

Organisation name	Influential English, London
Inspection date	18 January 2023
Current accreditation status	Accredited
Reason for spot check	Signalled: extend accreditation and inspect new premises

**Recommendation**

We recommend continued accreditation. However, evidence must be submitted within three months to demonstrate that weaknesses in W1 and D1 have been addressed.

**Changes to the summary statement**

The need for improvement in staff management can now be removed.

**New summary statement**

The British Council inspected and accredited Influential English, London in December 2020 and January 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](http://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.

**Updated summary inspection findings**
**Management**

The provision meets the section standard. The management of the provision generally operates to the benefit of the students, and in accordance with the provider's stated goals, values, and publicity. Systems of staff management are adequate, although the recruitment policy is not fully implemented.

**Organisation profile**

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	December 2020
Last full inspection	December 2020
Subsequent spot check(s) (if applicable)	18 January 2023
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	N/a
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	N/a

Student and staff profile	At inspection	In peak week: September
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	40	70
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	18	18
Typical age range	23–35	23–35
Typical length of stay	16 weeks	16 weeks
Predominant nationalities	Ukrainian, Spanish, Italian, Brazilian	Ukrainian, Spanish, Italian, Brazilian
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	3	5

Total number of managers including academic	3	3
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	2	2

### Premises profile

Address of main site	8 Skyline Village, Limeharbour, London E14 9TS
Additional sites in use	N/a
Additional sites not in use	N/a
Sites inspected	8 Skyline Village, Limeharbour, London E14 9TS

### Introduction

#### Background

Following a remote inspection in December 2020, Influential English was awarded accreditation for an initial period of one year, with a supplementary inspection due in late 2021. However, due to limited student numbers at that time and in the intervening period, it was decided to delay the follow-up inspection until early 2023, and for the inspection to be a spot check rather than a supplementary inspection due to the amount of time that had elapsed since the original inspection. As well as a being a signalled spot check to extend accreditation, the inspection also focused on new premises which the provider moved to in October 2022, as well as the implementation of some of the policies and procedures previously inspected.

Since the last inspection the school has moved to new larger premises situated very near to the previous school, also in Limehouse in the City of London. They occupy the ground, first and second floors of a modern building. On the ground floor there are toilets and a small kitchen. The first floor comprises the reception area, an office and one classroom, and the second floor has one classroom.

A new academic manager has been appointed since the last inspection.

#### Preparation

The inspector was sent relevant documents by the Accreditation Unit and looked at the school's website. The inspector contacted the school in advance to request some further documentation and to establish when key staff would be on site in order to plan when the inspection would take place. The inspector did not indicate to the school the date of the inspection.

#### Programme and persons present

During the week of the spot check, there were three teachers (including the director and the academic manager) teaching on site and three teachers teaching remote classes. Courses running were all either general English (at three levels) or IELTS preparation in different time slots through the day and evening; most students are part-time. The inspector arrived at the school's building at 11.45 and left at 16.00. He met the director, the academic manager, the sales and administration director, a group of teachers and a group of students. The inspector was given a tour of the building and was given access to various additional documents, which were provided in paper form or electronically.

### Findings

Findings are reported in the following section and in the Action taken on points to be addressed.

### 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.	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

The new premises provide a suitable environment for work and relaxation for both students and staff. They are in a good state of repair and have adequate signage and facilities.

### Action taken on points to be addressed

#### Management

M5 Action taken in response to student feedback is not recorded.

**Addressed. Student feedback is collected on a database, reviewed by management and action taken in response to it is recorded in a way that it is accessible to staff.**

M8 Human resources policies and procedures are minimal.

**Addressed. More detailed policies and procedures have been developed and are shared in staff handbooks.**

M9 Job descriptions are insufficiently detailed and there is no procedure for review.

**Addressed. All job descriptions are now appropriately detailed, and are reviewed periodically.**

M10 There is no formal recruitment policy. A number of references were missing from staff files.

**Not addressed. While a recruitment policy has been put in place, at the time of inspection records of qualifications had not been signed and dated, and there was one reference missing for one member of staff.**

M12 No appraisals have taken place. This includes the academic manager who has been in post for more than a year. There is no clear procedure for dealing with unsatisfactory performance.

**Addressed. There is now a systematised appraisal procedure in place, and evidence of appraisals being carried out by the director. There is a procedure for dealing with unsatisfactory performance outlined in the staff handbook.**

M22 Photographs are not always captioned where necessary.

**Addressed. Photographs used are now clearly of the school premises and do not require captions.**

M23 The text is not always well written and there are some linguistic inaccuracies.

**Addressed. The website is now mostly accurate and clearly written.**

M28 The website makes reference to highly qualified teachers, but this is not true of the current staff profile. Some changes were made immediately after the inspection but a number of references remain.

**Addressed. All references to highly qualified teachers have been removed, and the description of staff qualifications is accurate.**

#### Premises and resources

P8 There are very few resources for teachers, especially in terms of reference and methodology materials.

**Addressed. A bank of teacher methodology resources has been collated in an online library. However, it is not clear if this arrangement meets copyright requirements (see also D1 below).**

#### Teaching and learning

T12 Review is a relatively informal process, which is appropriate to the size of the current operation, but which will benefit from clearer records and procedures.

**Addressed. Courses are now reviewed regularly by the academic manager. There are clear procedures, and reviews are effectively recorded.**

T15 Although students are automatically enrolled on the school's VLE, to help support independent learning, the syllabus does not systematically highlight or identify study or learning strategies.

**Addressed. The coursebook includes study skills, and they are referred to in the teacher handbook, with specific examples for each level. However, the written course syllabus does not include study or learning strategies, and it is recommended that the school considers putting this in place.**

T16 Courses do not include any specific strategies in this area.

**Not addressed. Course outlines and teacher handbooks do not highlight specific strategies in this area.**

#### Welfare and student services

W1 Systems related to fire safety are unsatisfactory. There has been only one fire drill in the last year, and the fire risk assessment carried out by an external agent earlier this month has raised a number of issues that are outstanding. The school has no system for conducting their own checks of the building between external inspections.

**Not addressed. A new fire risk assessment has confirmed that previous outstanding issues have been addressed, fire drills have been carried out recently, and the school keeps records of its own checks. However, during the inspection numerous fire doors were found to be propped open, and a number of fire extinguishers had no evidence of having been serviced.**

W2 A critical incident plan was produced during the inspection, and subsequently made known to staff and students. This is no longer a point to be addressed, but checks will have to be made at a future date to verify that all staff and students are familiar with it.

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**Addressed. Staff and students are familiar with plans. Pertinent information is displayed in the school building and published in handbooks.**

W4 A policy was produced during the inspection, and incorporated into the school's information for students and staff shortly after the inspection. This is no longer a point to be addressed, but awareness will need to be checked at the next inspection.

**Addressed. The policy is appropriately disseminated through staff and student handbooks and information on noticeboards and staff and students demonstrated an understanding of the school's approach to tolerance, respect and abusive behaviour.**

W6 The information available does not provide any information related to ports of entry and no links to travel providers' websites are included.

**Addressed. The required information is now available on the website.**

#### **Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance**

D1 No CLA guidelines were on display and the school did not have a CLA licence.

**Addressed. The school has a CLA licence displayed about its printing facilities. However, courses are heavily reliant on photocopies from coursebooks (see new point to be addressed).**

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#### **Conclusions**

The school's transition to new premises has been smooth and caused no disruption, and the new premises meet the standards of the Scheme. The school has taken appropriate action in response to many of the points to be addressed, and satisfactory progress has been made. Immediately after the inspection, the school provided evidence that some of the outstanding points to be addressed have been acted upon. However, in most cases, it would be premature to judge that these points have been addressed, and this should be done through the regular protocols once this report has been shared with the provider.

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