

Organisation name	London Language Foundation
Inspection date	14 June 2017

BACKGROUND
Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	July 2015
Last full inspection	N/a
Subsequent spot check (if applicable)	N/a
Subsequent supplementary check (if applicable)	April 2016
Subsequent interim visit (if applicable)	February 2017
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

Current accreditation status and reason for spot check

Current accredited status	Accredited
Reason for spot check	Routine: newly accredited institution

Premises profile

Address of main site	602 Commercial Road, Limehouse Lock, London E14 7HS
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	<p>Main site.</p> <p>The London Language Foundation (LLF) rents rooms and an office in Brit College, close to Limehouse Lock in the Docklands in London. Brit College offers recognised qualifications in business studies, and has been located at the current site for ten years. LLF has classrooms on the ground floor and the use of a small office next to the main reception of Brit College. Students attending courses at the school also have access to the college computer room.</p>

Student and staff profile

	At inspection	In peak week June
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	25	30
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	18	18
Typical age range	18–35	18–35
Typical length of stay	2–3 months	2–3 months
Predominant nationalities	Spanish, Italian	Spanish, Italian
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	4	4
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	2	2

INTRODUCTION

Background

LLF was founded in April 2014 and started offering classes at the premises of Brit College in June 2014. Accreditation was awarded in April 2016, with the school being required to produce evidence within six months that a full risk assessment of the premises had been conducted. Satisfactory evidence was provided.

An interim visit was conducted in February 2017. At the time of the visit an acting director of studies (DoS) had been appointed; although an experienced teacher, he was TEFLI and not, therefore, qualified to carry out the full range of academic management duties, including observations. In addition, very little attention had been given to addressing the points highlighted in the supplementary report ten months before. There were issues with staff references, and with publicity, which needed urgent attention. The recommendation was to bring forward the routine spot check of the school (due as the school is a newly accredited provider) and carry it out within 12 months, rather than 18 months. The focus was to be on checking that all points to be addressed from previous inspection reports had been dealt with.

The school offers year-round general English courses for adults (18+) in the morning, afternoon and evening, and preparation courses for IELTS. Students live locally and can enrol for any number of sessions. All students enrolled since accreditation was awarded have been from EU countries. The school offers closed group programmes for adults (16+) but none have run so far.

In the week of the spot check there were two general English classes running Monday to Friday, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, and one student receiving one-to-one tuition three mornings a week. Three part-time general English evening classes were running, and three students were receiving one-to-one tuition in the evenings.

Preparation

The spot check was carried out by the inspector who had conducted the interim visit in February 2017. She contacted the school to check whether any days would be unsuitable for the visit. The principal provided her with an update on staffing in the school, together with his schedule. The exact date of the spot check was not given to the school. The inspector was sent the previous inspection report and other relevant documents, including an action plan submitted to the Accreditation Unit on 12 April 2017. She checked the school's website before the visit.

Programme and persons present

The inspector arrived at the school at 10.15 and left at 14.00. She had discussions with the principal, the acting DoS and the administration and welfare officer. She checked a range of documentation, including staff files. A brief roundup was given to the principal.

FINDINGS

Management

The regular team is the principal and the administrative and welfare officer, both of whom work part-time, the acting DoS and one teacher. Four additional teachers are available if and when student numbers and classes increase. The office is staffed when courses are running and the team works closely together. The principal is in regular contact by telephone and email if he is not in the office.

A new director has joined the company since the interim visit in February, bringing additional IT and marketing expertise to the business. The structure of the company has not changed.

Teachers' files were checked. Two references were on file for everyone, as well as endorsed copies of qualifications and up-to-date DBS numbers. All five teachers available to teach are TEFLI. Copies of signed contracts were not on file but were sent to the inspector immediately following the inspection. Staff are required to do online basic awareness safeguarding training and Prevent training, and there was evidence on file of their having completed this.

Appraisal records were on file for the acting DoS, the administration and welfare officer, and the teacher who teaches regularly throughout the year.

Premises

The premises are unchanged. Additional classrooms are available if needed, including small rooms for testing new students and one-to-one tuition. The working relationship with Brit College staff continues to be a constructive one; cover is provided by Brit College reception staff if the school's office is not staffed. The office is quite small for everyone to use, but as both office staff and teachers work part-time, numbers are quite low at any one time.

Academic management

The TEFLQ DoS in post at the time of the supplementary visit in April 2016 left the school in June 2016. A new

TEFLQ DoS was appointed but she left the school in November 2016. The current acting DoS, who had been teaching in the school for some time, was appointed in early December 2016. The Accreditation Unit was informed in June and November 2016 of the changes in academic managers.

The acting DoS is TEFLI and has at least three years' full-time relevant teaching experience. He has a range of non-ELT professional experience but does not have a Level 6 qualification. The school started recruitment for a new DoS in February but several months later, no suitable person had been found. Applications for the part-time role were relatively low and very few were from suitably qualified applicants. In order to support the acting DoS in the meantime, an experienced ELT consultant, with a background as head of ELT in a further education college, and experience as a member of the school's Board, was asked to carry out observations and provide some continuing professional development (CPD) for the teachers. A session on activities for differentiation in the classroom was run in April.

The inspector was shown a copy of the consultant's diploma-level certificate (TEFLQ).

The acting DoS has six additional paid hours on his timetable to support the teachers. He helps and advises on lesson planning, and has reviewed coursebooks being used, and assessed the need for new materials. He has been observed by the ELT consultant, and received feedback. Monthly meetings with teachers take place to discuss practical aspects of teaching, and administrative matters.

The principal told the inspector that, in the light of the difficulty of recruiting a new TEFLQ DoS, the Board had approved financial support for the acting DoS to study for a diploma-level qualification. Enquiries were being made at two suitable schools for a course starting in autumn 2017. The inspector explained that if the school were to continue without a TEFLQ DoS in post, the agreement with the ELT consultant would need to be more formalised to ensure adequate and structured support both for the acting DoS, and for the teachers while the acting DoS completes his qualification. On 23 June the inspector requested an outline of a more structured approach and on 26 June the principal responded with details of what had been agreed.

The ELT consultant has been contracted to deliver monthly CPD workshops for the teacher, to carry out teaching observations every two months and to provide practical guidance and support for the acting DoS. The consultant and the acting DoS have agreed to liaise by email as and when necessary.

The inspector agreed that this would be a broadly satisfactory arrangement, as long as it were continued throughout the period of the acting DoS's study. She asked the principal to keep the Accreditation Unit informed of any changes in this arrangement which might mean the school would be without academic support from a TEFLQ-qualified person.

Welfare and student services

The administration and welfare officer is responsible for enrolments, welfare and advice to potential and current students. There is no demand for the school to provide accommodation but if this should happen, the school will work with an accommodation agency which is registered with the British Council.

Feedback forms seen show that student satisfaction is high.

Care of under 18s

The school has a safeguarding policy and the administration and welfare officer has completed appropriate training as the designated safeguarding lead.

POINTS TO BE ADDRESSED

Points from the previous full inspection and/or subsequent spot checks or interim visits with comments (in italics) to indicate how far these have been addressed. Comments in bold are from this spot check. Only points reviewed during this spot check are included here. Any points outstanding will be checked at the next full inspection.

Management

M3 Job descriptions are not available for all positions and those that do exist are brief and do not reflect all the roles and responsibilities. They are also undated and unsigned.

Not addressed.

Addressed. New job descriptions seen are satisfactory.

M6 There was only limited evidence of the collection of references to confirm the experience of teachers.

Not addressed. Three teachers were working at the time of the interim visit; there was one reference on file for one teacher, confirmation of employment at a previous school for a second teacher (but no references), and no references for the third teacher. The application form does not have a section requesting references.

Addressed. References for teachers were on file. The application form now has a section requesting references.

M13 The emergency phone is not shared on a rota.

Not addressed. The administration and welfare officer continues to hold the emergency phone. However, as student numbers are low and students live locally, and no emergency calls have been received, the current situation is deemed acceptable.

Addressed. The emergency phone is now shared between the administration and welfare officer and the acting DoS.

M18 It is often not clear whether the feedback forms on file contain initial or final feedback as the same form is used for both occasions and it is often not dated. A space for action taken in response to points raised in the feedback form was not completed in the examples seen by the inspectors. The collation and dissemination of feedback is very limited.

Partially addressed. Two different forms are used now but there was no evidence that any action taken is recorded.

Addressed. Evidence of action taken having been recorded was seen.

M21 One or two errors of spelling and sentence formation were noted.

Not addressed.

Addressed. The language on the website has been proofread more thoroughly and there are now no errors.

M24 The number of taught hours is not specifically given, as courses are described as 6, 9, 15 hours with "a short break of 10 minutes", so they are in fact 5h 40m, 8h 30m, and 14h 10m.

Not addressed.

Addressed. An additional ten minutes has been added to the morning courses (10.00–13.10). There are no breaks in the afternoon and evening courses.

M25 The approximate cost of course related fees for the IELTS examination is not given.

Not addressed.

Addressed. The approximate cost of the test fee at an external IELTS centre is given.

Points to be addressed from the interim visit in February 2017

Teaching and learning

T4 The acting DoS, in post since the beginning of December 2016, is not appropriately qualified.

Not addressed. See comments under Academic management above.

T11 Since the departure of the TEFLQ DoS in November 2016 further observations have been completed by the Board member, with feedback and action planning rather cursory in level of detail. The Board member, though generally well qualified, is only TEFLI in terms of ELT qualifications.

Addressed. See comments under Academic management above.

T15 There are missed opportunities in the design of courses to include study and learning strategies that support independent learning and help students to continue their learning after the course.

Addressed. Syllabuses have been revised and include outlines of opportunities for independent learning.

Care of Under 18s

C1 The designated safeguarding lead and designated safeguarding person need to complete their specialist safeguarding training in the near future.

Addressed. The administration and welfare officer is the designated safeguarding lead and told the inspector she had completed her Level 3 safeguarding training on an external course in May 2016. However, no certificate or other documentation relating to the course was available.

Addressed. The certificate confirming the administration and welfare officer's completion of the safeguarding course was on file.

C5 In summer 2016 a 12 year-old boy was enrolled with his father and they were taught in a class with other adult students.

Addressed. The school will not accept individual enrolments of students aged under 16.

Points to be addressed arising from this visit

None.

CONCLUSIONS

The school is maintaining standards in its provision of English courses for local students. The points to be addressed from previous inspections have been dealt with satisfactorily. The situation relating to the lack of a suitably qualified DoS has been addressed by agreeing a three-month programme of support with a TEFLQ consultant, and by plans to support the acting DoS on a diploma-level course of study.

RECOMMENDATION

The next inspection falls due in 2020; there are no grounds for bringing this forward. However, the school should provide confirmation of the enrolment of the acting DoS on a diploma-level course. Since the agreement with the

TEFLQ consultant to support the acting DoS is not for a specified fixed period, the school should notify the Accreditation Unit if the agreement with her is terminated before the acting DoS has successfully completed the diploma-level course.

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Changes to summary statement

No changes need to be made to the summary statement.

Summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited London Language Foundation in April 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 English for adults (18+) and for closed groups of under 18s (16+).

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