

Organisation name	Windsor English, Windsor
Inspection date	14 February 2024
Current accreditation status	Accredited
Reason for spot check	Routine: newly accredited institution

Recommendation

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

Changes to the summary statement

No changes need to be made to the summary statement, apart from adding the date of this inspection and removing the reference to the school being small.
The need for improvement in the area of course design can now be removed.

New summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited Windsor English in April 2023 and February 2024. 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+).

Overall, the inspection report stated that the organisation met the standards of the Scheme.

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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 and values. Student administration is handled appropriately overall. A number of inaccuracies in publicity were addressed during the inspection.

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. Staff use the classroom technology confidently to support learning. There is a system for the review of resources in place.

Teaching and learning

The provision meets the section standard. The academic staff team has a professional profile appropriate to the context. Teachers receive sufficient support to meet the needs of the current teaching staff; and there is a coherent and appropriate course structure described in writing for teachers' guidance. Learning outcomes are shared with students. Learning strategies and attempts to develop students' language skills outside the classroom are included in some classes and the student handbook but they do not feature in course design documents. The teaching observed met the requirements of the Scheme.

Welfare and student services

The provision meets the section standard. The Windsor English team collaborates effectively to meet the needs of students for security, pastoral care, and information. Policies and practices promote tolerance and respect.

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	April 2023
Last full inspection	April 2023
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	N/a
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	N/a

Student and staff profile	At inspection	In peak week: <i>September</i>
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	27	30
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	18	18
Typical age range	30–40	30–40
Typical length of stay	3 months	3 months
Predominant nationalities	Chinese, Brazilian	Chinese, Brazilian
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	3	3
Total number of managers including academic	3	3
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	0	0

Premises profile	
Address of main site	21 Osborne Road, Windsor, Berkshire SL4 3EG
Additional sites in use	N/a
Additional sites not in use	N/a
Sites inspected	21 Osborne Road, Windsor, Berkshire SL4 3EG

Introduction

Background

Following the full inspection in April 2023 the school was scheduled for a routine spot check to check the progress against the points to be addressed.

Windsor English was established in 1984 and first accredited by the Scheme in 2023. The school is owned by the school director and operates from leased premises on the ground floor of a three-storey building in Windsor. Students are mostly recruited from the local community, including parents with children studying nearby. Courses of general English run throughout the year for adult students. No accommodation or leisure programme is offered by the school.

A new non-teaching director of studies (DOS) was appointed in August 2023. Class administration is completed by the administrative manager and the DoS dedicates an average of six hours per month to supporting the three long-serving teachers. Much of the DoS's work is conducted remotely e.g. monitoring the teachers' lesson plans that are uploaded daily. Teachers have easy access to the DoS via virtual and email contact systems. She also visits the school, usually once a month, to facilitate continuing professional development (CPD) and or complete lesson observations.

Preparation

The spot check inspector was sent relevant documents by the Accreditation Unit and looked at the school's website prior to the visit. The inspector also contacted the school directly in advance to establish when students would be studying but did not specify when the spot check would take place.

Programme and persons present

In the week of the spot check, there were three teachers allocated to three separate classes, pre intermediate, an intermediate and upper intermediate. All students were studying for 15 hours per week.

The inspector arrived at the school's main building at 10.30 and left at 14.15. The inspector met the owner and the office manager / administrator and had focus group meetings with the three teachers, and some students. Various electronic and hard copy documents were sampled. No teaching was observed.

Findings

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

Action taken on points to be addressed

Management

M3 The working hours of the DoS are insufficient to ensure the requirements of the role are satisfied.

Addressed: the DoS has regular virtual and face-to-face contact with the teachers and can monitor teacher activity via the shared electronic portal. The amount of dedicated time is sufficient to meet the needs of the current cohort of teachers.

M9 Job descriptions are not in place for all members of staff. The true scope of the DoS role is not reflected in the time allocated to her.

Partially Addressed: the DoS has six hours a month dedicated to academic matters. The job description only specifies the current priorities (teacher appraisals, facilitating meetings and making revisions to the syllabus) but there is no mention of day-to-day guidance and support for teachers. The provision is suitable for the existing teachers but there would be insufficient time available to support less experienced or confident teachers.

M12 Monitoring and performance appraisal procedures are in place for teachers. The DoS is not appraised on her academic management responsibilities.

Addressed: the DoS was appraised in January 2024 and the next meeting is scheduled for July 2024.

Records for teacher appraisals were on file.

M18 Students are not currently reminded to update their local contact details if there are any changes to their circumstances.

Partially addressed: students are reminded, via notices, to inform the office manager of any changes to accommodation and emergency contact information. There are plans for teachers to proactively ask students, in the first lesson of the month, if there are any changes to their contact details.

M20 Specific examples of behaviour that may result in a student being asked to leave the course are not made available to staff or students.

Addressed: information is included in the student handbook and a copy of the policy is on the student noticeboard.

Premises and resources

P12 There is no stated policy and no systematic review of coursebooks, or of supplementary resources.

Addressed: there is a review form in place and records evidenced coursebook review and changes at the end of last year. The next review is set for the end of the summer term.

Teaching and learning

T8 Insufficient guidance is provided for teachers on how to assimilate new students into classes.

Addressed: the whole student body is a very close-knit group. Teachers, and students, welcome students formally and informally as and when they move to a different class. A buddy system is in place.

T11 The teachers' handbook does not include information on the principles of the course design. The course structure is determined by the coursebook at each level but there is no time reference for its coverage, or guidance on how to supplement the course.

Addressed: course programmes include a guide to the amount of time to be spent on different aspects of the programme as well as information on supplementary material options.

T13 Other than the coursebook, course outlines are not made available to students. Lesson outcomes are not always made known to students during lessons.

Addressed: weekly course content is shared with students at the beginning of the week and the daily lesson plans specifying learning outcomes are uploaded each day. The DoS monitors plans weekly.

T15 Study and learning strategies do not feature in lesson plan templates and are not systematically covered in course design materials.

Addressed: strategies have been incorporated into the course plans and there is now some guidance in the syllabus and in the students' handbook.

T16 Course design does not consider strategies to help students benefit linguistically from their stay in the UK.

Partially addressed: teachers gave examples of how this is incorporated into homework tasks and the DoS reported that suggestions discussed at meetings are in the process of being added to course documentation.

T25 Outcomes were not made explicit to students in any of the lessons observed. Plans included teaching aims rather than student outcomes.

Addressed: the lesson plan template includes a section for student learning outcomes. The DoS reported that the observations she had completed confirmed that outcomes were shared with students. The completed lesson plans sampled by the inspector included student learning outcomes.

Welfare and student services

W7 Aspects of life in the UK which would be relevant to the student body are not covered in the student handbook.

Addressed: additional helpful information has been added to the student handbook.

Conclusions

Many positive changes have taken place in the period since the first inspection in April 2023 and most of the points to be addressed arising from that inspection have been addressed. However, some amendments to the DoS job description and hours made available may be required if the teacher profile changes or if there are any significant changes to the volume and programme of study for the students. Other points previously highlighted under management, teaching and learning, and welfare are now largely satisfactory. The implementation of plans to address M18 and T16 remains outstanding.
