

Inspection report

Organisation name	ILC Birmingham
Inspection date	8–10 April 2025

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 safe, 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 ILC Birmingham in April 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 and professional English for adults (18+) and young people (16+) and vacation courses for under 18s.

Strengths were noted in the area of leisure opportunities.

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

Introduction

ILC Birmingham (formerly TEG Birmingham) is part of the International Language Centers group with other schools in Bristol, Cambridge, Colchester and Portsmouth. The west regional director has oversight of the Birmingham, Portsmouth and Bristol schools. Day-to-day management of the school lies with the centre manager/director of studies. The school relocated to a new premises in November 2024 and is located in the jewellery quarter of Birmingham in the city centre. Since the last inspection, apart from the relocation and rebranding, the school has appointed a new centre manager/director of studies, who started in February 2025. The school offers general English, business English and exam preparation classes for students aged 16.

The inspection took place over a day and a half, with two inspectors. They talked to the west regional director, the centre manager/director of studies, the office & student services manager and the office & student services administrator. Focus group meetings were held with students and teachers. All teachers timetabled during the inspection were observed. One inspector held a video call with a homestay host, and a meeting with a second host who also works in the school. Video footage was viewed of the main residence in use.

Address of main site/head office

34-35 Ludgate Hill, Birmingham B3 1EH

Description of sites visited/observed

The school is located on Ludgate Hill in the jewellery quarter of Birmingham in the city centre. The premises is self contained and is spread over three floors. Access to the building is from the street. On the ground floor there is the reception, centre manager/director of studies' office, staff room and one classroom. On the second floor there are four classrooms, a toilet and a breakout area. The basement has a school kitchen (for students and staff), a staff toilet and a toilet for students.

Course profile	Year round		Vacation only	
	Run	Seen	Run	Seen
General ELT for adults (18+)				
General ELT for adults (18+) and young people (16+)	\boxtimes	\boxtimes		
General ELT for juniors (under 18)			\boxtimes	
English for academic purposes (excludes IELTS preparation)				
English for specific purposes (includes English for Executives)	\boxtimes			
Applied English/Content and language integrated learning (CLIL)				
Teacher development (excludes award-bearing courses)				
ESOL skills for life/for citizenship				
Other				

Comments

The school offers general English, exam preparation courses, communication skills and business skills to students aged 16 and over year-round. Most students are already working and living in Birmingham. Students can study from 5.5 hours per week in the evening, up to 25 hours per week, combining general English classes with communication skills. At the time of the inspection three levels of general English classes were running in the mornings with communication skills offered in the afternoons. One evening class at C1 level was also running. A junior vacation programme is planned for summer 2025.

Management profile

The centre manager/director of studies has responsibility for day-to-day running of the school and is assisted by the office & student services manager and the office & student services administrator. The centre manager/director of studies reports to the west regional director.

Accommodation profile

Accommodation is offered in student residence or homestay. Demand for accommodation is generally low as the majority of students make their own arrangements. The school currently makes use of three nearby residences and manages the booking process and has a small number of homestay providers on file, only two of which were active at the time of the inspection.

Summary of inspection findings

Management

The provision meets the section standard. The management of the provision operates to the benefit of the students, and in accordance with the provider's stated goals, values, and publicity. Procedures to ensure local contact details are collected and recorded as well as information on accommodation in publicity need attention.

Premises and resources

The provision meets the section standard. The premises provide students and staff with a safe and very comfortable and professional environment for work and relaxation. A range of learning resources is available, appropriate to the age and needs of the students.

Teaching and learning

The provision meets the section standard. The academic staff team has a professional profile which is mostly appropriate to the context. Teachers receive good guidance and support. Courses are structured to benefit students. The teaching observed met the requirements of the Scheme.

Welfare and student services

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The needs of the students for security, pastoral care, information and leisure activities are met. Students benefit from well-managed student services, including out-of-class activities and suitable accommodation. *Leisure opportunities* is an area of strength.

Safeguarding under 18s

The provision meets the section standard. In general, there is appropriate provision for the safeguarding of students under the age of 18 within the organisation and in the leisure activities and accommodation provided. Some details in recruitment procedures and accommodation placement require attention.

Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance

The items sampled were satisfactory.

Evidence

Management

Strategic and quality management	Met
M1 There is a clear statement describing the goals and values of the organisation, which is made known to all staff.	Met
M2 The management has clear objectives for the future of the organisation and has realistic plans to achieve them.	Met
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.	Met
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.	Met
M6 The provider regularly seeks and records feedback from all staff on the services offered. Appropriate action is taken and recorded.	Met
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.	Met

M4 Channels of communication within the school and across the wider organisation work very well. There are regular and documented meetings with various stakeholders. Staff have regular meetings with colleagues in other branches, which promotes support and sharing of practices. The centre manager/director of studies and the west regional director meet daily.

Staff management and development	Met
M8 The provider implements appropriate human resources policies, which are made known to staff.	Met
M9 The provider specifies the duties of all staff working with ELT students, and ensures that these are up to date.	Met
M10 There are effective procedures for the recruitment and selection of all staff.	Met
M11 There are effective induction procedures for all staff.	Met
M12 There are effective procedures for monitoring and appraising all staff, for highlighting good performance, and for handling unsatisfactory performance or conduct. These procedures are made known to all staff.	Met
M13 There are effective procedures to ensure the continuing professional development (CPD) of all staff to meet the needs of the individual, the students and the organisation.	Met
Comments	

All criteria in this section are fully met.

Student administration	Met
M14 Staff are helpful and courteous to students and their representatives, and provide good levels of customer service.	Met
M15 Students or their representatives receive sufficient information and advice on their course choices before arrival and during their stay.	Met
M16 There are clear systems in place to enrol students effectively and maintain accurate information about student payment and course details. This information is readily accessible to relevant staff.	Met
M17 There are effective systems to maintain up-to-date and accessible records of local contact details for students, and their designated emergency contacts.	Not met
M18 There is a clear and effective policy on student attendance and punctuality that is known to all staff and students and is applied consistently.	Met
M19 All staff and students are made aware of conditions and procedures under which a student may be asked to leave the course.	Met
M20 All students and, where appropriate, group leaders and parents/legal guardians, receive information in writing about who to see about problems and how to make a complaint.	Met

Comments

M17 Although there are systems in place to maintain local contact details for students, not all of the records checked during the inspection were complete.

Publicity	Met
M21 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.	Met
M22 All publicity and information about the provider and the services it offers is in clear, accurate and accessible English.	Met
M23 Publicity gives clear, accurate and easy-to-find information on the courses.	Met
M24 Publicity includes clear, accurate and easy-to-find information on costs.	Met
M25 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.	Met
M26 Publicity gives an accurate description of any accommodation offered.	Not met
M27 Descriptions of staff qualifications are accurate.	Met
M28 Claims to accreditation are in line with Scheme requirements.	Met

The website is the main medium of publicity, and this is supplemented by electronic and printed leaflets and social

M26 Information on accommodation offered is lacking. It is not clear from publicity that the residence is managed by a third party and information on cleaning, laundry, bedding and towels is missing.

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.	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.	Met
P4 Students have adequate room and suitable facilities for relaxation and the consumption of food.	Met
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

P2 The premises is in a very good state of repair and creates a very positive impression. Classrooms and communal areas are clean, freshly decorated and provide a very comfortable environment for students and staff.

Learning resources	Met
P7 There are sufficient learning resources for classroom use for the number of students enrolled, appropriate to their age and the level, length and type of courses offered.	Met
P8 There are appropriate resources for teachers, which are adequate in number, accessible, and well maintained and organised.	Met
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 Students have access to resources for independent learning, relevant to their learning aims and expectations.	Met
P11 There is a policy for the continuing review and development of teaching and learning resources, and evidence of its implementation.	Met
Comments	

All criteria in this section are fully met.

Teaching and learning

Academic staff profile Met

T1 There is a clear recruitment and support policy for the academic team relevant to the stated course objectives and student profile.

T2 The academic manager/academic management team has an appropriate professional profile to provide academic leadership.

T3 The teaching team has ELT/TESOL qualifications, general level of education, experience, knowledge and skills relevant to the courses they are teaching.

Comments

The academic staff team has a professional profile (qualifications and experience) that is largely appropriate to the school's context.

The recruitment and support policy is effectively devised and implemented in line with the stated course objectives and the student profile.

Academic management	Met
T4 Teachers are matched appropriately to courses and there are effective procedures for the appropriate timetabling of students, courses and classrooms.	Met
T5 There are formalised arrangements for covering for absent teachers which are satisfactory to students and staff.	Met
T6 Where enrolment is continuous, explicit attention is paid to all aspects of academic management affected.	Strength
T7 There are effective arrangements for the academic induction of new teachers appropriate to their needs.	Met
T8 There are effective arrangements, led by an academic manager, to ensure appropriate day-to-day guidance and support for all teachers.	Met
T9 There are effective arrangements for the observation and monitoring of teachers' performance by a TEFLQ academic manager based on clear standards known to teachers.	Strength
T10 There are effective procedures to ensure the continuing professional development (CPD) of all teachers to meet the needs of the individual teachers, the students, and the organisation.	Met
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T6 The teacher handbook gives useful tips and strategies for coping with continuous enrolment; staff are kept well informed of new students joining their classes.

T9 Good arrangements are in place for the observation and monitoring of teachers' performance. Staff in the focus group commented that the observations were both helpful and developmental.

Course design and implementation	Met
T11 The course design is comprehensive and is based on the provider's stated approach to learning or educational philosophy, and is appropriate to the learning context.	Met
T12 Courses include strategies which help students to develop their language skills outside the classroom and benefit linguistically from their stay in the UK.	Not met
T13 Course design is regularly reviewed in light of the different and changing needs of students and feedback from teachers and students.	Met
T14 Written course outlines and intended learning outcomes, appropriate to the course length and type, are available to students and referred to in class.	Met
Comments	

T12 Courses do not include strategies which help students to develop their language skills outside the classroom and benefit linguistically from their stay in the UK.

T15 There are effective procedures for the correct placement of students, appropriate to their level and age.	Met
T16 There are effective procedures for evaluating, monitoring and recording students' progress.	Met
T17 Students are helped to identify their learning needs and receive support to meet course objectives.	Met
T18 Where relevant, students are guided to select the examinations and examination training best suited to their needs and interests. Students wishing to progress to mainstream UK education have access to relevant information and advice.	Met

Comments

All criteria in this section are fully met.

Classroom observation record

Number of teachers seen	4
Number of observations	4
Parts of programme(s) observed	General English, communication skills
Comments	
All lessons took place in person.	

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Teaching: classroom observation	Met
T19 Teachers produce accurate models of spoken and written English; they provide clear explanations and relevant examples of language and usage, that are appropriate to the aims of the lesson and suitable for the students' level.	Met
T20 The content of the lessons is based on the overall course objectives and takes into account the differing students' needs and backgrounds.	Strength
T21 The intended learning outcomes of lessons are made known to students, and are achieved through an appropriate sequence of activities.	Met
T22 Teaching techniques used are appropriate to the focus of the lesson, to the context, and to the needs of the group and individual learners.	Met
T23 Teachers enhance learning by effectively managing the classroom environment and teaching and learning resources.	Met
T24 Students receive and benefit from appropriate and timely feedback on their performance during the lesson.	Met
T25 Lessons include activities for teachers and students to evaluate whether learning is taking place.	Met
T26 Teachers promote a positive and inclusive learning atmosphere and students are engaged in the lesson.	Strength

- T19 Teachers produced accurate models. They also gave clear explanations and relevant examples, most of which were appropriate to the level, as was the language teachers used.
- T20 Lesson plans were completed in detail and included student profiles as well as anticipated problems and solutions. Lessons included very appropriate activities. Lesson content was based on course and student profiles.
- T21 Learning outcomes were expressed in lesson plans and shared with students. In most lessons there was a clear link between the activities chosen in lessons and the learning outcomes.
- T22 A range of teaching techniques was observed, including concept checking, elicitation and questioning, nomination, instruction-giving and checking understanding of tasks.
- T23 For the most part, teachers displayed competent use of coursebooks, educational technology, supplementary materials and the whiteboard.
- T24 Teachers monitored student interactions and performance, in most lessons. On-the-spot correction was utilized in all lessons.
- T25 Restricted and freer activities, appropriate to the lesson focus, were planned to assess whether learning was taking place in all lessons.
- T26 Teachers showed good rapport with learners by being warm and encouraging. Lessons were well paced and involved a good balance of interactions. Student talking time was maximised.

Welfare and student services

Care of students	Met
W1 There is a comprehensive plan to respond to any emergency. This plan is known to all staff, and relevant elements are known to students.	Met
W2 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
W3 There are policies to promote tolerance and respect, and procedures for dealing with any abusive behaviour. All staff and students are aware of these.	Met
W4 Where relevant, students receive a 24-hour emergency contact number for the provider, in writing.	Met
W5 Students receive advice on relevant aspects of travel to and life in the UK.	Met
W6 Students have access to adequate health care provision.	Met

Comments

W2 Provision for pastoral care is good. Students in the focus group were very clear about what was available and who to approach in different scenarios. Help is available for students arranging private rentals. Pastoral meetings are held with individuals as appropriate and recorded.

Accommodation (W7–W18 as applicable)	Met
All accommodation	
W7 Students have a comfortable living environment throughout their stay.	Met
W8 Arrangements for cleaning and laundry are satisfactory.	Met
W9 A responsible representative inspects all accommodation (for safety and suitability) before students are placed, and at least every two years after that.	Not met
W10 Students receive written confirmation of accommodation booked, giving clear and accurate information.	Met
W11 There are effective procedures for identifying and resolving any problems students have with their accommodation.	Met
W12 Accommodation providers receive written confirmation of the rules, terms and conditions applied by the provider with respect to the provision of accommodation services.	Met
W13 Students receive meals as agreed; these offer a well-balanced diet, taking into account any reasonable dietary requirements students may have.	Met
Comments	

W9 There are records of visits to the three residences in use; however, they contain insufficient evidence of safety and suitability checks.

Accommodation: homestay only	
W14 Homestay hosts comply with the agreed terms and conditions for student placements.	Met
W15 Homestay placements encourage students to use English.	Met
W16 Hosts ensure that there is an adult available to receive students on first arrival.	Met
Comments	

All criteria in this section are fully met.

Accommodation: other	
W17 Students receive information about the implications of their living in private rented accommodation and advice in case of difficulties.	Met
W18 The provider monitors any other accommodation recommended, and booking and payment arrangements are clear.	

Comments

W18 The current residential offer is ambiguous; it is not always clear that residences do not belong to ILC and are independently managed. The school also manages some aspects of the booking arrangements although the tenancy is in the student's name.

Leisure opportunities	Area of strength
W19 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
W20 The content of any leisure programme is appropriate to the age and interests of the students.	Met
W21 Any leisure programmes are well organised and sufficiently resourced.	Strength
W22 There are effective systems to ensure the health and safety of students on all on-site and off-site activities.	Strength
W23 Staff supervising sporting and leisure activities on or off-site have appropriate experience, support and training.	Met

Comments

W19 There is plentiful, easy-to-access information on local events and activities. Social media is used to post comments on and photographs of social programme activities to encourage participation.

W21 The programme is well organised and supported. Administrative staff and some teachers are involved in leisure activities, and students are consulted about their interests and preferences. Students in the focus group were extremely positive about this aspect of their experience.

W22 Risk assessments are adapted from generic to specific documents, and there is a briefing, with a sign-off sheet for accompanying staff. The template includes post-activity feedback and review.

Safeguarding under 18s

Safeguarding under 18s	Met
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.	Met
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.	Not met
S5 There are suitable arrangements for the supervision and safety of students during scheduled lessons and activities.	Met
S6 There are suitable arrangements for the supervision and safety of students outside the scheduled programme.	Met
S7 There are suitable arrangements for the accommodation of students.	Met
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

The school accepts 16–17 year olds on adult courses. In the summer, 10–15 year olds are accepted and taught in separate groups. There were no under 18s at the time of the inspection.

S2 In addition to the designated safeguarding lead, the designated safeguarding person is trained to Level 2, and the principal is trained to level 3. Homestay hosts who accept under 18s complete basic awareness training. S4 Two references had been secured for all staff with one exception, where only one was on file. Attempts to secure a second had not been followed up.

S7 In general this criterion is met, but there had been a case of a 17-year-old in residential accommodation for a short period before turning 18. Staff were able to describe appropriate checks and balances applied, but these are not embedded in systems or recorded.

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	October 2021
Last full inspection	October 2021
Subsequent checks/visits (if applicable)	February 2023

Current accreditation status	Accredited
Other related non-accredited activities (in brief) at this	N/a
centre	
Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates	ILC Bristol, ILC Cambridge, ILC Colchester and ILC
	Portsmouth
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	N/a

Private sector

Date of foundation	2020
Ownership	Name of company: ILC International Language Centers Company number: 12861211
Other accreditation/inspection	N/a

Premises profile

Details of any additional sites in use at the time of the inspection but not visited/observed	N/a
Details of any additional sites not in use at the time of the inspection	N/a

Student profile	At inspection	Estimate at peak
ELT/ESOL students (eligible courses)	At inspection	July
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) 18 years and over	5	25
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) aged 16–17 years	0	5
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) aged under 16	0	0
Part-time ELT aged 18 years and over	6	5
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	11	35
Adult programmes: advertised minimum age	16	16
Adult programmes: typical age range	18–65	17–65
Adult programmes: typical length of stay	2–12 weeks	2–4 weeks
Adult programmes: predominant nationalities	Italian, Colombian, Japanese, Polish, Spanish, Greek, Iranian, Turkish, Portuguese, Korean	Saudi Arabian, Spanish, Italian, French, Polish
Junior programmes: advertised minimum age	N/a	11
Junior programmes: advertised maximum age	N/a	16
Junior programmes: typical length of stay	N/a	1–6 weeks
Junior programmes: predominant nationalities	N/a	Turkish, Spanish, French

Staff profile	At inspection	Estimate at peak
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	4	6
Number teaching ELT 20 hours and over a week	3	
Number teaching ELT under 20 hours a week	1	
Number of academic managers for eligible ELT courses	1	1
Number of management (non-academic) and administrative staff working on eligible ELT courses	0	
Total number of support staff	2	

Academic manager qualifications profile

Profile at inspection	
Professional qualifications	Number of academic
Floressional qualifications	managers

TEFLQ qualification and at least three years' full-time relevant teaching experience	1
Academic managers without TEFLQ qualification or three years' relevant experience	0
Total	1
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The academic manager does not normally teach and was not teaching the week of the inspection.

Teacher qualifications profile

Profile in week of inspection		
Professional qualifications	Number of teachers	
TEFLQ qualification/profile	2	
TEFLI qualification	1	
ATEFL portfolio in progress	0	
Non-ELT-related qualified teacher status only (for short courses for under 18s)	0	
Holding specialist qualifications only (for ESP/CLIL)	0	
Alternative professional profile	1	
Total	4	
Comments		

One teacher has a non-standard EFL qualification.

Accommodation profile

Number of students in each at the time of inspection (all students on eligible courses)			
Types of accommodation	Adults	Under 18s	
Arranged by provider/agency			
Homestay	0	0	
Private home	0	0	
Home tuition	0	0	
Residential	1	0	
Hotel/guesthouse	0	0	
Independent self-catering e.g. flats, bedsits, student houses	0	0	
Arranged by student/family/guardian			
Staying with own family	9	0	
Staying in privately rented rooms/flats	1	0	
Overall totals adults/under 18s	11	0	
Overall total adults + under 18s	11		

Items requiring early action

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