

Organisation name	Queen's English Language School, Kingston upon Thames
Inspection date	7 August 2024
Current accreditation status	Accredited
Reason for spot check	Signalled: inspect new or additional premises and monitor effect of change

### Recommendation

We recommend extending accreditation pending a full re-inspection in early 2025. However, evidence must be submitted within three months to demonstrate that weaknesses in P1 and W1 have been addressed, along with an action plan indicating how the school will respond to other points to be addressed before the re-inspection.

### Changes to the summary statement

Changes need to be made to the summary statement, including adding the date of this inspection and the removal of vacation courses for under 18s.

A need for improvement must be added in the areas of strategic and quality management, publicity, academic staff profile, and academic management. The area of strength for student administration must be removed.

### New summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited Queen's English Language School in February 2019 and August 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](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation) for details).

This small private language school offers courses in general English for adults (18+).

The inspection report noted a need for improvement in the areas of strategic and quality management, publicity, academic staff profile, and academic management.

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

### Updated summary inspection findings

#### Management

Overall, the management of the provision operates to the benefit of the students; however, there are gaps in both strategic and quality management and staff management and development. Student administration is mostly effective, but publicity is weak and several areas require immediate attention. There is a need for improvement in *Strategic and quality management* and *Publicity*.

#### Premises and resources

The provision meets the section standard. The premises provide a professional environment for staff and students, although risk assessments are not complete. Learning resources are appropriate for the needs of students and teachers.

#### Teaching and learning

This section was only partially assessed. The academic staff profile for teachers is satisfactory but there is currently no academic manager. Courses are designed to meet the needs and interests of the students and learner management is effective. It was not possible to observe classes during this inspection as no students were enrolled. There is a need for improvement in the *Academic staff profile* and *Academic management*.

#### Welfare and student services

The provision meets the section standard. Overall, the needs of the students for pastoral care and information are met. Accommodation and leisure activities are not provided by the school.

#### Safeguarding under 18s

No students under the age of 18 are accepted.

### Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance

The items sampled were satisfactory.

## Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	2019
Last full inspection	2019
Subsequent checks/visits (if applicable)	August 2019 – spot check
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	Estimate at peak: June
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	0	3
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	18	18
Typical age range	N/a	19–40
Typical length of stay	N/a	9 months
Predominant nationalities	N/a	German, Colombian
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	1	2
Total number of managers including academic	1	1
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	0	0

## Premises profile

Address of main site	Kingston Quaker Centre, Fairfield East, Kingston upon Thames KT1 2PT
Additional sites in use	N/a
Additional sites not in use	N/a
Sites inspected	Main site

## Introduction

### Background

This was a signalled spot check inspection in place of a full inspection. The very low number and unpredictability of student enrolments in 2024, as well as the consequent major reduction in staff and relocation to new teaching premises prompted this inspection.

Queen's English Language School (QELS) opened in August 2000 and caters almost exclusively for the local market. Student numbers have been drastically reduced since the pandemic and the school has relocated to rented classrooms at the Kingston Quaker Centre when students enrol. Traditionally, all students are 18 years of age or over, and most study part time for approximately nine months. In the summer students stay on average one or two weeks, although in 2024 no students enrolled over the summer period. Accommodation and a leisure programme are not offered at any time of the year. Open enrolment parent and child courses were previously available in the summer but are no longer offered.

### Preparation

The inspector was sent relevant documents and reviewed the school's website in advance. He contacted the school owner and discussed an appropriate date for the spot check to take place on the understanding that there were currently no students enrolled at the school.

### Programme and persons present

The inspector arrived at 10.00 and departed at 13.30. Meetings were held with the school principal. The inspector had a tour of the premises and checked relevant documentation.

## Findings

### Management

The owner/principal is currently the only member of staff at the school and she teaches any students that enrol. Prior to the pandemic there were generally effective systems in place to ensure the provision operates to the benefit of the students but due to the reduction in staff and student numbers, certain procedures have not been consistently

---

followed. When additional teachers have been engaged, they work on a self-employed basis or are recruited from a teaching agency. Consequently, appraisals and continuing professional development (CPD) have been neglected.

Objectives for the future are not clearly stated and staff and student feedback has not been consistently obtained. Student administration is generally effective but local and designated emergency contact details are not always recorded. Information on how to make a complaint is also insufficient.

Publicity does not give a realistic impression of the new premises, location and availability of services and resources. There are no images of the premises and while the advertised minimum age is 18, there are images and testimonials from students under this age. There are several typographical errors and inaccuracies in English. The maximum class size is not clear, nor is the total number of hours tuition. The calendar of events is empty and timetables are out of date.

### **Premises and resources**

The new premises provide a very comfortable and professional environment for work and relaxation, although the premises risk assessment is incomplete and there are no records of fire drills. Two classrooms are available for hire at this centrally-located community centre. The premises are modern, well designed and comfortably furnished with good facilities. Classrooms are of a good size, have natural light, air conditioning and appropriate furnishings. There is good space for students to relax between lessons including access to a kitchen and a small garden area. School signage is minimal and there is no dedicated teachers' room, although there is ample space for staff to use in the common areas of the building or their classrooms. Resources for teachers are appropriate.

### **Teaching and learning**

It was not possible to observe any lessons as no students are currently enrolled. The school does not have an academic manager. The owner is TEFLI and additional teachers used during busy periods are suitably qualified. Course design is appropriate. The needs of the most recently enrolled students were met as evidenced by them booking another course for September.

### **Welfare and student services**

There is an emergency plan but it needs to be adapted for the new premises. The school does not provide accommodation or a leisure programme.

### **Safeguarding under 18s**

The minimum age for study is now 18.

---

## **Premises and resources**

<b>Premises and facilities</b>	<b>Met</b>
P1 Providers ensure the safety and security of students on their premises by measures appropriate to their age and background, and the location.	Not 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.	Met
P5 There is adequate signage to buildings, routes, rooms and exits, and there are facilities for the display or sharing of general information.	Met
P6 There is sufficient space for all staff, for work, meetings, relaxation and the storage of personal possessions.	Met

### **Comments**

P1 The premises risk assessment is incomplete and there are no records of fire drills.

P2 The premises are in a very good state of repair, cleanliness and decoration and provide a very comfortable environment for staff and students.

---

## **Action taken on points to be addressed**

### **Premises and resources**

P8 There are insufficient resources in the area of teacher development.

**Addressed.**

### **Welfare and student services**

---

---

W23 More resources are needed to provide students with information about local social, cultural and sporting events and activities.

**Addressed.**

---

### **Conclusions**

There are aspects of the provision that do not currently meet Scheme requirements. The new premises are very appropriate but various systems and procedures that were in place during the last inspection have been neglected due to the reduction in staff.

As a result of the considerable decrease in student numbers, the reduction in staff, and relocation of the teaching premises, the owner of the school is considering whether accreditation is a necessary part of the school's future. Students are mostly recruited locally and follow part-time courses of between four and six hours per week, so accreditation is not essential. However, the owner is keen that the school maintains a recognised standard of quality.

---

### **Items requiring early action**

Evidence must be submitted within three months to demonstrate that weaknesses in P1 and W1 have been addressed, along with an action plan indicating how the school will respond to other points to be addressed before the re-inspection.

---