

Organisation name	ELC Chester
Inspection date	4–5 June 2024

Section standards	
Management The management of the provision operates to the benefit of the students, and in accordance with the provider's stated goals, values, and publicity.	Met
Premises and resources The premises provide students and staff with a safe, 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.	Met
Teaching and learning 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.	Met
Welfare and student services The provision meets the needs of the students for security, pastoral care, information and leisure activities. Students benefit from well-managed student services, including, where offered, out-of-class activities and suitable accommodation.	Met
Safeguarding under 18s There is appropriate provision for the safeguarding of students under the age of 18 within the organisation and in any leisure activities or accommodation provided.	Met

Recommendation
We recommend continued accreditation.

Summary statement
<p>The British Council inspected and accredited ELC Chester in June 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).</p> <p>This private language school offers courses in general English for adults (18+) and young people (16+) and for closed groups of adults and under 18s, and vacation courses for under 18s.</p> <p>Strengths were noted in the areas of strategic and quality management, staff management, student administration, publicity, premises and facilities, learning resources, academic staff profile, academic management, course design, learner management, teaching, care of students, accommodation, leisure opportunities, and safeguarding under 18s.</p> <p>The inspection report stated that the organisation met the standards of the Scheme.</p>

Introduction

ELC is a group of schools comprising centres in Brighton, Eastbourne, and Chester. ELC is a not-for-profit organisation overseen by a voluntary board of trustees. The head office is in Brighton, where the chief executive officer (CEO) is based.

ELC Chester was acquired in September 2019. Accreditation from the previous school was carried over to the new school and the previous centre manager (CM) stayed on until January 2024, when a new CM was appointed. Many of the key staff have remained with the school throughout the changeover period.

In the summer a vacation course for 13–16 year olds is run from separate premises located very near the main school.

The inspection took two days and included meetings with the CEO, the CM, the marketing and student services manager (MSSM), the academic manager (AM), the course director, the accommodation and welfare officer, the administrative assistant, the groups' coordinator, and the social activities organiser. Focus group meetings were held with teachers and students. All teachers timetabled to teach during the inspection were observed. One inspector conducted virtual visits of two homestays and a residence.

Address of main site/head office

9–11 Stanley Place, Chester CH1 2LU

Description of sites visited/observed

The school occupies two premises. The main building is on four floors with an external patio seating area at the rear. The ground floor comprises the reception, office areas and a classroom. 11 classrooms, self-access centre, staff and student rooms are located on the other floors. The other premises, known as the Language Training Centre (LTC), is on the opposite side of the small square and is used for 25+, 50+ and one-to-one courses. It is on three storeys and there is a basement which is used for storage. The ground floor comprises a large student lounge and coffee bar. On the other two floors are five classrooms, a staffroom and a computer room.

Course profile	Year round		Vacation only	
	Run	Seen	Run	Seen
General ELT for adults (18+)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General ELT for adults (18+) and young people (16+)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General ELT for juniors (under 18)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
English for academic purposes (excludes IELTS preparation)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
English for specific purposes (includes English for Executives)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Applied English/Content and language integrated learning (CLIL)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher development (excludes award-bearing courses)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ESOL skills for life/for citizenship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments

ELC Chester offers general English courses of 21 hours per week. Needs/interest-based programmes for students aged 50+ and 25+ are also offered as well as examination preparation courses, and one-to-one lessons. In summer there is an off-site vacation course for under 18s.

Management profile

The CM from each school in the group reports to the CEO of the ELC group. The CM is supported by the MSSM and AM. The AM is supported by two course directors, one of whom oversees the academic management of the summer vacation course. The MSSM leads the student services and administration team.

Accommodation profile

The school offers homestay accommodation (ensuite available), which is managed by ELC. Residential, studio accommodation is also available and managed by an external provider. A number of hotels are recommended.

Summary of inspection findings

Management

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The management of the provision, in all respects, operates clearly to the benefit of the students, and very evidently in accordance with the provider's stated goals, values, and publicity. Management and administration systems are well established and very effective. Publicity is well presented and accurate. *Strategic and quality management, Staff management, Student administration, and Publicity* are areas of strength.

Premises and resources

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The premises provide students and staff with a safe, very comfortable and professional environment for work and relaxation. A wide range of well-organised 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. *Premises and facilities and Learning resources* are areas of strength.

Teaching and learning

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The academic staff team has a good professional profile (qualifications, experience and continuing professional development) entirely appropriate to the context. Teachers receive very good guidance to ensure that they support students most effectively in their learning. Courses are well-structured and managed to provide the maximum possible benefit to students. The teaching observed met the requirements of the Scheme. *Academic staff profile, Academic management, Course design, Learner management, and Teaching* are areas of strength.

Welfare and student services

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. Care of students is effectively managed, and students receive a high level of pastoral care. Accommodation is of a very good standard with many welcoming and experienced hosts supported by a strong team at ELC. The leisure programme is full, varied and very popular with students. *Care of students, Accommodation, and Leisure opportunities* are areas of strength.

Safeguarding under 18s

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. Excellent policies and procedures are in place, and the safeguarding profile of the team is very good. Supervision of under 18s is sensible, and accommodation is thoughtfully managed. *Safeguarding under 18s* is an area of strength.

Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance

The items sampled were satisfactory

Evidence

Management

Strategic and quality management	Area of strength
M1 There is a clear statement describing the goals and values of the organisation, which is made known to all staff.	Strength
M2 The management has clear objectives for the future of the organisation and has realistic plans to achieve them.	Strength
M3 There is a documented and clearly understood structure for the ELT operation. There are sufficient staff to manage and deliver the provision, and to ensure continuity at all times.	Met
M4 There are effective channels of communication between all involved in the ELT operation, and between the ELT operation and any wider organisation of which it is a part.	Strength
M5 The provider regularly obtains and records feedback from students on all the services offered. Feedback is circulated to relevant staff and appropriate action is taken and recorded.	Met
M6 The provider regularly seeks and records feedback from all staff on the services offered. Appropriate action is taken and recorded.	Met
M7 The provider reviews systems, processes and practices with a view to continuing improvement. Appropriate action is taken and recorded in an annual self-evaluation.	Strength

Comments

M1 ELC has a statement of goals and values that covers all aspects of the provision, and this was adopted at the takeover. It is effectively disseminated through a variety of channels to all stakeholders. It clearly underpins all activity at the school. Managers understand and can articulate the relevance of the goals and values to the current

situation.

M2 The school's development plan is very detailed, broad in scope, with SMART objectives in place. Evidence was seen that a number of objectives have already been met, and progress towards others has also been recorded.

M4 Channels of communication, both formal and informal, are very effective. There are regular formal meetings both within and between the three ELC schools. Staff and managers have opportunities, both formally and informally, to communicate across the organisation. Homestay hosts receive a monthly newsletter and are frequently welcomed into the school.

M7 The review of systems and processes is very thorough, well documented and in line with the organisation's mission statement. Minutes from meetings and the development plan provide clear evidence of a focused and systematic approach to improvements across the school.

Staff management and development	Area of strength
M8 The provider implements appropriate human resources policies, which are made known to staff.	Strength
M9 The provider specifies the duties of all staff working with ELT students, and ensures that these are up to date.	Met
M10 There are effective procedures for the recruitment and selection of all staff.	Strength
M11 There are effective induction procedures for all staff.	Strength
M12 There are effective procedures for monitoring and appraising all staff, for highlighting good performance, and for handling unsatisfactory performance or conduct. These procedures are made known to all staff.	Met
M13 There are effective procedures to ensure the continuing professional development (CPD) of all staff to meet the needs of the individual, the students and the organisation.	Strength

Comments

M8 The staff guide is comprehensive, and support is key to many of the policies and procedures. Overall, staff felt valued and well supported both in their roles and personally.

M10 There are comprehensive procedures for each stage of the recruitment process, including a thorough interviewing process, and evidence of their consistent implementation. Staff files were all complete.

M11 Thorough inductions are provided for all staff. Teachers go through a lengthy process, which includes an ongoing 'buddy' system, and administrative staff have role-specific inductions. Temporary summer staff have a two-day paid induction.

M12 There are effective procedures in place for monitoring all staff and all permanent staff have an annual formal appraisal. However, although all non-permanent teachers are effectively appraised following a formal observation with the AM, this is not systematically recorded.

M13 There are very effective procedures to ensure the CPD of staff. CPD is well established and funded. Individual development needs and opportunities are identified, and all staff are encouraged to engage fully with their professional development.

Student administration	Area of strength
M14 Staff are helpful and courteous to students and their representatives, and provide good levels of customer service.	Strength
M15 Students or their representatives receive sufficient information and advice on their course choices before arrival and during their stay.	Strength
M16 There are clear systems in place to enrol students effectively and maintain accurate information about student payment and course details. This information is readily accessible to relevant staff.	Met
M17 There are effective systems to maintain up-to-date and accessible records of local contact details for students, and their designated emergency contacts.	Met
M18 There is a clear and effective policy on student attendance and punctuality that is known to all staff and students and is applied consistently.	Strength
M19 All staff and students are made aware of conditions and procedures under which a student may be asked to leave the course.	Met
M20 All students and, where appropriate, group leaders and parents/legal guardians, receive information in writing about who to see about problems and how to make a complaint.	Strength

Comments

M15 Students or their representatives receive excellent support on course choice, and this is available through a variety of channels.

M18 Systems for recording student attendance and responding to absences are very clear and efficient. One

member of staff has specific responsibility in this area and evidence was seen that the policy is consistently implemented.

M20 As well as the complaints policy, notices around the school make it clear to students who to see if they have a problem with any aspect of their stay, including the option to escalate their concerns to an external body. Records show that action taken is swift and appropriate.

Publicity	Area of strength
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.	Strength
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.	Strength
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.	Strength
M26 Publicity gives an accurate description of any accommodation offered.	Strength
M27 Descriptions of staff qualifications are accurate.	Met
M28 Claims to accreditation are in line with Scheme requirements.	Met

Comments

The main medium of publicity is the website. In addition, the school has a presence on various social media platforms.

M21 The website is easy to navigate with very clear descriptions of the provision; all supported by authentic photo and video material. The brochure is similarly attractive, and all publicity gives an impression of the school which is fully representative of the student experience.

M23 Information on courses is detailed, very clear and consistently presented across all courses.

M25 There is a section devoted to providing information on the level of care given to under 18s at the school. The page also contains links to both the safeguarding policy and the pastoral care policy.

M26 The description of accommodation is accurate, well presented and supported by a useful frequently asked questions section.

Premises and resources

Premises and facilities	Area of strength
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.	Met
P4 Students have adequate room and suitable facilities for relaxation and the consumption of food.	Strength
P5 There is adequate signage to buildings, routes, rooms and exits, and there are facilities for the display or sharing of general information.	Strength
P6 There is sufficient space for all staff, for work, meetings, relaxation and the storage of personal possessions.	Met

Comments

P2 Both premises provide a very comfortable environment for students and staff. Consideration has been given to the function of spaces, especially communal areas. As well as ample space inside, there is access to an inviting outside patio, with a covered area.

P4 In both premises, students have a choice of ample spaces for relaxation. There are large common rooms in both buildings and in the main building there is also a large 'coffee' room, with tables and facilities to make drinks and to heat food.

P5 Signage is very clear and excellent use is made of both digital and physical noticeboards for the display of general information, including who's who staff displays.

Learning resources	Area of strength
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.	Strength
P8 There are appropriate resources for teachers, which are adequate in number, accessible, and well maintained and organised.	Strength
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.	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

P7 There is a wide range of very well-organised and up-to-date learning materials. As well as coursebook and supplementary materials to suit the various courses, there are also custom-made materials to respond to students' needs. There is a system of allocated materials for use in the different courses.

P8 There is a wide range of very appropriate resources for teachers. In addition to these, the school pays for subscriptions to a range of professional journals and online resources. There is an established culture of sharing and exchanging materials between the staff.

Teaching and learning

Academic staff profile	Area of strength
T1 There is a clear recruitment and support policy for the academic team relevant to the stated course objectives and student profile.	
T2 The academic manager/academic management team has an appropriate professional profile to provide academic leadership.	
T3 The teaching team has ELT/TESOL qualifications, general level of education, experience, knowledge and skills relevant to the courses they are teaching.	

Comments

The academic staff team has a professional profile (qualifications and experience) that is clearly appropriate to the school's context. A majority of teachers are TEFLQ, and the overall profile of both managers and teachers matches the requirements of the different course profiles, including the junior summer course.

The recruitment and support policy is very effectively devised and implemented in line with the stated course objectives and the student profile.

Academic management	Area of strength
T4 Teachers are matched appropriately to courses and there are effective procedures for the appropriate timetabling of students, courses and classrooms.	Strength
T5 There are formalised arrangements for covering for absent teachers which are satisfactory to students and staff.	Strength
T6 Where enrolment is continuous, explicit attention is paid to all aspects of academic management affected.	Met
T7 There are effective arrangements for the academic induction of new teachers appropriate to their needs.	Strength
T8 There are effective arrangements, led by an academic manager, to ensure appropriate day-to-day guidance and support for all teachers.	Strength
T9 There are effective arrangements for the observation and monitoring of teachers' performance by a TEFLQ academic manager based on clear standards known to teachers.	Strength
T10 There are effective procedures to ensure the continuing professional development (CPD) of all teachers to meet the needs of the individual teachers, the students, and the organisation.	Strength

Comments

T5 As well as the AM and course directors, there is a regularly updated list of available cover teachers, and detailed work records are kept to ensure continuity.

T7 Academic induction is very thorough and supported by excellent record keeping. New teachers complete a

number of checklists to ensure awareness of new systems and procedures, and they are assigned a buddy for ongoing informal support. Those spoken to found the process very supportive.

T8 There is very effective day-to-day support available, both from the very experienced AM and from the two course directors. The formal buddy system pairs new or less experienced teachers with teachers who have proven competency in delivering the syllabus. Feedback from teachers was very positive.

T9 Arrangements for observation and monitoring are very effective. There are annual regular, formal observations of all teachers and frequent informal pop-in observations, both of which inform the CPD programme. Teachers receive detailed and helpful feedback and reported positively on the process.

T10 There are very effective procedures to ensure relevant and appropriate CPD. There are monthly in-house development sessions. Regular check-ins identify developmental needs and teachers are offered opportunities and encouraged to lead sessions and to present at external events.

Course design and implementation	Area of strength
T11 The course design is comprehensive and is based on the provider's stated approach to learning or educational philosophy, and is appropriate to the learning context.	Strength
T12 Courses include strategies which help students to develop their language skills outside the classroom and benefit linguistically from their stay in the UK.	Strength
T13 Course design is regularly reviewed in light of the different and changing needs of students and feedback from teachers and students.	Strength
T14 Written course outlines and intended learning outcomes, appropriate to the course length and type, are available to students and referred to in class.	Met

Comments

T11 Course design is based on very clear principles, and teachers are well supported in matching the general English syllabus to the coursebook. There is also a degree of negotiation with students on a weekly basis to ensure the interests and needs of all students are considered. Courses for 50+ and 25+ are designed to suit the specific needs of the students.

T12 There is a good focus within the syllabus to ensure that students benefit linguistically from their stay in the UK. Activities linked to their lives outside the school, including their interactions with homestays as well as opportunities provided by the social programme, are well supported.

T13 Feedback from students and staff is systematically used to develop course design. The 25+ and 50+ courses are under continuous review in order to match the needs of the specific groups and individuals.

Learner management	Area of strength
T15 There are effective procedures for the correct placement of students, appropriate to their level and age.	Strength
T16 There are effective procedures for evaluating, monitoring and recording students' progress.	Strength
T17 Students are helped to identify their learning needs and receive support to meet course objectives.	Strength
T18 Where relevant, students are guided to select the examinations and examination training best suited to their needs and interests. Students wishing to progress to mainstream UK education have access to relevant information and advice.	Met

Comments

T15 Placement procedures are clearly effective. Assessment covers all relevant areas, including speaking, and it was evident from lesson observations as well as speaking to students, that the levels within each class were similar.

T16 There are various procedures for monitoring students' progress. As well as weekly reviews, there are more formal progress tests, and record-keeping is very good.

T17 Students receive excellent support in identifying their needs. This is done informally through interaction with an attentive and experienced academic team, and also through the tutorial programme which provides a more formal opportunity to set and review objectives.

Classroom observation record

Number of teachers seen	10
Number of observations	10
Parts of programme(s) observed	General English, 50+ and 25+ courses

Comments

None.

Teaching: classroom observation	Area of strength
T19 Teachers produce accurate models of spoken and written English; they provide clear explanations and relevant examples of language and usage, that are appropriate to the aims of the lesson and suitable for the students' level.	Strength
T20 The content of the lessons is based on the overall course objectives and takes into account the differing students' needs and backgrounds.	Strength
T21 The intended learning outcomes of lessons are made known to students, and are achieved through an appropriate sequence of activities.	Met
T22 Teaching techniques used are appropriate to the focus of the lesson, to the context, and to the needs of the group and individual learners.	Strength
T23 Teachers enhance learning by effectively managing the classroom environment and teaching and learning resources.	Met
T24 Students receive and benefit from appropriate and timely feedback on their performance during the lesson.	Strength
T25 Lessons include activities for teachers and students to evaluate whether learning is taking place.	Met
T26 Teachers promote a positive and inclusive learning atmosphere and students are engaged in the lesson.	Strength

Comments

T19 Teachers demonstrated a very good level of knowledge and awareness of the use of English. They gave clear explanations and examples, developed emergent language and indicated parts of speech. Phonemic script and stress marks were provided to support pronunciation.

T20 The lesson content was clearly based on both student and class needs, as well as on the course objectives. Detailed class profiles showed in-depth awareness of individuals' strengths and weaknesses.

T21 The intended learning outcomes were generally made known to students and these were achieved through a coherent sequence of activities.

T22 Teachers used a wide range of appropriate teaching techniques very confidently. These included sensitive nomination and questioning, eliciting and prompting, and the development of skills and sub skills.

T23 Teachers generally managed the classroom environment effectively. Whiteboards were organised well, and technology was handled competently.

T24 Teachers confidently used a range of correction techniques that included on-the-spot, delayed, peer and self-correction. The corrections led to language extension work relevant to the student profile. Positive feedback was used appropriately.

T25 Generally teachers included activities which gave both themselves and students the opportunity to evaluate learning.

T26 All teachers promoted a positive and inclusive learning atmosphere. They clearly demonstrated their awareness of their students' specific needs and interests, and students remained actively engaged throughout the lessons.

Welfare and student services

Care of students	Area of strength
W1 There is a comprehensive plan to respond to any emergency. This plan is known to all staff, and relevant elements are known to students.	Strength
W2 Students receive pastoral care appropriate to their age, background and circumstances. All staff and students know the name(s) of the person or people who deal with students' personal problems.	Strength
W3 There are policies to promote tolerance and respect, and procedures for dealing with any abusive behaviour. All staff and students are aware of these.	Strength
W4 Where relevant, students receive a 24-hour emergency contact number for the provider, in writing.	Met
W5 Students receive advice on relevant aspects of travel to and life in the UK.	Strength
W6 Students have access to adequate health care provision.	Strength

Comments

W1 A comprehensive plan is in place to respond to emergencies. Appropriate aspects of the plan are made known to both students and staff, through handbooks, induction presentations, and noticeboards.

W2 Pastoral care systems are very effective. An explicit policy is in place to ensure that all students can access the support they may need. Record keeping of any concerns arising is also excellent.

W3 Tolerance and respect feature prominently in the organisation's ethos. All staff and homestays complete the school's commissioned online safeguarding and prevent course.

W5 Up-to-date information and advice about life in the UK is clearly presented in a range of ways and locations, and onward travel arrangements are personalised for individual students and groups, with guaranteed limited wait times.

W6 Students have very good access to healthcare during their stay. The school has an arrangement with a local GP which works well, and staff are also on hand to accompany students if, due to age or language level, they require assistance when visiting the doctor or a hospital.

Accommodation (W7–W18 as applicable)	Area of strength
<i>All accommodation</i>	
W7 Students have a comfortable living environment throughout their stay.	Strength
W8 Arrangements for cleaning and laundry are satisfactory.	Met
W9 A responsible representative inspects all accommodation (for safety and suitability) before students are placed, and at least every two years after that.	Strength
W10 Students receive written confirmation of accommodation booked, giving clear and accurate information.	Strength
W11 There are effective procedures for identifying and resolving any problems students have with their accommodation.	Strength
W12 Accommodation providers receive written confirmation of the rules, terms and conditions applied by the provider with respect to the provision of accommodation services.	Strength
W13 Students receive meals as agreed; these offer a well-balanced diet, taking into account any reasonable dietary requirements students may have.	Strength

Comments

W7 Students have a very comfortable living environment during their stay. This was clear from visits to accommodation as well as consistently good student feedback.

W9 Inspection procedures are very thorough. All homestays hosting under 18s are visited every year, and inspection records for all accommodation are detailed and up to date.

W10 Accommodation confirmations are excellent. These include photos of the homestays, pen portraits of the hosts, useful information regarding life in the UK, as well as feedback on the hosts from previous students.

W11 Procedures for identifying and resolving issues with accommodation are clearly effective. New hosts are contacted within their first few weeks to check that all is going well, and records show that action taken in response to student feedback is swift and appropriate. Hosts also commented on the supportive and proactive approach of ELC staff.

W12 Accommodation providers receive very useful information and support. The 'homestay hub' on the website is a welcome resource and the school has utilised it well for the sharing of ideas and experience.

W13 Feedback from students in the focus groups as well as recorded statistics show consistently good feedback from students regarding the meals provided in homestay accommodation.

<i>Accommodation: homestay only</i>	
W14 Homestay hosts comply with the agreed terms and conditions for student placements.	Met
W15 Homestay placements encourage students to use English.	Met
W16 Hosts ensure that there is an adult available to receive students on first arrival.	Met

Comments

All criteria in this area are fully met.

<i>Accommodation: other</i>	
W17 Students receive information about the implications of their living in private rented accommodation and advice in case of difficulties.	Met
W18 The provider monitors any other accommodation recommended, and booking and	Met

payment arrangements are clear.	
Comments	
All criteria in this area are fully met.	

Leisure opportunities	Area of strength
W19 Students have appropriate information about and access to social, cultural and sporting events and activities which enhance their experience of studying in the UK.	Strength
W20 The content of any leisure programme is appropriate to the age and interests of the students.	Strength
W21 Any leisure programmes are well organised and sufficiently resourced.	Strength
W22 There are effective systems to ensure the health and safety of students on all on-site and off-site activities.	Strength
W23 Staff supervising sporting and leisure activities on or off-site have appropriate experience, support and training.	Met

Comments	
<p>W19 Students are provided with many opportunities to access social, cultural and sporting events in the local area and around the country. Suggestions are included on the social programme calendar, as well as various information sheets for visiting cities around the UK and points of interest in Chester itself.</p> <p>W20 The social programme is full and very popular with students. Recorded feedback is very good and in the focus group, students commented on the wide variety of opportunities.</p> <p>W21 The programme is very well resourced, with a full-time member of staff devoted to its design and implementation. For activities not led by the social activities organiser, detailed excursion packs are put together.</p> <p>W22 Health and safety is very well provided for. Risk assessments are used, and evidence was seen that these are updated to reflect any change in circumstance. Most activities are led by the social activities organiser who is first-aid trained.</p>	

Safeguarding under 18s

Safeguarding under 18s	Area of strength
S1 There is a safeguarding policy which specifies procedures to ensure the safety and well-being of all students under the age of 18. A named member of staff is responsible for implementing this policy and responding to child protection allegations.	Strength
S2 The provider makes the policy known to all adults in contact with under 18s through their role with the organisation, and provides guidance or training relevant to its effective implementation.	Strength
S3 The provider has written parental/guardian consent reflecting the level of care and support given to students under 18, including medical consent.	Met
S4 Recruitment procedures for all roles involving responsibility for or substantial access to under 18s are in line with safer recruitment good practice and the organisation's safeguarding policy.	Met
S5 There are suitable arrangements for the supervision and safety of students during scheduled lessons and activities.	Strength
S6 There are suitable arrangements for the supervision and safety of students outside the scheduled programme.	Strength
S7 There are suitable arrangements for the accommodation of students.	Strength
S8 There are suitable arrangements to ensure contact between the provider and parents, legal guardians or their nominated representatives concerning the welfare of students.	Met

Comments	
<p>At the time of the inspection, there was one student aged under 18. Closed groups of students aged under 16 are accepted outside the summer. During the summer the number of under 18s increases, 90 predicted in peak week.</p> <p>S1 There is a clear and comprehensive safeguarding policy, which has had expert opinion into its framing. The policy is implemented through and supported by relevant practical documents, including codes of conduct and incident reporting.</p> <p>S2 The policy is made well known to all stakeholders and guidance and training ensure its effective implementation. As well as the designated safeguarding lead and deputy who have specialist level training, two other staff members</p>	

are trained to advanced level. All staff and homestay hosts complete a basic level safeguarding course, which was commissioned by the school.

S5 Very suitable arrangements are in place for the supervision and safety of students during scheduled lessons and activities. When groups of under 16s are in the school, there are effective procedures to keep them separate from adult students. Absence or lateness of under 18s is quickly and effectively followed up.

S6 Supervision outside scheduled activities is entirely appropriate. Clear codes of conduct are in place and both students and parents sign agreement to these via the parental consent form.

S7 Homestay hosts all complete the basic safeguarding training commissioned by the school, and there is regular communication between the accommodation and welfare officer and hosts to ensure that students are well looked after. Hosts spoken to were very aware of their responsibilities in this area.

Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance

D1 The organisation certifies that it operates at all times in accordance with the declarations in the *Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance*.

The Accreditation Scheme requires accredited providers to comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

Providers must take steps to ensure that they are aware of, and comply with, all existing and new legal requirements.

On initial application and annual renewal of accreditation, providers are required to confirm that they are complying with all applicable laws and regulations.

Inspectors will check a random sample of items during inspection, in relation to criterion D1; if they find evidence of a breach of statutory or other legal requirements, the provider will be required to submit evidence of compliance confirmed by the appropriate regulatory body.

Any breach of the law or regulations will be viewed seriously by the Scheme and may result in the withdrawal or withholding of accreditation.

Any sustained breach of the law or regulations which an accredited provider fails upon reasonable notice to remedy will result in accreditation being withdrawn.

Comments

D1 The items sampled were satisfactory.

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	1984
Last full inspection	May 2019
Subsequent checks/visits (if applicable)	N/a
Current accreditation status	Accredited
Other related non-accredited activities (in brief) at this centre	N/a
Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates	The English Language Centre, Brighton; The English Language Centre, Eastbourne
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	N/a

Private sector

Date of foundation	1976
Ownership	Name of company: The English Language Centre Company number: 1886535
Other accreditation/inspection	N/a

Premises profile

Details of any additional sites in use at the time of the inspection but not visited/observed	N/a
Details of any additional sites not in use at the time of the inspection	The Queen's Lower School 55 Liverpool Road, Chester CH2 1AW. Classrooms and office spaces as needed.

Student profile

	At inspection	Estimate at peak
ELT/ESOL students (eligible courses)	At inspection	July
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) 18 years and over	58	55

Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) aged 16–17 years	1	55
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) aged under 16	0	40
Part-time ELT aged 18 years and over	0	0
Part-time ELT aged 16–17 years	0	0
Part-time ELT aged under 16 years	0	0
Overall total ELT/ESOL students shown above	59	150
Adult programmes: advertised minimum age	16	16
Adult programmes: typical age range	16–76	16–64
Adult programmes: typical length of stay	1–44 weeks	2–44 weeks
Adult programmes: predominant nationalities	Swiss, Japanese, Italian, Saudi Arabian, Korean	Swiss, Japanese, Turkish, Korean, Russian
Junior programmes: advertised minimum age	(12) closed groups off-peak	13
Junior programmes: advertised maximum age	(16) closed groups off peak	16
Junior programmes: typical length of stay	1–2 weeks	2–4 weeks
Junior programmes: predominant nationalities	Spanish, Japanese, Thai, Mexican, Argentinian	Argentinian, Italian, Swiss, Polish, Spanish

Staff profile	At inspection	Estimate at peak
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	10	22
Number teaching ELT 20 hours and over a week	2	
Number teaching ELT under 20 hours a week	8	
Number of academic managers for eligible ELT courses	2	5
Number of management (non-academic) and administrative staff working on eligible ELT courses	6	
Total number of support staff	4	

Academic manager qualifications profile

Profile at inspection	
Professional qualifications	Number of academic managers
TEFLQ qualification and at least three years' full-time relevant teaching experience	2
Academic managers without TEFLQ qualification or three years' relevant experience	0
Total	2
Comments	
The academic manager and course director do not have regular teaching hours.	

Teacher qualifications profile

Profile in week of inspection	
Professional qualifications	Number of teachers
TEFLQ qualification/profile	6
TEFLI qualification	4
ATEFL portfolio in progress	0
Non-ELT-related qualified teacher status only (for short courses for under 18s)	0
Holding specialist qualifications only (for ESP/CLIL)	0
Alternative professional profile	0
Total	10
Comments	
None.	

Accommodation profile

Number of students in each at the time of inspection (all students on eligible courses)		
Types of accommodation	Adults	Under 18s
<i>Arranged by provider/agency</i>		

Homestay	31	1
Private home	0	0
Home tuition	0	0
Residential	8	0
Hotel/guesthouse	8	0
Independent self-catering e.g. flats, bedsits, student houses	11	0
<i>Arranged by student/family/guardian</i>		
Staying with own family	0	0
Staying in privately rented rooms/flats	0	0
Overall totals adults/under 18s	58	1
Overall total adults + under 18s	59	