comprehensive independent syllabus covering all relevant aspects of language system and use could lead to gaps in the students' knowledge as they move from level to level, as each coursebook used comes from a different coursebook series.

Not yet addressed. The academic manager has plans to create an overarching syllabus for each level once coursebooks have been selected.

Points to be addressed arising from this visit

C5 There are no guidelines for teachers or other staff accompanying trips.

CONCLUSIONS

The college has developed appropriate policies and procedures for the care of under 18s. These are known to all staff and being effectively implemented.

RECOMMENDATION

The next inspection falls due in 2020; there are no grounds for bringing this forward.

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Changes to summary statement

The minimum age for the courses can be updated.

Summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited Excel College, Manchester in February 2016. The Accreditation Scheme assesses the standards of management, resources and premises, teaching, welfare, and care of 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+) in school premises.

Strengths were noted in the areas of staff management, quality assurance, academic management, course design, care of students and accommodation.

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

Revised summary statement

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