

Organisation name	ILC Cambridge
Inspection date	24 January 2023
Current accreditation status	Accredited by extension
Reason for spot check	Signalled: first inspection of new extension

Recommendation

We recommend continuation of the extension of accreditation pending a full inspection of the provision within 12 months. However, evidence must be submitted within three months to demonstrate that weaknesses in W1, W2, W26, S5 and S6 have been addressed. The required evidence was subsequently submitted.

Updated summary inspection findings

Management

The provision meets the section standard. The management of the provision operates to the benefit of students and staff, and in accordance with the provider's stated goals, values, and publicity. Student administration is largely appropriate. Publicity is generally clear but some information is yet to be added to reflect accurately the level and care of support given to any students following courses for under 18s.

Premises and resources

The provision meets the section standard. The premises generally provide students and staff with a comfortable and professional environment for work. 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.

Welfare and student services

The provision meets the section standard. In principle the needs of students for security, pastoral care, and information are met, and students benefit from well-managed student services, including out-of-class activities and suitable homestay accommodation. The absence of students on site and very limited student feedback documentation meant it was impossible to evaluate fully the effectiveness of the implementation of the policies and procedures.

Safeguarding under 18s

The provision meets the section standard. There is appropriate provision for the safeguarding of 16 and 17 year-olds on adult courses within the organisation and in any leisure activities or accommodation provided. Systems and procedures for under 16s are under development and the effectiveness of their implementation will need to be assessed at the first full inspection.

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	January 2023
Last full inspection	N/a
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	ILC schools in Birmingham, Bristol, Colchester, Portsmouth and Southampton.
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	N/a

Student and staff profile	At inspection	In peak week: <i>July</i>
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	0	60
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	0	5

Typical age range	0	18–40
Typical length of stay	0	2–4 weeks
Predominant nationalities	N/a	Spanish, Italian
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	0	5
Total number of managers including academic	2	2
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	0	3

Premises profile

Address of main site	9a Bridge Street, Cambridge CB2 1UB
Additional sites in use	Head office: 19 Lexden Road, Colchester C03 3PW
Additional sites not in use	N/a
Sites inspected	9a Bridge Street, Cambridge CB2 1UB

Introduction

Background

In March 2022 Study in Colchester Ltd acquired ABC Cambridge, and launched ILC Cambridge using the same premises. The Cambridge site was opened as a new branch of the established parent school ILC Colchester. An extension of accreditation was requested in April 2022 and the school started accepting students on site in July 2022. This spot check was carried out as a first inspection of the new extension.

The director of studies (DoS) was appointed in June 2022 and the office and student services manager (OSSM) started in January 2023. At the time of the inspection the management team were focused on getting ILC systems and procedures set up, preparing the premises to receive students and recruiting homestay accommodation providers.

The school occupies a two-storey building, attached to the Cambridge Union building, in a central area of Cambridge. The school has its own separate entrance and can be accessed from Bridge Street and Park Street. On the ground floor there is a reception and office area, two classrooms, a staff kitchen and a staircase down to the basement. The latter is currently out of commission and the staffroom which used to be there is in the process of being moved to the first floor. The DoS is based in the staff room on the first floor where there are two additional classrooms and separate male and female toilet facilities. On the second floor there is a further classroom and access to the Cambridge Union building. The interconnecting door is locked and is not used by staff or students from either organisation. There is no student common room.

Preparation

Documentation, including publicity and the previous report of ILC Colchester (the parent school), were provided in advance by the Accreditation Unit. The inspector contacted the school prior to the inspection to get an outline of when key personnel would be available. The specific date of the inspection was unannounced. The inspector viewed the school website before visiting the premises and the school provided a range of documents and information during the half-day visit.

Programme and persons present

One inspector carried out the face-to-face spot check inspection, which ran from 10.15 to 14.30. Meetings were held with the principal of the parent school ILC Colchester (virtual), the DoS ILC Cambridge and the recently appointed OSSM. As no students were on site at the time of the inspection there were no meetings with students. The inspector viewed records from past courses and students. The inspector gave a brief round-up to the DoS at the end of the inspection.

Findings

Management

The principal of ILC Colchester oversees the running of ILC Cambridge which is run on a day-to-day basis by the DoS supported by the OSSM. The Colchester principal has daily email and phone contact with the DoS and OSSM. More formal fortnightly virtual meetings are scheduled to start from 27 January. The Cambridge centre uses the same policy documentation, student feedback systems and appraisal procedures as the parent school in Colchester. A commercial student management system has recently been introduced and is in operation for both centres. A limited number of records were available, for students who studied in Cambridge in the autumn and, some data such as designated emergency contact details were missing.

Publicity is accurate in the main but the absence of captioned photographs means the extent and availability of services is not always clear or which of the six schools in the wider group is being referred to.

Premises and resources

The premises are in suitable working order including toilet facilities. Classrooms are quiet, have good natural light and offer a flexible layout. Three of the five classrooms have large TV screens that can be used with laptops to share electronic resources with students. Laptops, with preloaded teaching resources, are available to teachers along with a range of hard copy coursebooks and learning resources. The first floor DoS office and teachers' room is furnished with desks and shelving but the teaching resources have yet to be brought up from the decommissioned basement teachers room. There is no student common room or cafe, but students have easy access to cafes, shops and eateries close to the school. Teachers have use of a small kitchen for storing food or making hot and cold drinks. There are plans to install a water cooler so students can have access to free drinking water.

Welfare and student services

Welfare systems, policies and procedures, brought across from the Colchester centre, are appropriate. A premises risk assessment is in place. Fire evacuation procedures and practice are controlled by the Cambridge Union management and are under review with ILC management. At present ILC do not have details of fire evacuation procedures including a fire assembly point or records of fire safety checks. The emergency plan is also under review. The student management system has a dedicated area to record homestay providers and their relevant information such as references and gas certificates. Recruitment of additional providers is underway to extend the small register currently available. There are plans to offer residential accommodation but agreements have not yet been finalised. Risk assessments for sports and leisure activities are on file but they do not routinely include clear guidelines on how to respond to situations where students are at risk.

Safeguarding under 18s

At the time of the inspection, no under 18s had been enrolled since the school opened. There are plans to accept students from the age of five (accompanied by their parents) as well as older unaccompanied children as individual and group bookings.

In general, there are appropriate arrangements for the safeguarding of under 18s in adult classes. These include daily signing in, swift follow-up in the case of absence, and curfew times. Systems and procedures are in line with those in operation in Colchester but there was no specific information relating to the supervision, care and support of under 16s and the younger groups.

Premises and resources

Premises and facilities	Met
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.	Met
P4 Free drinking water is available. A choice of appropriate food at affordable prices is available to students on site, if not available locally.	Not met
P5 There is adequate signage to buildings, routes, rooms and exits, and there are facilities for the display of general information.	Met
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	
P4 There is currently no provision of free drinking water.	
Learning resources	Met
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.	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 Any facilities provided for additional or independent learning are appropriately equipped and organised.	N/a
P11 Students receive guidance on the use of any resources provided for independent learning.	N/a
P12 There is a policy for the continuing review and development of teaching and learning resources, and evidence of its implementation.	Met

Comments

P12 The teaching and learning resources for the Cambridge centre have not been reviewed as yet but there are plans to do this after some groups have completed courses over the spring and summer.

Conclusions

The school has only been open for a short period in total since July 2022, but the Colchester principal and the DoS Cambridge have managed to set up policies and procedures relating to all aspects of the school's services. The ILC group is a well-established organisation with an experienced team with much insight and practical knowledge. The DoS and OSSM are working hard to implement the systems and procedures but with so few students to date they remain relatively untested. The experienced DoS has covered the teaching to date and the OSSM is getting up to speed with all aspects of the welfare, accommodation and leisure provision. No under 18s have yet been accepted by the school. However, appropriate safeguarding systems have been set up, homestay providers are receiving relevant training, and suitability checks are in the process of being carried out.