

Organisation name	HIL Liverpool
Inspection date	25 January 2023
Current accreditation status	Accredited
Reason for spot check	Routine: newly accredited institution

Recommendation

We recommend continued accreditation. The next inspection falls due in 2025; there are no grounds for bringing this forward.

Changes to the summary statement

An area of strength can be added for premises and facilities.

New summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited HIL Liverpool in November 2020. 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+).

Strengths were noted in the areas of student administration, premises and facilities, and teaching.

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

Updated summary inspection findings
Premises and resources

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The school building is in good condition and the renovation for educational purposes has been well thought through. Classrooms are bright and adequate in size. Space for students and staff to relax and socialise is very comfortable and well appointed. *Premises and facilities* is an area of strength.

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	November 2020
Last full inspection	November 2020
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	
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>June 22</i>
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	30 (FT)	35 (FT)
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	18	18
Typical age range	25–34	25–34
Typical length of stay	4–8 weeks (asylum seekers 6 months)	4–8 weeks (asylum seekers 6 months)
Predominant nationalities	Brazilian, Colombian, Sudanese	Brazilian, Afghan

Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	6	6
Total number of managers including academic	4	4
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	1	2
Premises profile		
Address of main site	36 Windsor Street, Liverpool L8 1XF	
Additional sites in use	N/a	
Additional sites not in use	N/a	
Sites inspected	Windsor Street	

Introduction

Background

Heritage International Languages Limited, (trading as HIL Liverpool) is a language school based in the south of the city. The school was founded in 2018 in response to the language learning needs of refugees and European citizens resident in the area. The school offers English language courses to adult students, both fee-paying and supported, throughout the year.

HIL Liverpool was first accredited following an inspection in November 2020, which was carried out remotely. This January 2023 inspection was a routine spot check for a newly accredited provider.

Preparation

The inspector was sent relevant documents by the Accreditation Unit and looked at the school's website. The inspector contacted the centre in December 2022 to inform them that the spot check would take place at some point in January and asking them to provide information on staff availability and/or planned absences. The inspector also asked for, and was provided with, a number of documents including an updated action plan and staff chart.

Programme and persons present

In the week of the inspection, General English courses for adults were running, with communication skills classes available as add-ons. The inspector arrived at the school at 10.00 and left at 13.30.

Meetings were held with the operations director, the development director, the director of studies (DoS), and the student welfare officer. The third director/principal was not present. A focus group meeting was held with teachers and another with a group of students, and one class was observed briefly. The inspector was given a tour of the building, including the newly renovated ground floor, and introduced to the Bridge2 charity space and staff members.

Findings

Management

The management structure remains the same as at the last inspection, with three directors: the principal/director, the development director and the operations director. HIL Liverpool was formerly owned by two of these directors; now all are shareholders. The same team operate Bridge 2 (Liverpool), a charity serving asylum seekers. The premises are shared with Bridge2, which is run by the same team as HIL Liverpool but is a separate legal entity.

The DoS is still in post and the teaching team is also relatively stable in its composition. There is a new welfare officer who also teaches.

Premises and resources

Work on the premises has been completed since the last inspection, and the ground floor of the building has been fully renovated to house the Bridge2 charity. The café on the first floor is now operating.

Premises and resources

Premises and facilities	Area of strength
P1 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
P2 Classrooms and other learning areas provide a suitable study environment.	Met
P3 Students have adequate room and suitable facilities for relaxation and the consumption of food.	Strength

P4 Free drinking water is available. A choice of appropriate food at affordable prices is available to students on site, if not available locally.	Strength
P5 There is adequate signage to buildings, routes, rooms and exits, and there are facilities for the display of general information.	Met
P6 There is sufficient space for all staff, for meetings, relaxation and the storage of personal possessions, and for teachers to carry out their preparation and marking.	Met

Comments

P1 The premises provide a very comfortable environment. Particular thought has been given to making the best possible use of the building and creating a distinctive environment. Students were very positive about all aspects of the building.

P3 The very large student lounge on the second floor provides a welcoming space for relaxation and socialising, with comfortable seating, DVDs, books and games, as well as computers and a study area with free Wi-Fi. There is also a café area.

P4 The café provides free snacks, hot and cold drinks and is popular with students.

Teaching and learning

The school aims to open as many classes as possible with fee-paying students and create spaces for refugees and asylum seekers within those classes. The Bridge2 charity also provides some English language sessions and acts as a kind of staging post.

Some online classes are also offered – these are not accredited as HIL Liverpool has not yet signed up to the accreditation Code of practice for online ELT.

Welfare and student services

Accommodation is now offered, although this offer is not yet reflected on the website. Approximately six homestay hosts have been recruited and the welfare officer is keeping systems and records of visits for these. Help with finding other accommodation is also provided.

Action taken on points to be addressed

Points which must be addressed within three months

Management

M10 Staff files are incomplete, and records of appropriate references are absent.

Addressed. Evidence of references were sent to the unit within three months of the last inspection. Files have been updated and references obtained for all staff. Staff files were viewed; they contained the requisite information and documents.

Other points to be addressed

Management

M5 Initial course feedback from students is informal, ad hoc and not recorded.

Addressed. An electronic feedback form has been created. This is shared with all new students at the end of their first week. Responses are recorded electronically and circulated to the management team

Conclusions

HIL Liverpool has created a welcoming and positive learning environment for a growing number of students. All students and staff spoken to were happy and appreciative of the school, its facilities and its management. All points to be addressed have been fully dealt with.