

| | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Organisation name | English Path Manchester |
| Inspection date | 29 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.

Organisation profile

| Inspection history | Dates/details |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| First inspection | February 2023 |
| Last full inspection | February 2023 |
| Subsequent spot check(s) (if applicable) | N/a |
| Subsequent supplementary check(s) (if applicable) | May 2023 |
| 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 | English Path schools in Birmingham, Leeds, London Canary Wharf, London Greenford |
| Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates | N/a |

| Student and staff profile | At inspection | In peak week: <i>July</i> |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT) | 85 | 150 |
| Minimum age (including closed group or vacation) | 18 | 18 |
| Typical age range | 18–30 | 18–55 |
| Typical length of stay | 12 weeks | 4 weeks |
| Predominant nationalities | Kuwaiti, Saudi Arabian, Turkish, Brazilian, Colombian | Kuwaiti, Saudi Arabian, Turkish, Brazilian, Colombian, Spanish |
| Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses | 7 | 16 |
| Total number of managers including academic | 2 | 2 |
| Total number of administrative/ancillary staff | 2 | 3 |

Premises profile

| | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Address of main site | Universal Square, Devonshire Street North, Manchester M12 6JH |
| Additional sites in use | N/a |
| Additional sites not in use | N/a |
| Sites inspected | Universal Square |

Introduction
Background

This was a routine spot check carried out 12 months after the first full inspection. The inspector had also been part of the first inspection and carried out the subsequent spot check to inspect the new premises.

Preparation

The inspector was sent a list of key staff and unsuitable dates before the inspection.

Programme and persons present

The spot check took the inspector half a day. A brief teacher focus group took place, and meetings were held with the director of studies (DoS), the student services manager, and the accommodation officer. Documentation was provided during the check as requested.

Findings

Management

There have been relatively few staffing changes in the Manchester school. A new accommodation officer has been in the role since June 2023. The accommodation officer supports the new student services manager position, held by the previous student services officer, whose role has been extended to coordinate student services across the schools (UK and Ireland).

The teachers' files sampled all contained signed copies of qualifications, two references and signed contracts. Their qualifications had been appropriately checked and evaluated.

As the organisation grows, so do opportunities for cross communication, support and sharing of experience amongst staff with similar roles. The accommodation officer meets regularly with his counterparts in other schools, and on the day of the inspection, the student services manager was involved in a meeting of student support staff from a range of schools and countries.

Premises and resources

The school is now well established in its designated area, which it moved into last May. Staff are appreciative of the new space, which contains all activity when numbers are low, and which can be supplemented through booking rooms in the wider college. There are nearby kitchens for both staff and students, two IT suites which can be booked for class use, and four additional computer stations are available in the college library, which is also close to the English Path area. The library has the beginnings of an EFL section; there are plans to augment this and encourage students to make use of it (at present they cannot borrow any of the few books available).

Teaching and learning

Courses remain the same as at the last inspection; the main offer is general English with varying numbers of hours and a range of electives. Some advertised courses do not run in Manchester although they may do so in other English Path schools.

There have been a number of developments in teaching and learning. All teachers have observed each other through a peer observation scheme with cover support from the DoS. Three of the teachers have also taken the lead on CPD sessions. A number of processes have been improved to support students in developing their learning goals and self-study skills. These can be followed up in tutorials, and the weekly study clinics remain very popular.

Welfare and student services

Care of students

A new, more structured student experience process is being introduced, including an online induction to help students with pre-arrival questions and information.

Accommodation

At the time of the first inspection, homestay accommodation was provided solely by an agency registered with British Council. The school, along with all the other English Path schools, have now introduced their own homestay provision. Systems to support this are still in development and the accommodation officer has received appropriate training and support. No visits were made during the spot check. The school continues to use the registered agency as necessary. Residential accommodation can also be arranged as required.

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

M22 Publicity contains some potentially misleading claims and descriptions; for example, facilities are described as "unparalleled", and there is a guarantee that students will reach their goals.

Addressed. These claims have been removed.

M28 Publicity makes reference to a highly qualified academic team, when this is not true of the whole team at all times.

Addressed. This claim has been removed.

Teaching and learning

T8 Practical guidance for teachers on dealing with continuous enrolment is insufficiently explicit.

Addressed. Teachers are now given useful guidance on ways to deal with continuous enrolment, there is an ideas poster in the staffroom, and there has been a development session focusing on this area.

T11 There is no documented course structure for elective programmes.

Addressed. A syllabus with suggested materials has been created for each elective area.

T13 No course outlines are available for elective programmes.

Addressed. Course outlines are now in place.

Conclusions

English Path Manchester continues to be well managed, both through its wider management, systems and processes, as well as through staff on the ground. The school has established itself well in its new premises and student numbers are growing. The school continues to meet the requirements of the Scheme. All points arising from the last inspection have been addressed.

Action plan

N/a.
