

Organisation name	Lewis School of English, Southampton
Inspection date	24 July 2024
Current accreditation status	Accredited
Reason for spot check	Signalled: supplementary to inspect provision not seen at full inspection.

Recommendation

We recommend continued accreditation. This accreditation now covers the year-round school in Southampton and seasonal junior courses in Southampton and Winchester. The next inspection falls due in 2026; there are no grounds for bringing this forward.

Changes to the summary statement

The need for improvement in academic staff qualifications can now be removed and the date of this inspection added.

New summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited Lewis School of English, Southampton in April 2022 and July 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 was a compliance-only inspection during which the inspectors focused only on whether inspection criteria were met or not met. Inspectors did not evaluate the extent to which requirements were exceeded and no strengths were awarded. No new summary statement has been issued; please refer to the last inspection report for any areas of strength previously awarded.

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

Updated summary inspection findings

Teaching and learning

The provision meets the section standard. Almost all teachers have appropriate ELT qualifications and are given good support to ensure their teaching meets the needs of their students. The academic managers have a professional profile which is well matched to the context. Course design and learner management are effective and, overall, courses are managed to provide the maximum possible benefit to students. The teaching observed met the requirements of the Scheme.

Safeguarding under 18s

The provision meets the section standard. Appropriate safeguarding policies are in place and relevant training is provided to staff and homestay hosts. Students are suitably supervised during lessons, social activities, while in homestay and residential accommodation and outside scheduled activities.

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	1989
Last full inspection	2022
Subsequent checks/visits (if applicable)	N/a
Other related non-accredited activities (in brief) at this centre	N/a
Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates	Year-round school and junior programme in Southampton
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	N/a

Student and staff profile	At inspection Winchester centre only	Estimate at peak: July
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	149	300
Minimum age	11	11
Maximum age	17	17
Typical age range	13–17	11–17
Typical length of stay	2 weeks	2 weeks
Predominant nationalities	Italian, Turkish, Spanish, Saudi Arabian	Italian, Turkish, Spanish, Saudi Arabian, Brazilian
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	7	9
Total number of managers including academic	5	5
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	15	15

Premises profile	
Address of main site	Lewis School of English, 30–33 Palmerston Road, Southampton SO15 7NW
Additional sites in use	University of Winchester, Sparkford Road, Winchester SO22 4NR
Additional sites not in use	N/a
Sites inspected	University of Winchester

Introduction

Background

Lewis School of English offers general English courses to adults (16+) and to groups of juniors (11–17). In the summer, the school offers junior summer courses (for 11 to 17 year-olds) in its Southampton main site and in the University of Winchester campus. The Southampton centre offers homestay accommodation, while the Winchester one uses on-site student residences. The Winchester centre provides lessons and social activities in both the morning and the afternoon. Specialist programmes in English & Football and English & Theatre are offered at this centre. In the past the summer school provision outside the main school fell under a separate multicentre accreditation which is no longer required. The purpose of this supplementary spot check inspection was to include the summer school provision in Winchester within the accreditation of the main school.

Only one under 18 had been studying in the main school at the time of its compliance-only inspection in 2022. During his visit to the Winchester centre, the inspector focused on the teaching and learning section, the care of students and the safeguarding provision.

Preparation

The inspector contacted the provider and discussed the upcoming spot check with the owner/director and the marketing communications manager. He also read the 2022 inspection report, the centre publicity and the documentation sent to him by the organisation.

Programme and persons present

The inspector visited the Winchester campus for a day in the fourth week of the courses running there. He held interviews with the centre manager, the head teacher and her deputy, and the welfare and residence manager. Separate focus group meetings were held with teachers, students and group leaders. The inspector visited a typical residential block and sampled the food in the canteen. Documentation, including copies of qualifications and feedback from students, staff and group leaders were examined. Out of the seven teachers teaching in the week of the inspection, six were observed.

Findings

Management

The organisational structure is clear. The management team in the centre includes the centre manager, the head teacher and their deputy, the welfare and residence manager and the activities manager. The centre manager is the year-round head of marketing and operations, and the main school teacher trainer observed some of the Winchester centre teachers and delivered professional development sessions. The course clearly benefits from the fact that so many of the managers have worked extensively on previous courses. Procedures for obtaining and acting on feedback from students, group leaders and staff work well.

Staff management is effective. Recruitment and induction procedures are thorough, and staff give exit feedback.

Student administration is effectively managed and staff were seen to be courteous, helpful and friendly towards parents, students and group leaders.

Publicity accurately reflects the centre provision.

Premises and resources

The premises and facilities used for summer programmes provide a very comfortable environment for both students and staff. Although there is a premises risk assessment in place, this does not pay sufficient attention to ensuring that risks associated with sharing a campus with other providers and separate toilet provision for adults and under 18s have been addressed (P1). The centre has all its classrooms in the same block as its office. Classrooms are bright and airy and all have projectors and whiteboards. Signage is clear and the centre has developed good wall displays in classrooms and general areas. Students can use two large social spaces for relaxation and activities, the canteen and a very good range of sports and arts facilities.

Different premises are used on the campus for the closed group courses that occur at other times of the year, but this provision will be discontinued in the autumn.

Resources are adequate, although teachers referred to the fact that all staff shared a single laptop and printer in the office. Classroom resources are appropriate and support staff are on hand to help if there are any technical issues.

Teaching and learning

Academic staff profile

The school presented a recruitment and support policy document, which indicated the support given to less experienced and less well qualified teachers. Overall, the academic staff team has a professional profile (qualifications and experience) that is appropriate to the school's context. Academic managers are TEFLQ, and most teachers have ELT qualifications that meet Scheme requirements. The recruitment and support policy is effectively devised and implemented in line with the stated course objectives and the student profile.

Academic management

Timetabling works well with two teachers being paired together to teach the same class. Cover arrangements are effective, helped by having two non-teaching academic managers on site. Teachers were very happy with the daily support they received and all of them had been formally observed.

Course design is clear and detailed to help teachers plan weekly programmes and individual lessons.

Learner management

Appropriate placement systems are in place. Students receive regular tests and they are given certificates and detailed reports at the end of their courses.

Teaching and learning

Classroom observation record

Number of teachers seen	6
Number of observations	6
Parts of programme(s) observed	A mixture of coursebook-based and project work lessons.
Comments	
None.	

Teaching: classroom observation	Met
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.	Met
T20 The content of the lessons is based on the overall course objectives and takes into account the differing students' needs and backgrounds.	Met
T21 The intended learning outcomes of lessons are made known to students, and are achieved through an appropriate sequence of activities.	Not 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.	Met
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.	Met
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.	Met

Comments

T19 Teachers modelled spoken and written English accurately and explained grammar and vocabulary effectively in language that was suitable to the students' level.

T20 The content of the lessons is based on the overall course objectives and takes into account the differing students' needs and backgrounds.

T21 Teachers generally did not express lesson aims as intended learning outcomes.

T22 Teachers generally used a range of techniques including effective questioning and elicitation, and nomination. There was some drilling of individual words in some classes.

T23 Overall, teachers used the learning resources effectively, and board work was clearly organised.

T24 Teachers monitored students' performance during activities, and corrected their language, including pronunciation. There was some evidence of teachers using delayed correction.

T25 In many classes, learning was evaluated through students completing short gap filling or multiple choice tasks.

T26 Students were fully engaged in almost all of the lessons observed. In most, but not in all classes, students worked together purposefully in pairs and small groups.

Welfare and student services

Care of students	Met
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.	Met
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.	Met
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.	Met
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.	Met
W6 Students have access to adequate health care provision.	Met

Comments

The welfare and residence manager, who is trained in welfare and safeguarding issues, is the designated safeguarding lead; he is the person responsible for both student and staff-related welfare issues. All individual students are given a dedicated school guardian who looks after their well-being, and is in very regular contact with them. Students receive a very useful pre-arrival guide and an induction on arrival, which includes simplified information on compliance with the law.

Accommodation (W7–W18 as applicable)	Met
<i>All accommodation</i>	
W7 Students have a comfortable living environment throughout their stay.	Met
W8 Arrangements for cleaning and laundry are satisfactory.	Not met
W9 A responsible representative inspects all accommodation (for safety and suitability) before students are placed, and at least every two years after that.	Met
W10 Students receive written confirmation of accommodation booked, giving clear and accurate information.	Met
W11 There are effective procedures for identifying and resolving any problems students have with their accommodation.	Met
W12 Accommodation providers receive written confirmation of the rules, terms and conditions applied by the provider with respect to the provision of accommodation services.	Met
W13 Students receive meals as agreed; these offer a well-balanced diet, taking into account any reasonable dietary requirements students may have.	Met

Comments

The accommodation provided is of a good standard with all students having ensuite accommodation in groups of flats with a kitchen and social area. Although there are systems in place for group students and individuals to report problems with their accommodation, cleaning arrangements were unsatisfactory and unreliable, despite the efforts of Lewis staff to improve the situation (W8).

Safeguarding under 18s

Safeguarding under 18s	Met
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.	Met
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.	Met
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.	Met
S6 There are suitable arrangements for the supervision and safety of students outside the scheduled programme.	Met
S7 There are suitable arrangements for the accommodation of students.	Met
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

There were 149 under 18s studying at the centre in the week of the inspection.

A suitable safeguarding policy is in place, and the DSL, who has a specialist level safeguarding qualification, provides training and guidance to staff. The safeguarding policy is shared with staff, and group leaders are required to sign an agreement to say they have been provided with access to it. Safer recruitment procedures are followed. There are appropriate arrangements for the supervision and safety of students during lessons, in activities and excursions, at night and outside the times of the scheduled programme.

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.

Teaching and learning

T1 (T3) Fifty per cent of teachers at the time of the inspection lacked a Level 6 qualification.

Addressed. All teachers have Level 6 qualifications or above.

T2 (T3) One teacher did not have an ELT qualification which meets Scheme requirements.

Addressed. Provision now meets current requirements.

Safeguarding under 18s

S4 Not all records sampled had the required references.

Addressed. All required references were in place.

S6 There is no single clear set of rules shared with parents, group leaders and hosts (including the time students are expected to return for meals and at night) to ensure these rules are understood and adhered to.

Addressed. Documentation has been amended and the rules are clear.

Conclusions

The Winchester centre provision meets all section standards and the previous points to be addressed have been satisfactorily resolved. There are no grounds for bringing forward the time of the next full inspection and this seasonal centre can be included within the accreditation of the main school.