

Organisation name	Imperial English UK, Birmingham
Inspection date	27 June 2025
Current accreditation status	Accredited
Reason for spot check	Signalled: inspect new or additional premises.

Recommendation

We recommend continued accreditation with a full inspection within 12 months.

Changes to the summary statement

No changes need to be made to the summary statement, apart from adding the date of this inspection.

Changes to the summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited Birmingham College in October 2018, March 2019 and June 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+).

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

Summary 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 and values. Although publicity is generally clear and comprehensive, the photographs are of the old premises and create a false impression of the provision which needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

Premises and resources

The provision meets the section standard. The premises provide students and staff with a 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.

Teaching and learning

The provision meets the section standard. 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 met the requirements of the Scheme.

Welfare and student services

The provision meets the section standard. The needs for pastoral care, information and leisure activities are met and students are given a good deal of individual, personal assistance. Accommodation is not offered.

Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance

The items sampled were satisfactory.

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	2010
Last full inspection	2018
Subsequent checks/visits (if applicable)	2019 spot check

Other related non-accredited activities (in brief) at this centre	Online and app-based teacher training, workshops, resources and resources development for teachers based outside the UK.
Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates	N/a
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	N/a

Student and staff profile	At inspection	Estimate at peak: <i>August/September</i>
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	0	25 face-to-face 50 online
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	0	18
Typical age range	0	20–45
Typical length of stay	0	24 weeks
Predominant nationalities	0	Face-to-face: Qatari, Kuwaiti, Saudi Arabian. Online: British Nationals Overseas Hong Kong, Ukrainian, Afghan.
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	0	2
Total number of managers including academic	0	1
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	0	1

Premises profile	
Address of main site	36 Great Charles Street, Birmingham B3 3JY
Additional sites in use	N/a
Additional sites not in use	N/a
Sites inspected	36 Great Charles Street, Birmingham B3 3JY

Introduction

Background

This was a spot check to inspect the new premises of Imperial English UK (IEUK) following the closure of the previous site in March 2020. The lease for the new premises was secured at the end of 2024 and work started on refurbishments in March 2025. The school is ready to commence on-site activities as soon as the internet is connected. This is scheduled for 2 July. The small team, who continued during and after the pandemic, work remotely. Until recently they have principally been working on resources and app development and other non-accredited activities.

Preparation

The school was contacted at the beginning of March to check availability of key staff and to request some documents. The date of the inspection was agreed in order to ensure a member of the team could be on site to show the inspector around the premises. Documents were provided in advance by the Accreditation Unit and by the school. The website was checked.

Programme and persons present

The inspector arrived at 10.00 and left at 13.00. She conducted a tour of the site and had a meeting with the administrator, who has worked with the school for more than 22 years. The director was absent due to a family emergency outside the UK. The administrator was able to provide all the necessary information and is familiar with all aspects of the organisation. All relevant documents were provided for the inspector during or shortly after the inspection.

Description of site

The school occupies half of the fourth floor of a modern eight-storey building in a central area of Birmingham close to the train station and other facilities. Entry to the building is gained using a keypad code for staff and students or an intercom with IMUK reception for visitors. There is a shared comfortable lobby area on the ground floor and lifts up to the school and other, mostly financial, businesses on the other floors. The school has a reception area, two classrooms and a spacious student lounge with kitchen facilities. Resources are stored in a variety of glass-fronted cupboards in the different rooms. There are lockable storage units in reception for staff to use. Toilet facilities, shared with the other businesses in the building, are available on each floor.

Findings

Management

Matters relating to the opening of the new premises are clearly identified in the strategic plan and objectives. The content of the publicity is generally clear and covers the required areas with the exception of M21. There were no outstanding points to be addressed after the 2019 spot check inspection.

The website has not yet been updated to take account of the new premises. Although the course information and costs are accurate the old photographs and testimonial clips are still in use. The imagery used is all from the previous premises not used since 2019. It does not give an accurate and realistic description of the building, the facilities and the extent of services.

Premises and resources

The relocation of IMUK provides the school with modern purpose-built premises and facilities in a prime central location. The main lease and licence to occupy runs until 2028. A specialist external company has carried out the fire safety checks and procedures. The school is working with the building management to get the relevant signage in place. Fire notices are all in order, but some other signage is yet to be completed. There is currently no internet available so none of the IT resources are functioning. Internet access is scheduled to be available from 2 July. Procedures are in place for continuing compliance in relation to legal and health and safety matters.

Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance

The items sampled were satisfactory.

Management

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.	Not 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.	N/a
M26 Publicity gives an accurate description of any accommodation offered.	N/a
M27 Descriptions of staff qualifications are accurate.	Met
M28 Claims to accreditation are in line with Scheme requirements.	Met
Comments	

The website is the main source of publicity.

M21 Not met. The photographs of the premises, student classes, and facilities used all relate to the previous Margaret Street premises and do not accurately represent the provision.

M23 Overall met. The course descriptors reflect the courses that were and will be offered. Course dates are advertised as termly with specific dates 'to be confirmed'.

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.	Met
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.	Not met

P6 There is sufficient space for all staff, for work, meetings, relaxation and the storage of personal possessions.	Met
Comments	
P5 New signage with the name of the school is not yet in place in the entrance to the building or on the floor being used. Fire exits are clearly indicated but there are no noticeboards or areas to display information to staff or students.	
Learning resources	
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.	Not 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	
P9 Classrooms have appropriate educational technology but there is currently no Internet provision. The office equipment, printer and classroom boards are scheduled to be operational by 2 July.	
Items requiring early action	
Evidence must be submitted within three months to demonstrate that weaknesses in M21 and M28 have been addressed.	