

Organisation name	English Language Centre, Bristol
Inspection date	15–18 October 2018

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 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

The British Council inspected and accredited ELC Bristol in October 2018. 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 large private language school offers courses in general English for adults (16+).

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, safeguarding under 18s.

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

Introduction

The English Language Centre Bristol (ELC) was established in 1969. It is family-owned and run by two directors. Year round the school operates as one school working on two sites, Pembroke House (Pembroke) and Abon House (Abon). During July and August, the school opens up a third site for seven weeks in Clifton College, a private boarding school. The school regards all three sites as one school; they are close to each other and each is managed by experienced, year-round staff.

There have been two changes at senior management level. In August 2018 a new principal was appointed who had previously worked at ELC for 15 years in a number of roles, including accommodation and marketing director and vice principal. In May 2017 the director of studies retired and the academic management team was restructured, with the vice principal appointed as academic director at Pembroke and the director of studies transferring to Abon. An assistant director of studies and two senior teachers are based at each year-round centre.

ELC offers general English courses and examination preparation courses for IELTS and other external general English examinations. Approximately eighty-five percent of students are placed in the school by established language-travel agents, many of whom have been working with the school for several years.

The inspection was carried out by two inspectors over the course of two days and two half days. Meetings were held with the two directors, the principal, the vice principal/academic director (AD), the director of studies (DoS), the two assistant directors of studies (ADoSs), the four senior teachers, the marketing and IT manager, the business and finance manager, the registrar, the admissions officer, the homestay manager, the self-catering manager, the social programme manager and the maintenance manager. Focus group meetings were held with teachers and students at both centres. All teachers timetabled during the inspection were observed. One inspector visited three homestays and the largest self-catering student house. A round-up was given to five managers at the end of the inspection.

Address of main site/head office

44 Pembroke Road, Bristol BS8 3DT.

Description of sites visited

The school occupies two mid-nineteenth century houses located in the district of Clifton, close to the centre of Bristol. Both Pembroke and Abon (25 St John's Road, Bristol BS8 2HD) have nine classrooms, a multimedia centre, a student common room, a garden area with seating and a teacher's room. Pembroke has a new recreation room in the garden area. There are separate reception areas in both buildings and there is appropriate office space for all staff.

Course profile	Year round		Vacation only	
	Run	Seen	Run	Seen
General ELT for adults	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General ELT for juniors (under 18)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input 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"/>
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

All courses are full-time general English courses at all levels except beginners, with 21 hours of classroom time per week for all students. Courses include preparation for external general English and IELTS examinations. Lessons are every morning and on four afternoons a week. On two afternoons there is a continuation of the morning programme, while on the other two, higher-level students can choose an elective option in subjects such as business English, British culture or sport.

One-to-one is offered but there were no classes running at the inspection.

At the time of the inspection classes were running from low elementary to advanced level at both sites. Six electives were running on two afternoons.

Students aged 16 and 17 are enrolled on adult courses.

Accommodation profile

The school offers homestay and self-catering accommodation. About 55 per cent of students choose homestay, 35 per cent self-catering and ten per cent make their own arrangements. Most homestays are within walking distance, except in summer when students are warned they may be up to a 15-minute bus ride from the school. There are six self-catering shared houses, flats and a residence able to accommodate between three and 28 students, with a further two flats joined to family homes. In July and August the school also uses a university residence. Accommodation is managed by the school's homestay manager and the self-catering manager. One of the wardens of the largest self-catering residence is the property manager for all the school's self-catering accommodation.

The inspector selected three homestays to visit and the largest self-catering residence. This is almost opposite Abon and offers 28 single bedrooms, five kitchens, shared showers and toilets, a living room, conservatory, laundry room and a large back garden. There are two resident wardens.

Summary of inspection findings

Management

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. ELC has clearly stated goals and values which are made known to all staff and applied to good effect by experienced staff. Quality assurance procedures are sound and lead to continued improvement. Student administration is handled well and publicity is attractive, clear 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 school's premises are attractive, well maintained and entirely suitable for students and staff. A wide range of carefully selected and well-produced, appropriate resources is available for all courses; these are well maintained and regularly reviewed, updated and added to. *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. Suitably-qualified staff led by a well-qualified and experienced management team provide students with a positive learning experience through well-designed courses. Academic management is carried out efficiently and support is available for staff and 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. The needs of the students for security and pastoral care are very well met. They receive well-presented information about, and access to, relevant social, cultural and sporting events and activities. Students benefit from well-managed student services including out-of-class activities and suitable accommodation. *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. There is appropriate, thoughtful provision for the safeguarding of students under the age of 18 within the school and in the leisure activities and accommodation provided. *Safeguarding under 18s* is an area of strength.

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.	Strength

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.	Strength
M6 The provider regularly seeks and records feedback from all staff on the services offered. Appropriate action is taken and recorded.	Strength
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 The goals and values of ELC are clearly expressed and made known to all stakeholders in staff handbooks and on the school's website. There was evidence not only of staff's understanding of the values and of having contributed to them but also ample evidence that all staff are committed to providing the highest quality education and personal care and attention to the school's students.

M2 ELC has a quality development team who meet twice a year. The plans for future growth are clearly stated in the quality development plan (QDP) which has recently been re-formatted by the new principal to ensure objectives are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time based, (SMART). The QDP is brought to the attention of all staff on noticeboards and in staff handbooks.

M3 The ELC structure is clearly set out in the organogram and staff photographs and roles are displayed in all classrooms, in hallways and on the website. The director has been in post since the school's inception and continuity and cover for key staff are ensured by management structures which are duplicated in both centres by long-standing staff. The summer centre is managed by the year-round ADoSs. The principal has recently formalised shadowing procedures so that they are open to all non-teachers.

M4 There is a range of regular formal and informal meetings which ensures very effective communication throughout the school. These include meetings between and within all departments. The availability and approachability of managers was commented on by staff and students. There are opportunities for staff with similar roles to share best practice with other schools in the marketing group of independent schools to which ELC belongs. Homestay hosts receive regular newsletters to keep them informed of developments.

M5 Students have constant daily contact with all staff, including senior managers who have an 'open door' policy and are present at breaks. Initial, mid and end-of-course student satisfaction questionnaires are administered. All feedback is analysed, summarised and discussed at length and every student is discussed at the weekly teachers' meeting. The school's 'It's good to talk' poster is displayed in all classrooms. Personalising the students' experience is seen as a key priority and students' names and photos are displayed on the school's database and app for easy identification.

M6 Detailed feedback from staff is gathered informally through daily communication and formally through annual appraisals and mid-year and end-of-term feedback forms. Staff were able to give examples of where their feedback had been listened to and action taken. Homestay hosts are encouraged to give feedback on their students, and records and analyses were available.

M7 The quality development team carries out an annual review of a wide range of measurable quality indicators which incorporate staff and student feedback and previous inspection reports. A review of the school's administrative systems is carried out every 18 months. An external consultant carries out an annual review of the safeguarding procedures. A very useful and accurate self-assessment report was produced for this inspection.

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 regularly reviews these.	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, and for handling unsatisfactory performance or conduct. These procedures are made known to all staff.	Strength
M13 There are effective procedures to ensure the continuing professional development of all staff to meet the needs of the individual, the students and the organisation.	Strength

Comments

M8 Human resources policies and procedures are made known to staff through clear documentation. All staff appreciate the school's family-friendly policies and close attention to staff wellbeing. Returning staff valued the opportunities to take extended leave or work elsewhere for a short period in order to further their professional development. A happy work environment was very evident at the inspection.

M10 The school's recruitment policies set out sound procedures and ensure standardisation of the many stages involved in the recruitment and selection of staff. The appointment of the new principal provides evidence of strategic recruitment to develop a balanced senior management team.

M11 There are clear induction procedures and accurate records are kept. Thorough induction, including basic health and safety training, is provided for all staff. New administrative staff are given the opportunity to shadow other staff and new teachers are allocated a mentor and partnered with an experienced teacher. The new principal received an extensive induction.

M12 The school's observation, appraisals and disciplinary and capability policies are set out in staff handbooks. All year-round staff receive annual appraisals. Some post-appraisal feedback included the comment that teachers had gained a more holistic understanding of the school. Both teacher observations and student feedback are used in the management of staff performance. Policies dealing with capability issues are clear, and related disciplinary procedures highlight that a supportive approach is used before any disciplinary action is taken.

M13 All staff benefit from an impressive amount of continuing professional development (CPD). There are appropriate training opportunities for administrative staff and teachers have a wide range and variety of CPD opportunities, including peer observation. Full funding is available for study towards additional qualifications; six teachers are currently enrolled on a course leading to a TEFLQ qualification. The director and principal also have CPD opportunities via regular contact with their peers in other schools.

Student administration	Area of strength
M14 Staff are helpful and courteous to students and their representatives, and provide satisfactory 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 Staff carry out enrolment, cancellation and refund procedures efficiently, fairly, and with appropriate sensitivity.	Strength
M17 There are effective systems in place to maintain accurate and up-to-date records of student enrolment, payment and course details. These records are accessible at all times to authorised staff.	Met
M18 There are effective systems to maintain up-to-date and accessible records of local contact details for students, and their designated emergency contacts.	Met
M19 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
M20 All staff and students are made aware of conditions and procedures under which a student may be asked to leave the course.	Strength
M21 All students and, where appropriate, group leaders and parents/legal guardians, receive information in writing about how to make a complaint.	Strength

Comments

M14 Long-serving administrative staff, combined with well-established procedures and sound IT systems are all used effectively to handle the volume of work. Student feedback indicated high levels of satisfaction with the efficiency and helpfulness of staff.

M15 Established overseas agencies with long relationships with the school enrol the majority of students on the main general English course. Course enquiries from direct students or their representatives are mainly dealt with in the Pembroke office. Comprehensive pre-course information is available on the school's website and prospective students receive appropriate information and advice when communicating directly with administration staff.

M16 Enrolments are dealt with efficiently by the admissions officer and registrar. Procedures with regard to cancellation and refund are very clear and a condensed copy of the school's cancellation and refund policy is posted in every classroom. Students who enrol online, directly in person or by telephone are entitled to a 'cooling off period' of 14 days with the right to free cancellation.

M19 Attendance and punctuality are taken very seriously. It was evident that the school's policy, which is made clear to students at induction and in the student handbook, is rigorously enforced. Students who arrive more than five minutes late for any lesson are not allowed into class. Leaving certificates show students' actual attendance percentage and do not record successful completion of the course for students whose attendance falls below 85 per cent.

M20 Staff and students are made well aware of the school rules and student disciplinary policy which is listed on the school's website and brochure and available in poster format in classrooms. A clear three-stage process is applied and the school's zero tolerance policy in the case of serious instances leads to immediate dismissal.

M21 The school's complaints and suggestions policy is made clear through information on the website, on classroom posters and in staff handbooks. A notice in each hallway contains a final stage of reference to an appropriate outside body. Any complaints and subsequent actions taken are immediately recorded on the school's management information system.

Publicity	Area of strength
M22 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
M23 All publicity and information about the provider and the services it offers is in clear, accurate and accessible English.	Strength
M24 Publicity gives clear, accurate and easy-to-find information on the courses.	Met
M25 Publicity includes clear, accurate and easy-to-find information on costs.	Met
M26 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
M27 Publicity gives an accurate description of any accommodation offered.	Strength
M28 Descriptions of staff qualifications are accurate.	Met
M29 Claims to accreditation are in line with Scheme requirements.	Met
Comments	

The publicity consists of a website and a brochure. Updated information about the school's social programme is also provided on social media. The school's main selling points and its terms and conditions are translated into a number of languages.

M22 Publicity contains clear, accurate descriptions of the school's provision and includes excellent photographs which are captioned. The extent and availability of resources are described accurately and the nationality mix is stated. The new video on the website portrays the school and its location accurately. The current leisure programme is described in the 'Student Corner' section of the website.

M23 Information on the websites is well written, in plain English, and is highly accessible.

M26 The school's website has a dedicated page for students under 18 which gives full and accurate details of pastoral care for under 18s. There is also a link to the '*Under 18s Handbook for Students*', which includes relevant rules.

M27 Publicity including photographs relating to accommodation is detailed, accurate and raises entirely realistic expectations. There is a page on the website explaining the 'pros and cons' of the school's self-catering accommodation and another section outlining the advantages and potential difficulties facing students wanting to arrange their own.

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.	Strength
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.	Strength
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.	Strength
Comments	

P1 The school's premises provide a comfortable environment for students and staff. Both buildings have well-kept grounds and all areas are spotlessly clean and kept in an excellent state of repair by the school's long-standing maintenance manager. Teachers have individual lockable cabinets which have built-in chargers for laptops and mobile phones.

P2 Classrooms vary in size and groups are timetabled accordingly. All rooms have natural light and are free from extraneous noise. Glass panels and internal locks and blinds have recently been fitted to all classroom doors. All classrooms have flexible furniture consisting of tables and chairs at Abon and seminar chairs with large bespoke tablet tops at Pembroke. There is an ongoing policy of refurbishment, redecoration and general improvement of the premises which is flagged up in the QDP.

P3 Students have excellent facilities for relaxation. Both Pembroke and Abon have spacious common rooms with magazines, wide-screen interactive TVs with social programme information, comfortable chairs, a snooker table and piano. The gardens have seating areas and at Pembroke a new recreational area, the 'rec room', with two games tables and microwave facilities, is available for use by students from both centres.

P4 There are chilled water dispensers in the Pembroke and Abon hallways. Students can buy reasonably priced

food in a number of nearby food outlets and can purchase sandwiches and snacks from a local supplier who visits each centre during the morning break. There is a useful '*places to eat*' poster in every classroom based on students' recommendations.

P5 There is clear and consistent signage throughout both buildings. Noticeboards are visually attractive and well maintained, with a well-placed 'who's who' photoboard in each hallway. A 'take-away' map with walking directions to the school's buildings is provided in the entrance halls. Classrooms, and corresponding noticeboards, are colour-coded to aid identification. Each classroom has photos and accompanying profiles of all the students in the class. There are clear exit signs, fire-evacuation and lock-down procedure notices.

P6 There are very good facilities for staff. Staffrooms are spacious and quiet and teachers have individual desks and lockers. Breakout rooms and unused classrooms may be used for preparation. There is easy access to resources and computing and printing facilities. Staff are provided with free tea and coffee and have access to small kitchens with facilities for the preparation of food.

Learning resources	Area of strength
P7 There are sufficient learning resources 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.	Strength
P10 Any facilities provided for additional or independent learning are appropriately equipped and organised.	Strength
P11 Students receive guidance on the use of any resources provided for independent learning.	Met
P12 There is a policy for the continuing review and development of teaching and learning resources, and evidence of its implementation.	Strength

Comments

P7 Learning resources are very well organised and easily accessible. There is a wide range of up-to-date learning materials, including supplementary and in-house materials, photocopiable materials, easily accessible laminated photos and appropriate materials for elective classes. The senior teachers are given designated time to work on producing new materials. All students receive a coursebook.

P8 Teachers have access to a wide range of well-organised resources, including six laptops, colour-printing facilities and class sets of tablets for classroom use which have a screen-mirroring option for display on large classroom TV screens. An up-to-date library of teaching methodology books is available which provides excellent support for the teachers studying on the diploma-level course. The school subscribes to a number of professional publications and online resources.

P9 Educational technology is well maintained and a log book is checked daily. Five members of staff provide technical support and additional support is available from a local IT company. Teachers receive regular training in the use of the available technology. There are 14 computers in each multi-media centre (MMC). Wi-Fi provision is reliable and freely available to students and staff.

P10 The MMCs are well stocked, with a good selection of resources including a PC-based multi-media suite that can be used as a teaching aid and for self-study. The MMCs are open for student use during school opening hours. The school's online learning platform has a wide range of learning resources and all students are given full access to e-learning on enrolment and for three months after they leave.

P11 Teachers provide support in the Pembroke MMC for one hour after classes on four afternoons a week. There was evidence that teachers regularly book their classes into the MMCs in the mornings.

P12 The school has a wide range of up-to-date teaching and learning resources. The DoSs are responsible for their review and development and senior teachers are allocated time for the production of new materials. New resources are introduced in the weekly teachers' meetings. There are no budgetary restrictions for the acquisition of new materials and resources. Teachers at the focus group meetings were very satisfied with the provision.

Teaching and learning

Academic staff profile	Area of strength
T1 All academic staff have a level of education normally represented by a Level 6 qualification on the Ofqual register of regulated qualifications.	Met
T2 The teaching team has ELT/TESOL qualifications relevant to the courses they are teaching.	Strength
T3 The teaching team has a range of experience, knowledge and skills appropriate to the	Strength

courses offered and the needs of the learners.	
T4 The academic manager/academic management team has an appropriate professional profile to provide academic leadership.	Strength

Comments

T1 One teacher does not have a Level 6 qualification. A rationale was seen and accepted in the context of this inspection. The teacher has an HND qualification and extensive ELT experience.

T2 One teacher did not have an ELT/TESOL qualification that meets Scheme requirements. A rationale was provided which explained that the school believed her qualification was externally validated although this subsequently proved not to be the case. The rationale was accepted in the context of this inspection. The overall qualifications profile of the teaching team is excellent. Nine of the 15 year-round teachers are TEFLQ and six teachers are working towards a diploma-level qualification. Some teachers also hold relevant postgraduate qualifications, including one teacher with an MA in TESOL, a teacher with a PGCE in Modern Foreign Languages and a teacher with an OCR Certificate in Learning Difficulties who provides support to other teachers who may have students with learning difficulties.

T3 The school and its students benefit from the retention of a core of very experienced long-term teachers and a high proportion of teachers who return each summer.

T4 The four senior members of the academic management team are TEFLQ and have many years' appropriate experience. They are supported and covered when on leave by two similarly experienced and qualified ADoSs and four senior teachers who are TEFLQ and have taught at the school for over 12 years. One of the directors and the principal are both TEFLQ, with many years' teaching experience. The academic management team's engagement with all aspects of the school's academic management was very evident during the inspection.

Academic management	Area of strength
T5 Teachers are matched appropriately to courses.	Strength
T6 There are effective procedures for the appropriate timetabling of students, teachers, courses and classrooms.	Strength
T7 There are formalised arrangements, satisfactory to students and staff, for covering for absent teachers.	Strength
T8 Where enrolment is continuous, explicit attention is paid to all aspects of academic management affected.	Strength
T9 There are effective arrangements, led by an academic manager, to ensure appropriate day-to-day guidance and support for all teachers.	Strength
T10 There are effective arrangements for the observation and monitoring of teachers' performance by a TEFLQ academic manager.	Strength

Comments

T5 The vice principal is responsible for teacher deployment and is assisted by the DoS. Teachers are deployed according to their relevant experience, qualifications and preferences. CPD sessions have been run on teaching exam classes. Specialist knowledge is not required for the elective classes but several teachers who have gained considerable experience with some electives, for example business, are deployed accordingly.

T6 There are effective procedures for timetabling. Rooms are matched to the size of the group and all classrooms are similarly resourced. The vice principal and DoS try to minimise movement between buildings, and timetable afternoon electives in the same building as the morning classes whenever possible. There are no classes on Friday afternoons in order to provide time for staff meetings and enable Muslim students to attend prayers.

T7 Cover arrangements are sound. A number of appropriately qualified and experienced part-time teachers and former permanent teachers are available for emergency cover, up to six throughout the year, and an additional two in the summer. The academic managers also provide cover as needed. Cover lesson plans at all levels have been produced for last-minute need.

T8 The syllabus is formulated in self-contained weekly blocks and outlines of work covered in the previous week are posted on classroom walls. In classes with newly arrived students new work is not started on Monday mornings. There is a buddying system in place for new teachers. Each class has a student representative who helps new students to integrate into the course.

T9 There are effective arrangements in place to ensure day-to-day guidance and support for the teaching staff. The academic management team members, including the vice principal and DoS, are based in the staffrooms in their respective buildings. Teachers in both focus group meetings felt they were very well supported and confirmed that there are opportunities to discuss specific classroom issues at weekly teachers' meetings and workshop sessions. There is a regular programme of peer observations which teachers appreciate.

T10 Teachers are formally observed at least once a year and new teachers are observed within the first two weeks of employment. Observations include oral and written feedback and there is a section for teachers' self-evaluation. Observation records seen at the inspection were thorough, with strengths acknowledged and points for development noted. Teachers in the focus groups found the process useful and developmental. Some drop-in observations also take place during the first or second week of a new term to enable the academic managers to familiarise themselves with the students and levels.

Course design and implementation	Area of strength
T11 Course design is based on stated principles. There is a coherent and appropriate course structure described in writing for teachers' guidance.	Strength
T12 Course design is regularly reviewed in light of the different and changing needs of students and feedback from teachers and students.	Strength
T13 Written course outlines and intended learning outcomes, appropriate to the course length and type, are available to students.	Met
T14 Any activities additional to English classes, and which form part of the language curriculum, encourage the acquisition of language and the development of relevant language skills.	N/a
T15 Courses include study and learning strategies that support independent learning and enable students to benefit from their programmes and continue their learning after the course.	Strength
T16 Courses include strategies which help students to develop their language skills outside the classroom and benefit linguistically from their stay in the UK.	Strength

Comments

T11 Courses are well designed to meet the needs of students for a balanced and varied curriculum. Teachers are given a comprehensive syllabus planner to complete before the start of each course. All students are given a coursebook which is supplemented by other materials. All students who are B2 and above choose an elective class on two afternoons a week which forms part of the language curriculum. There are syllabus folders for each elective class with links to supplementary resources.

T12 Course design is regularly reviewed in the senior academic management and senior teachers' meetings and student feedback is taken into account. For example, the decision to remove the Friday afternoon classes and the opportunity for teachers to consult students in their weekly Friday interviews and adapt their lesson plans as needed was taken in response to teacher and student feedback.

T15 Courses include training in, and development of, study and learning strategies and students are given extensive information about the importance of study skills in their handbooks. The MMC is well stocked with self-study materials which students are encouraged to use by the teacher on duty and by teachers who take their classes there at least once a fortnight. All students have access to the school's guided e-learning platform which they can continue to use for three months after they leave the school.

T16 The school's '*English Out There*' policy sets out the ways in which students can get the most out of their time in the UK and is summarised in student and teacher handbooks. Teachers have access to a number of lessons which are designed to link to many of the social programme activities, for example, lesson plans linked to a visit to the BBC in Bristol. Free talks by outside speakers are offered once a term and have included the Bristol music scene. Students benefit from the opportunity to join Bristol University's sports clubs and societies outside the summer.

Learner management	Area of strength
T17 There are effective procedures for the correct placement of students, appropriate to their level and age.	Strength
T18 There are effective procedures for evaluating, monitoring and recording students' progress.	Strength
T19 Students are provided with learning support and enabled to change courses or classes where necessary.	Strength
T20 Where relevant, students are guided to select the examinations and examination training best suited to their needs and interests.	Strength
T21 Academic reports are made available to students on request and, in the case of under 18s, to their parents/guardians.	Strength
T22 Students wishing to progress to mainstream UK education have access to relevant information and advice.	Strength

Comments

T17 The school's placement procedures include a grammar, vocabulary and reading test, a short writing test and an oral interview. Test scores are converted into the school's refined version of CEFR levels which breaks down each level into tiers to aid accurate placement of students. The school aims to have as much homogeneity as possible in terms of level while at the same time having a good mix of nationalities, ages and gender. The achievement of these aims was evident at the inspection.

T18 There are effective procedures for monitoring student progress. Students are given the same placement and exit test which enables the school to measure student progress more objectively and they are given a final oral assessment CEFR score in their last week. Teachers administer three-weekly progress tests and inform students of their progress in their weekly interviews. The progress of students staying for over six months is tracked via a

monthly tutorial which is recorded in their academic record.

T19 Learning support is available in weekly interviews with teachers and on four afternoons a week in the MMCs, where the teacher on duty offers support and advice. Students at the focus groups stated that they were well supported and confirmed that class changes are made quickly. The school has run useful CPD sessions on working with certain cultures or nationalities. The school's special educational needs and disabilities policy is overseen by the vice principal.

T20 Clear information about exams is provided both in the school's publicity and in the student handbook. Students interested in any exams are asked to do a pre-test to check whether their test scores match the level required to prepare for a particular exam. The academic managers are readily available to give advice. Teachers receive guidance about IELTS and other external general English exams in CPD sessions and receive regular updates on the criteria from a teacher who is an experienced examiner.

T21 All students studying for more than two weeks are given an academic progress report in their final week which records the CEFR level reached and includes their actual attendance percentage, homework, class participation and punctuality. There is a section for students to assess their own progress and performance.

T22 Information and advice is provided in an academic counselling notice which is displayed in all classrooms. Students can seek advice from the vice principal or DoS who can refer them to the marketing manager for an interview. He in turn makes arrangements for a professional academic counselling session on request.

Classroom observation record

Number of teachers seen	26
Number of observations	26
Parts of programme(s) observed	All

Comments

None.

Teaching: classroom observation	Area of strength
T23 Teachers demonstrate sound knowledge and awareness of the use of English and the linguistic systems underlying it, and provide appropriate models of both spoken and written English.	Strength
T24 The content of the lessons shows that the course objectives, the learning needs and cultural backgrounds of the students have been taken into account.	Strength
T25 Lessons lead to relevant learning outcomes, made known to students and achieved through a coherent sequence of activities.	Met
T26 Teaching techniques are appropriate to the focus of the lesson and to the needs of the group and individual learners.	Strength
T27 Teachers promote learning by the effective management of the classroom environment and resources.	Strength
T28 Students receive appropriate and timely feedback on their performance during the lesson.	Strength
T29 Lessons include activities to evaluate whether learning is taking place.	Met
T30 Teachers demonstrate the ability to engage students and create a positive learning atmosphere.	Strength

Comments

T23 Teachers showed a sound knowledge of the linguistic systems of English and were able to provide good models of spoken and written English. Models on the board included parts of speech, phonetic script and stress marks. Good use was made of pronunciation charts. Where relevant, teachers indicated differences in varieties of English.

T24 Lesson plans reflected the course objectives and took into account the individuals within the groups. Detailed class profiles showed teachers' awareness of their students' strengths and needs.

T25 All lessons were very well planned, with relevant warmers and a good logical sequence of activities. All had appropriate learning aims that were shared with the students. Supplementary materials provided students with opportunities to develop the target language in a more creative way during free stage practice.

T26 In all classes teachers made confident use of a wide range of techniques including appropriate elicitation, sensitive prompting and purposeful monitoring. Regular checks of understanding were evident in most of the segments observed. Good techniques were employed for encouraging memorisation of new language.

T27 The classroom resources and environment were very effectively managed. Pair, group and mingling activities were well organised. The whiteboard was used effectively, including purposeful use of colour. Supplementary materials were professionally prepared and were free from errors.

T28 Most teachers provided relevant and instant feedback on errors in students' oral performance. Teachers made confident use of a range of correction techniques including peer and self-correction. Teachers gave appropriate

praise when it was deserved.

T29 Teachers made good use of review activities. Most lessons were carefully staged with progress from simpler to more complex tasks.

T30 Teachers gave clear instructions and checked students knew what to do. Nomination was a particular strength as all teachers knew their students well. Planning allowed for a good balance of student and teacher talking time. Many lessons were conducted at a good pace and included competitive elements which students enjoyed. There was excellent rapport in all lessons and students were clearly enjoying them.

Classroom observation summary

The teaching observed met the requirements of the Scheme. Teaching ranged from outstanding to good, with the majority being very good. Teachers presented sound models of spoken and written language. Lessons were well planned and included learning outcomes which were generally shared with students. Teachers managed the classroom environment and resources well and lessons included a wide variety of activities. Correction and feedback were handled well and students' learning was evaluated appropriately. Teachers established good rapport and all students were fully engaged in their learning.

Welfare and student services

Care of students	Area of strength
W1 Providers ensure the safety and security of students on their premises by measures appropriate to their age and background, and the location.	Strength
W2 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
W3 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
W4 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
W5 Where relevant, students receive a 24-hour emergency contact number for the provider, in writing.	Met
W6 Students receive in advance information on the most appropriate forms of transport between the point of entry to the UK and the provider or accommodation, including approximate costs.	Met
W7 Students receive advice on relevant aspects of life in the UK.	Strength
W8 Students have access to adequate health care provision.	Strength

Comments

W1 Excellent measures are in place to ensure the safety and security of students. The school director is responsible for health and safety, heading a team that meets quarterly to assess risks and review action taken at all school premises. Visitors sign in and are given a health and safety information leaflet. CCTV is in operation, and there are trained fire marshalls and emergency evacuation plans for any disabled students and staff.

W2 Management has attended external emergency training and the school's plans and procedures have been externally checked. Relevant parts of the plan are communicated appropriately to all staff and students. In the school there is a 'lock down' procedure including a separate alarm signal, each classroom door lockable, and instructions posted inside on how to respond. For outside activities and excursions, there are emergency plans and instructions for leaders and, where appropriate, a 'Run-hide-tell' procedure made known to students.

W3 Student welfare is considered a personal priority by the school directors, who try to know the names of all the students in their school. Class lists include students' photographs, dates of birth, attendance etc. 'NB' notes for staff flag up individuals aged under 18, or with medical or personal problems. At the weekly teachers' meeting each student in the school is named and briefly discussed. Pastoral information gathered from students' tutorials is fed in. The website has a student support section and the welfare team includes the directors and homestay manager.

W4 A key point of the school's mission statement is to 'encourage an atmosphere of tolerance and respect'. The school's policies on 'Respect and Prevent' and dealing with abusive behaviour are available on the website, and staff and students' attention is directed to them at induction and in their handbooks. The staff CPD programme includes training in Respect and Prevent, and the vice principal is the Prevent lead. There are 'Respect' posters displayed in all classrooms.

W6 Accessible practical information, including transfer options and costs, is set out on the school's fees and enrolment form and on the website. For under 18s, a transfer is arranged from the airport to the homestay unless parental consent is given for independent transfer and the student's travel details are given in advance. Under 18s have an additional handbook specifically for them and other conditions are fulfilled.

W7 Students are informed about personal safety and the care of valuables at their induction on the first day. The

induction also deals with cultural awareness, traffic and laws, transport and health, and living in Bristol. Students' understanding of key points of their induction is checked with a quiz. There is further information in student files and in the 'Student Corner' of the website, and a further quiz to encourage them to explore the website's information. W8 There is very thoughtful health-care provision. Students are advised to take out health insurance before they arrive and the school has arrangements with two local surgeries. There are first aid boxes and seven trained first aiders; staff are alerted to 'NB' students with ongoing medical problems, 'Feeling unwell' posters are in students' files and every classroom, four members of staff have attended a two-and-a-half day mental health training course and passed on training to colleagues, and there is a defibrillator by the entrance of both main school buildings.

Accommodation (W9–W22 as applicable)	Area of strength
<i>All accommodation</i>	
W9 Students have a comfortable living environment throughout their stay.	Met
W10 Arrangements for cleaning and laundry are satisfactory.	Met
W11 A responsible representative inspects all accommodation (for safety and suitability) before students are placed, and at least every two years after that.	Strength
W12 Students receive written confirmation of accommodation booked, giving clear and accurate information.	Strength
W13 There are effective procedures for identifying and resolving any problems students have with their accommodation.	Strength
W14 Accommodation providers receive written confirmation of the rules, terms and conditions applied by the provider with respect to the provision of accommodation services.	Strength
W15 Students receive meals as agreed; these offer a well-balanced diet, taking into account any reasonable dietary requirements students may have.	Met

Comments

W11 Accommodation is initially assessed by an informal interview and visit to the host or landlord by one of the experienced and well-trained accommodation managers. Regular re-inspections against checklists take place at least every two years, and more frequently for hosts accepting under 18s. Checklists have reminders of what topics to discuss with hosts or landlords. Information stored on ELC's bespoke database is regularly updated to include accommodation profiles, reminders, safety and training details and records of previous students and their feedback. W12 Students' written confirmation of accommodation booked is accurate, detailed and is sent at least two weeks in advance. It includes distance from school, local facilities, access to a map and contact details for students to send their estimated arrival time. Homestay confirmations give a pen portrait of the hosts and their households. Self-catering confirmations include a description of the accommodation and reminders of what is included and what the student needs to bring. W13 There are good procedures for identifying and resolving any accommodation problems. Students can visit the homestay and self-catering managers without an appointment. A first-week questionnaire, tutorials and a mid-course questionnaire check satisfaction. Accommodation managers attend the weekly teachers' meeting for accommodation and welfare feedback. Student feedback is recorded and used to place future students as carefully as possible and, where relevant, passed on to hosts. Accommodation cancellation arrangements are clear and fair. W14 Homestay hosts receive a copy of the *Homestay guidelines*, and also sign a *Code of conduct and declaration* which is re-sent with each new placement to remind the host of what is required. Independent self-catering landlords sign a similar self-catering code of conduct and declaration. The codes of conduct are regularly reviewed and revised.

<i>Accommodation: homestay only</i>	
W16 Homestay hosts accommodate no more than four students at one time.	Met
W17 Homestay hosts do not accommodate more than one student with the same language, unless the students, their agents, parents or legal guardians specifically request this in writing.	Met
W18 No more than two students share the same bedroom, unless the students, their agents, parents or legal guardians specifically request this in writing.	Met
W19 English is the language of communication within the homestay home.	Met
W20 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>	
W21 Students receive information about the implications of their living in private rented accommodation and advice in case of difficulties.	Met

W22 The provider monitors any other accommodation recommended, and booking and payment arrangements are clear.	Met
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Comments

W21 The website has a section, 'Finding your own accommodation' with useful, accessible practical guidance and pointing out the potential pitfalls.

Leisure opportunities	Area of strength
W23 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
W24 The content of any leisure programme is appropriate to the age and interests of the students.	Strength
W25 Any leisure programmes are well organised and sufficiently resourced.	Strength
W26 There are effective systems to ensure the health and safety of students on all on-site and off-site activities.	Strength
W27 Staff supervising sporting and leisure activities on or off-site have appropriate experience and training.	Met

Comments

W23 The school organises a full excursion to another city or tourist destination every weekend and two or three free or paid-afternoon or evening activities during the week. Very comprehensive information is presented on noticeboards, information screens, handouts and the 'Social Corner' of the school's website, and the programme manager visits classrooms each week to promote the programme and local events.

W24 The content of the social programme is designed to appeal to students' different interests, ages and genders. Their suggestions for the programme are actively sought, their feedback is analysed and they are given help to join local clubs or activities organised, for instance, by Bristol University's student union. Feedback from excursions is collected on the coach to monitor and help improve the programme. Participation in outside sports clubs and societies outside school is recorded and analysed term by term.

W25 The full-time social programme manager, a former teacher, is introduced to students at their induction. There is a social programme assistant for the summer centre. Activity leaders are made aware of any 'NB students' (under 18s, or students with any medical or other needs) on the activity sign-up lists. Teachers and other members of staff, leading excursions are briefed by the social programme manager and given excursion packs including maps and notes. Participants receive detailed itineraries and a map when they board the bus.

W26 Excursion and activity sign-up lists and lists for class outings include participants' photos. There are first-aid packs and an emergency phone with participants' details, and activity-leader checklists include emergency procedures. A teacher and former social programme manager, with expertise and experience in risk assessments, draws them up for all on-site and off-site activities. The risk assessments are tailored to each event, signed off by the activity leader, and reviewed afterwards by the social programme manager. They are also reviewed annually.

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.	Strength
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.	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

At the time of this inspection, 11 students in the school (about six per cent) were aged 16 and 17, rising to about 13 percent at the summer peak. Students aged under 16 are not accepted.

S1 The school has a comprehensive safeguarding policy, reviewed every six months and written with advice from an independent consultant who also conducts an annual safeguarding audit and report. The vice principal is the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) heading a safeguarding team of eight senior staff, whose job descriptions reflect their responsibilities. A condensed safeguarding policy and code of conduct is signed by all staff and homestay providers. Training includes reporting procedures. Incidents are recorded on a secure database.

S2 The safeguarding policy is presented to all staff at induction and told it is everyone's responsibility. Any updates are given at the weekly staff meetings. All staff, homestay hosts and contractors are given appropriate safeguarding training and visitors receive a flyer with safeguarding information. All members of the safeguarding team have specialist or advanced-level training. Training updates are provided. Under 18s are identified on staffroom photo noticeboards, on class and activity lists and wear appropriate wristbands. There are safeguarding posters in all classrooms.

S4 All managers, including the homestay manager, have had safer-recruitment training. All staff and homestay hosts (and adults in the household) have enhanced DBS checks, paid for by the school. Written references are now followed up with a phone call. Homestay-host recruitment includes checking with Children's Services if there are any concerns about the family.

S6 Rules and safety arrangements for under 18s are explained on the website. On their first day under 18s meet a member of the safeguarding team who checks on their welfare and understanding of the rules with a quiz. They receive an under-18s handbook, wristband and, if necessary, a phone sim card. Emergency and homestay numbers are entered and checked. On their second day and at the end of the week their welfare and understanding of rules are again checked. Rules for under 18s are also communicated to staff, other students and homestay hosts.

S7 Under 18s must stay in homestays: they are not allowed to stay in or visit the school's self-catering accommodation. Placements are arranged carefully by the homestay manager who is assistant DSL, has specialist-level safeguarding training and is herself a former international student. Homes are thoroughly checked and only students of a similar age are placed in them. Four pages of the 14-page *Homestay guidance* document are devoted to hosting under 18s and hosts have both online and face-to-face safeguarding training.

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	1983
Last full inspection	November 2014
Subsequent spot check (if applicable)	20 July 2016
Subsequent supplementary check (if applicable)	N/a
Subsequent interim visit (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	N/a

Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	N/a
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Private sector

Date of foundation	1969
Ownership	Name of company: ELC Bristol Ltd Company number: 10027743
Other accreditation/inspection	N/a

Premises profile

Details of any additional sites in use at the time of the inspection but not visited	N/a
Details of any additional sites not in use at the time of the inspection and not visited	Summer Centre, Clifton College, Bristol BS8 3JL

Student profile

	At inspection	In peak week: July (organisation's estimate)
ELT/ESOL students (eligible courses)	At inspection	In peak week
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) 18 years and over	169	221
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) aged 16–17 years	11	34
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) aged under 16	0	0
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	180	255
Junior programmes: advertised minimum age	N/a	N/a
Junior programmes: advertised maximum age	N/a	N/a
Junior programmes: predominant nationalities	N/a	N/a
Adult programmes: advertised minimum age	16	16
Adult programmes: typical age range	16–60	16–60
Adult programmes: typical length of stay	12	6
Adult programmes: predominant nationalities	Swiss, Korean, Dutch, Saudi, Taiwanese, Italian, Turkish, Japanese	Swiss, Italian, Spanish, Turkish, Korean, Saudi, Thai, Brazilian, Czech

Staff profile

	At inspection	In peak week: July (organisation's estimate)
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	26	32
Number teaching ELT 20 hours and over a week	6	
Number teaching ELT under 19 hours a week	20	
Number of academic managers for eligible ELT courses	8	8
Number of management (non-academic) and administrative staff working on eligible ELT courses	12	
Total number of support staff	2	

Academic manager qualifications profile

Profile at inspection	
Professional qualifications	Number of academic managers
TEFLQ qualification	4
Academic managers without TEFLQ qualification or three years relevant experience	0
Total	4
Comments	
None.	

Teacher qualifications profile

Profile in week of inspection	
Professional qualifications	Number of teachers
TEFLQ qualification	14
TEFLI qualification	11
Holding specialist qualifications only (specify)	0
Qualified teacher status only (QTS)	0
Teachers without appropriate ELT/TESOL qualification	1
Total	26
Comments	

Seven members of the academic management team were teaching a total of 108 hours during the week of the inspection as follows: DoS: three; the two ADoSs: 15; one senior teacher: 21; three senior teachers: 18. They are included in the above profile. The academic director is not scheduled to teach.

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	94	11
Private home	0	0
Home tuition	0	0
Residential	0	0
Hotel/guesthouse	N/a	N/a
Independent self-catering e.g. flats, bedsits, student houses	57	0
<i>Arranged by student/family/guardian</i>		
Staying with own family	0	0
Staying in privately rented rooms/flats	18	0
Overall totals adults/under 18s	169	11
Overall total adults + under 18s	180	