



**EDUCATIONAL OVERSIGHT INSPECTION OF PRIVATE FURTHER  
EDUCATION COLLEGES AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE SCHOOLS**

**EXTENDED MONITORING VISIT**

**EF LANGUAGE SCHOOLS LTD**

**(Company registration no. – 1043158)**

Full Name	<b>EF Language Schools Ltd</b>
Address	EF Language Schools, Cambridge, 221 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB2 8RN EF Language Schools, Brighton, 1-2 Sussex Square, Brighton, BN2 1FJ EF Language Schools, Bristol, Custom House, Queen's Square, Bristol BS1 4JQ EL Language Schools, London, 74 Roupell Street, London, SE1 8SS EF Language Schools, Manchester, 26 Wilbraham Road, Fallowfield, Manchester, M14 6JX EF Language Schools, Oxford, Pullens Lane, Oxford, OX3 0DT
Telephone Number	01223 240020
Email Address	ruth.chambers@EF.com
Website	www.EF.com
Accreditation and Compliance Director	Ms Ruth Chambers
Proprietor	EF Language Schools Ltd
Age Range	12+
Total number of students	1880
Numbers by age and type of study	Under 16: 0 16 – 18: 299 18+: 1581 EFL only: 1617 FE only: 263
Inspection date	<b>6-8 December 2022</b>

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the Framework for Educational Oversight Monitoring Visits and Extended Monitoring Visits of private further education colleges and English language schools. The focus of the visit is to confirm that the quality standards reported at the last full inspection are being maintained.

The ISI is an approved Educational Oversight body authorised by the Home Office to inspect privately funded further education colleges and English language schools in England and Wales offering courses on the Qualifications and Credit Framework. It is designed to improve the quality of education on offer to international students who attend UK colleges through student visas.

ISI inspections are required to:

- Report on the extent to which colleges comply with the published Educational Oversight Standards;
- Assess and report on the quality of educational outcomes and provision;
- Where applicable, make recommendations outside the scope of the Standards to support continued improvement of quality.

Inspection provides objective and reliable reports on the quality of colleges, and by placing reports in the public domain, makes this information available to students, Government and the wider community. Inspection takes account of the context of each individual college, and of how it evaluates its own performance and demonstrates its success.

The inspection of the college is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, though inspectors will comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on students. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit;
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the college, its services or other physical features;
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the college or its accounting procedures;
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the college's compliance with employment law.

An extended monitoring visit is for those colleges found at the last inspection to have met or exceeded the quality Standards for Educational Oversight. Inspectors will make judgements on progress against any action points and recommendations made at that time. The inspection will not examine all other Standards in detail but will sample to confirm that previous Standards have been maintained and that there are no contrary indicators to those quality judgements. Inspectors will also consider the impact of any material change reported since the last inspection.

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## **1. CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT**

- 1.1 EF Education was founded in 1965 by Bertil Hult and is still privately owned by the Hult family. EF Language Schools was founded in 1977 and currently consists of ten schools in the UK and Ireland. The inspection of EF Language Schools focused on the six private English Language schools located in Cambridge, Brighton, Bristol, London, Oxford and Manchester. The UK schools are accredited by the British Council and are members of English UK. Each school is managed by a school director who reports to the central EF schools operations team. Support for the school directors is provided by directors in key areas, including academic, accreditation and compliance and this operations team reports to the Vice President UK and Ireland who is based in the UK and Zurich.
- 1.2 The organisation's aim is opening the world through education and is committed to providing a supportive, friendly and nurturing environment where students from diverse cultural and educational backgrounds are able to learn in the most effective way. EF Language Schools offer general English language courses and exam preparation for the Cambridge suite of examinations, running from 1 to 52 weeks in duration. Two schools, Cambridge and Oxford, offer university foundation year courses and the EF Academy in Oxford is an international sixth-form college providing A-levels and the International Baccalaureate.
- 1.3 EF language schools offer general English courses linked to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) from foundation to proficiency levels, examination courses from intermediate to proficiency levels and junior courses. Further Education provision includes English language teacher training, academic subjects and university pathways programme.
- 1.4 At the time of this inspection, the number of students registered at the six schools was 1880. There are equal male and female students who come from a very wide range of countries. English is an additional language for all students. No students have been identified with learning difficulties or disabilities.
- 1.5 Application is either direct to a school, through the group's global network of recruitment offices or by approved agents. The application process confirms the candidate's suitability and places them on the most appropriate level of the course. Students are able to enrol at any point of the year. Students following further education courses join termly and are accepted following confirmation of their qualifications and English language checks. There is a broad range of accommodation in school residences and with host families.
- 1.6 This monitoring visit has been extended due to a change of 20 per cent or more of the permanent teaching staff and a change of principal at the Bristol and Manchester Schools. For this reason, Section 3 and 5 of the Educational Oversight Framework will be looked at in detail.

- 1.7 The college was previously inspected on 7-9 December 2021 when it was judged to meet exceed expectations and the quality was excellent. There were no recommendations from the previous report.

## 2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1 **The language schools exceed expectations.** At the previous inspection of 7 – 9 December 2021 the language schools were found to exceed expectations and the quality of education as judged at that time has been maintained.
- 2.2 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is excellent. The schools have clear educational aims and objectives and offer a wide range of very high-quality courses that fully meet the language needs of the students. The curriculum is very well-planned and courses on offer to students on Student visas meet the definition of an approved qualification, as set out in the Home Office guidance. Initial assessment prior to, and on arrival, is excellent and accurately places students on the most appropriate course in accordance with their language abilities. Overall, teaching is excellent. Teachers have comprehensive subject knowledge and in the majority of classes use highly effective teaching methods to motivate and keep the students' interest. As a result, students make excellent progress across the range of courses and schools. However, in a very small number of classes, teachers do not start the lesson at the scheduled time, which reduces the learning opportunities available to the students. Students' achievement and attendance rates are high.
- 2.3 Arrangements for the health, safety and welfare of students are excellent. Health and safety are very well managed, monitored, with comprehensive oversight ensuring that any issues are quickly addressed. Each of the six school's buildings are very well maintained and provide high quality facilities that effectively support learning. Comprehensive health and safety policies and procedures are in place and implemented effectively to ensure a safe and secure learning environment for students and staff. Fire precautions, drills and evacuations are systematically undertaken and are clearly understood by all students and staff. Student registration and attendance records are excellent. They are accurate, very well managed and are highly effective in monitoring attendance and taking necessary action. Procedures for reporting to the Home Office are highly secure. Each of the school's pastoral structure provides excellent support and guidance for the students in accordance with their aims. Arrangements for the safeguarding of students under the age of 18 are excellent, fully implemented and reflect official guidance. Relationships between staff and students are excellent. Students report that they are happy, safe and well supported.
- 2.4 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is excellent. The group is highly effective in ensuring that very high levels of education, welfare, health and safety are maintained. A clear vision for each school is shared by senior leaders and staff, who work very well together for the good of the students. A detailed management structure, with well-defined roles and responsibilities, ensures that each school is well run, meets all its legal obligations and quality assurance is prioritised. An effective process of self-assessment and evaluation informs improvement planning and ensures that the necessary resources are in place to meet the changing needs of the school. Systems to ensure consistent assessment and the

monitoring of student progress are excellent. The schools are very successful in attracting highly qualified and experienced administrators, teachers and managers. Procedures for the recruitment of staff are excellent, in accordance with legal requirements, with all appropriate checks undertaken.



### **3. THE QUALITY OF THE CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENTS**

- 3.1 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is excellent. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 3.2 This monitoring visit has been extended due to a change of 20 per cent or more of the permanent teaching staff. As such, section 3 of the Educational Oversight Framework has been reviewed in detail.
- 3.3 The quality of course provision and curriculum is excellent. Students are very well educated in a friendly and supportive environment and in accordance each of the school's aims. The curriculum is based on a clear policy statement, is well planned and provides a comprehensive range of courses to meet the different needs, ages and language capabilities of the variety of students who attend the schools. Testing of students prior to and on arrival is excellent. The process is accurate and ensures that students are placed on courses that meet their needs. As a result, students are very satisfied with the provision offered. The courses on offer to students on Student visas meet the definition of an approved qualification as set out in Home Office guidance. Courses offer suitable progression routes, with English language courses being aligned to the Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR). Students on university preparation courses, A-levels or the International Baccalaureate have clear progression routes into higher education.
- 3.4 Overall, teaching is excellent and results in high levels of student progress. Detailed planning and an excellent understanding of the needs of their students allow teachers to successfully adapt lessons to meet individual learning needs and effectively challenge students. Teachers are enthusiastic and have extensive subject knowledge and an excellent rapport with their students. In the vast majority of classes, a wide range of teaching and learning methods are used to deliver engaging lessons. Teachers effectively organise work to ensure that students of different abilities make appropriate progress. Students work very well in groups, showing excellent co-operative learning and independence. In a very small number of classes, teachers do not start the lesson at the scheduled time, which reduces the learning opportunities available to the students. Classroom resources are of a good quality, quantity and range and are used effectively by teachers to support learning.
- 3.5 Teaching effectively promotes fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. It encourages respect for other people including those with the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- 3.6 Assessment is excellent. There are clearly defined processes in place to monitor students' progress to ensure that they are successfully progressing towards their learning aim. As a result, the progress of each student is carefully tracked and allows managers, teachers and students to monitor their progress effectively. Overall, students' make excellent progress and achievement and attendance rates are high.

#### **4. STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY**

- 4.1 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is excellent. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 4.2 All of the school's premises are fit for purpose, very well maintained and enhance the students learning experience. Classrooms are tidy, clean, with good lighting, heating, sound insulation and ventilation. Detailed health and safety, first aid and fire safety policies and procedures are consistently implemented. All necessary measures to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards have been taken. Fire precautions, drills and evacuations are systematically undertaken and are clearly understood by all students and staff. An appropriate number of fire marshals and staff trained in first aid are in place. Free drinking water is readily available throughout each of the schools.
- 4.3 Systems for recording registration and attendance are very well-managed. Admission procedures are highly detailed and strictly observed. Staff at each school works very closely with senior managers to maintain clear and accurate admission registers and records. Online student files are accurately maintained and provide a clear record of checks on identification, previous academic experience, and visa status. Attendance records are accurate and daily attendance is very closely monitored. Staff at each of the six schools has a clear understanding of Home Office requirements regarding the enrolment and attendance requirements for students on Student visas.
- 4.4 Pastoral support for students is excellent. Student welfare is a key priority for each of the schools and detailed policies and procedures ensure that they provide a safe and supportive environment where students can progress quickly. On arrival students receive a comprehensive induction which is effective in helping them settle quickly in their course, their school and the local area. Relationships between staff and students, and amongst the students themselves, are excellent with a strong culture of mutual respect, integration and tolerance. A wide range of policies and procedures reinforce this culture and the expectations of appropriate behaviour and conduct.
- 4.5 The safeguarding arrangements for students under the age of 18 are excellent. Arrangements have proper regard to official guidance and the implementation of safeguarding and recruitment strategies are appropriately checked and regularly reviewed by senior managers. There is a designated child protection officer in place at each school who is trained to the required level. All staff that have access to students under the age of 18 are subject to an appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) suitability check prior to or on appointment.

## **5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

- 5.1 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is excellent. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 5.2 This monitoring visit has been extended due to a change of principal at the Bristol and Manchester Schools. As such, section 5 of the Educational Oversight Framework was looked at in detail.
- 5.3 The quality of governance is excellent. The group provides excellent oversight and discharge their responsibilities well for financial planning and investment in the future of each of the six schools. Senior managers from the group are fully engaged in the strategic development of each of the schools and are highly active in providing support and guidance when required. A clear vision for each school is shared by the group, senior leaders, managers, teachers and staff, who work very well together to ensure the very best learning and social experience for the students.
- 5.4 The quality of leadership and management is excellent. An appropriate management structure, with clear roles and responsibilities, ensures that each school is well run and that they meet all its legal obligations. Policies and procedures are well defined, appropriate and regularly reviewed. Relationships and communication between the group and the leadership team of each school are excellent.
- 5.5 Arrangements for quality assurance and the tracking of student progress are excellent. Managers are highly effective in monitoring procedures and evaluating outcomes to ensure high standards are maintained. Self-assessment is well-developed, accurate and is used effectively to ensure the necessary resources are in place to meet the changing needs of the schools. Performance data are used effectively to evaluate the provision and to highlight key issues for leaders and managers.
- 5.6 Arrangements to check the suitability of staff are excellent. Staff files at each of the schools are well maintained. All required employment and suitability checks are completed on staff before their employment is confirmed. A comprehensive central record of appointments is in place for each school and is effectively monitored by senior staff.
- 5.7 The complaints policy and procedure are clear and appropriate and includes provision for outside adjudication if necessary. Students confirm that they are aware of the policy.
- 5.8 The provision of information is excellent. The group's website is clear and user-friendly. Prospective students are able to access accurate and highly relevant information to inform their study choices.
- 5.9 The college was highly responsive in providing information for the inspection in a timely manner.

## **6. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The school has maintained the excellent quality found at the last inspection.

### **Recommendations for further improvement**

In order to further improve the excellent quality provided, the school should:

- Ensure that teachers start classes at the scheduled time.

## INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons. They held discussions with senior members of staff and attended registration sessions. The responses of staff and students to confidential pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the schools.

### Inspectors

Dr Nigel Chambers	Lead Inspector
Mrs Margaret Arokiasamy	Team Inspector
Ms Pauline Bateman	Team Inspector
Ms Jane Beeson	Team Inspector
Ms Sarah Colmar	Team Inspector
Ms Christine Reba Edge	Team Inspector
Mr John Rooney	Team Inspector
Ms Jane Roy	Team Inspector