

Organisation name	ODILS Plymouth
Inspection date	12 April 2025
Current accreditation status	Accredited
Reason for spot check	Signalled: inspect new or additional premises

Recommendation

We recommend continued accreditation. The next inspection falls due in 2027; there are no grounds for bringing this forward.

Updated 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, values, and publicity.

Premises and resources

The provision meets the section standard. The recently refurbished premises provide students and staff with a 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. Thorough guidance and support 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 meets the requirements of the Scheme.

Welfare and student services

The provision meets the section standard. The needs of the students for security, pastoral care and general information are met. Students benefit from well-managed student services and related activities.

Safeguarding under 18s

No students under the age of 18 are accepted.

Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance

The items sampled were satisfactory.

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	2006
Last full inspection	2018, compliance-only inspection in 2023
Subsequent checks/visits (if applicable)	N/a
Other related non-accredited activities (in brief) at this centre	Employment mentoring, teacher training, community support work, creche
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>No peak</i>
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	320	N/a
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	19	N/a
Typical age range	19–65	N/a
Typical length of stay	Academic year	N/a
Predominant nationalities	Afghan, Syrian, Ukranian	N/a

Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	17	N/a
Total number of managers including academic	8	N/a
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	11	N/a

Premises profile

Address of main site	1–5 Manor Street, Plymouth PL1 1TL
Additional sites in use	N/a
Additional sites not in use	N/a
Sites inspected	Main site remotely

Introduction

Background

Open Doors International Language School (ODILS) is a charity which delivers qualifications in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and in Functional Skills English. Many students are fully funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency, although some may have to pay a small proportion of their fees for their ESOL qualifications, if not on any state benefits and above a salary threshold. ODILS teaches migrant workers, refugees and asylum seekers, and spouses of British citizens. Funded and fee-paying students are taught together.

The school does not arrange accommodation. There is no advertised leisure programme, although teachers occasionally organise social events for their students.

The school moved into new premises in February. This spot check focused on the new premises.

Preparation

A date was agreed for the check. A video of the premises and some requested documentation was sent to the inspector beforehand.

Programme and persons present

The spot check was conducted remotely by one inspector and lasted half a day. Meetings were held with the academic director and the IT/facilities manager. A remote tour of the premises was conducted.

Findings

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

Premises and resources

The school relocated to the new premises, on a 25-year lease, six weeks ago. The property was acquired and completely re-purposed and re-furnished to suit the needs of the school and the students.

The school occupies a two-story building in Plymouth city centre. There are eight classrooms, each equipped with an interactive whiteboard. There is an additional large room, currently used as an office by five employment mentors, but can be re-purposed for smaller school events. There is a café for staff and student use with a break-out area to relax in, and a kitchen for staff use. There is also a teachers' resources room. There are office spaces for the school managers and staff and also for staff carrying out other activities. There is a creche area, which can also be used for large whole school events and examinations.

Thorough checks and risk assessments have been carried out, and staff and students were given very complete inductions to the new premises, which included health and safety procedures.

Each classroom is equipped with an interactive whiteboard. There is an IT member of staff, as well as an external company for consultation as needed. Guidance and support for teachers is very good, with regular training as part of the in-house development sessions. Students are all given individual access to an online operating system and all necessary guidance in its use.

Welfare and student services

Appropriate onsite emergency plans are in place.

Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance

All documentation for the new premises is in place.

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.	Strength
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, including the toilets are extremely well presented, spotlessly clean and maintained to a high standard. The décor and furnishings are entirely suitable and both staff and students enjoy a very comfortable environment.

P3 The classrooms are spacious, light and airy. Each classroom is equipped with very effective lighting, cooling and heating systems. The furniture has been chosen for its suitability and flexibility.

Action taken on points to be addressed

Points from the previous full inspection with comments (in bold) to indicate how far these have been addressed.

Management

M28 (2024: M27) Descriptions of staff qualifications are not accurate.

Addressed. Staff qualifications are accurately described.

Teaching and learning

T8 (2024: T6) There is no clear guidance on managing continuous enrolment for teaching staff.

Addressed. The course design, individual learning plans (ILPs), tutorials and differentiation take account of the needs of students who do not enrol at the beginning of the academic year and thorough guidance is given to teachers in inductions and ongoing development sessions.

T9 (2024: T8) New teachers are sometimes not observed until their fourth week in the job.

Addressed. New teachers are observed within the first two weeks.

T15 (2024: T11) Study and learning plans are not systematically included in course design.

Addressed. After a thorough needs analysis, ILPs are drawn up which include study plans.

T16 (2024: T12) No linking was seen between course content and students' lives outside the classroom.

Addressed. The course design includes links between the classroom and the students' lives outside.

T25 Many teachers gave teaching aims rather than learning outcomes. Some lessons would have benefited from additional stages, either to support students better before an activity or to provide more meaningful practice towards the end of the same.

Addressed. Teachers are now presenting and making learning outcomes known to students and this has been a focus for teacher development sessions.

Conclusions

The new premises are entirely suitable and the move into them has gone very smoothly. All checks, licences, documentation, and risk assessments are in place. All points to be addressed have been fully addressed.

Items requiring early action

N/a