



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

MONITORING VISIT

**WE BRIDGE INTERNATIONAL LTD TRADING AS WE BRIDGE
ACADEMY**

(7104100)

Full Name	WE Bridge International Ltd trading as WE Bridge Academy		
Address	10th Floor, East Wing, South Gate House, Wood Street, Cardiff, CF10 1EW.		
Company name	WE Bridge International Limited		
Telephone Number	02920225656		
Email Address	info@we-bridge.co.uk		
Website	www.we-bridge.co.uk		
Principal	Ms Penny Matthews		
Proprietor	Mr Dave Henson		
Age Range	16+		
Total number of students	61		
Numbers by age and type of study	16-17:	8	
	18+:	53	
	EFL only:	11	
	FE only:	5	
	EFL and FE:	45	
Inspection date	10 December 2024		

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 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.

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1. CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT

- 1.1 WE Bridge Academy is a private further educational institution. It was founded in 2009 and moved to its current location in Cardiff city centre in 2013. The academy occupies premises on the 10th floor of an office building. Governance is provided by a board of four directors, of whom three are shareholders. The Managing Director oversees the academy's operations, assisted by the Director of Studies and one of the directors.
- 1.2 The academy's mission is to prepare international students for study in British universities. It aims to enable students to progress to higher education and improve their language skills. It offers International Foundation Programmes (IFP) in business, computing, healthcare science, and engineering. General English and preparation classes for the International English Language Testing Service (IELTS) examination are also provided. At the time of inspection, only one general English class was being delivered at the upper-intermediate level. The academy also offers professional development courses for teachers, but these were not running during the inspection.
- 1.3 The academy accepts students from the age of 16 years. The majority of those who attend are sponsored by their home governments and stay for longer than six months. Students on English courses can enrol every week. Students on IFP courses enrol in September or January each year and must have completed suitable prior academic study.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection, 61 students were enrolled, five of whom were studying on Student visas. Most students are male and over the age of 18. Almost all students speak English as an additional language. The highest numbers of students come from Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Yemen. No students had been identified as having learning difficulties or disabilities.
- 1.5 The academy provides student accommodation in home stay residences.
- 1.6 The academy was previously inspected in November 2023 when it met all Key Standards and the quality of education was judged to meet expectations. The recommendations from the previous report are:
 - Put appropriate arrangements in place to ensure all students attend regularly.
 - Support managers in using data more effectively to inform evaluations of performance and action planning.
 - Fully implement the staff development programme to help teachers share best practices and further enhance teaching quality.

2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1 **The academy meets expectations.** At the previous inspection of 21 to 23 November 2023, it was found to meet 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 good. The overall suitability of the course provision and curriculum is good. Most students complete the IFP programme, which includes a good range of subject pathways that match students' needs and educational goals well. However, the range of general English courses at different ability levels is limited. As a result, the curriculum does not always challenge a few of the most able students fully, so that they make substantial progress from their starting points. Courses on offer to students on Student visas meet the definition of an approved qualification, as set out in the Home Office guidance. Most students complete the course they register for. The quality of teaching is good and often excellent. Well-qualified teachers use their expertise to plan effective lessons which engage and interest most students. Most teachers use a good range of assessment techniques in lessons to effectively check students' progress. Teachers often set students useful homework activities to consolidate their knowledge and check their understanding. However, homework is not always routinely completed by all students, and teachers' written feedback is not always sufficiently constructive to ensure that students progress rapidly over time. Progress and attainment are good. Most students make good progress in developing their language skills and progress to higher-level study.
- 2.3 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is good. The standard of the premises is good. The academy is clean, well maintained and fit for purpose. Students benefit from a large and comfortable social area. Classrooms and other areas of the academy are furnished, equipped and decorated to a good standard. Systems for recording registration and attendance are good. The academy maintains highly accurate admission and attendance registers. Attendance records are updated daily and systematically maintained using effective management information systems. A range of monitoring arrangements to identify and tackle low levels of student attendance promptly are in place. However, a minority of students do not attend their lessons regularly enough. Leaders and managers have a secure understanding of their responsibilities for reporting to the UKVI as required when a student fails to enrol or otherwise discontinues study or does not fulfil Home Office requirements for attendance. The safeguarding arrangements for students under the age of 18 are good. Leaders and managers implement effective safeguarding policies and procedures, including the reporting and recording of any safeguarding concerns. All staff are subject to an appropriate enhanced disclosure and barring service (DBS) suitability check prior to or on appointment.
- 2.4 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is good. Leaders provide clear educational direction and ensure that the majority of students make good progress in developing their knowledge and skills. There are good relationships between leaders and managers. Quality assurance arrangements are good. Teachers

benefit from a detailed programme of continuous professional development to enhance their teaching skills. Peer observations help teachers to share good practice. Leaders and managers collect and analyse accurate achievement data and use it effectively to manage their provision and maintain a good standard of education. Managers have not yet been able to improve overall attendance rates significantly. Arrangements to check staff suitability are good. Leaders and managers ensure the necessary checks are completed to confirm staff identity, right to work in the UK, and suitability to work with student under 18. Staff files are well-organised, and a central record of completed suitability checks is appropriately maintained. The quality of information is good.

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

- 3.1 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is good. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 3.2 The overall suitability of the course provision and curriculum is good. A large majority of students complete the IFP programme, which includes a good range of subject pathways which are matched well to students' needs and educational goals. IFP courses are well designed and structured to ensure that most students make good progress in developing the knowledge and skills they need to progress to higher-level study. The general English course meets the needs and aptitudes of most students. It is appropriately designed and implemented to help students develop their reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. However, the range of general English course levels is limited. As a result, the curriculum does not always fully challenge a few of the most able students to enable them to make more substantial progress from their starting points.
- 3.3 Courses on offer to the five students on Student visas meet the definition of an approved qualification, as set out in the Home Office guidance. Courses are full-time, with a minimum of 15 hours a week of classroom-based, daytime study. English language courses are at level B2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Most students complete the course they register for.
- 3.4 The quality of teaching is good and often excellent. Teachers are well qualified in their subject disciplines. They use their expertise well to plan effective lessons which engage and interest most students. Teachers have a good rapport with their students. They manage the learning environment well to ensure good behaviour for learning. Most teachers use a good range of learning resources well to help students develop the knowledge and skills they need. Students benefit from a virtual learning environment which supports their learning outside of the classroom and helps them to develop their independent learning skills.
- 3.5 Most teachers use a good range of assessment techniques in lessons to effectively check students' progress. Teachers often set students useful homework activities to consolidate their knowledge and check their understanding. However, set homework is not always routinely completed by all students and teachers' written feedback is not always sufficiently constructive to ensure all students make rapid progress over time.
- 3.6 Teaching encourages respect for others, including their protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010. Teaching does not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- 3.7 Progress and attainment are good. Most students on general English courses are well supported to make at least the progress expected in developing their vocabulary, pronunciation, and general English language skills. Student achievement rates on IFP

programmes remain consistent, with the majority of students completing their course and progressing to appropriate higher-level study.

4. STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 4.1 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is good. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 4.2 The recommendation in this area from the previous inspection report is:
- Put appropriate arrangements in place to ensure all students attend regularly.
- 4.3 Unsatisfactory progress has been made against the recommendation. Leaders and managers have implemented a broad range of additional monitoring arrangements to identify and tackle low levels of student attendance swiftly. Managers use information systems well to systematically review overall rates of attendance for each student, identifying any trends in absence. Managers issue enhanced reporting arrangements for students with low or declining attendance rates to help them improve. Despite these measures, a minority of students do not attend their lessons regularly enough.
- 4.4 The standard of the premises is good. The academy is clean, well maintained and fit for purpose. Students benefit from a large and comfortable social area. The lighting, heating, sound insulation and ventilation in the classrooms and social areas are appropriate. Classrooms and other areas of the academy are furnished, equipped and decorated to a good standard. The washrooms are clean and sufficient for the current number of students. Free drinking water is available. Effective security arrangements are in place and students report feeling safe at the academy.
- 4.5 Student registration and attendance records are good. The academy maintains highly accurate admission and attendance registers. Attendance records are updated daily and systematically maintained using effective management information systems. Staff are appropriately aware of the whereabouts of all students on the register. Procedures for contacting students who miss a class or are late are systematically implemented and recorded.
- 4.6 At the time of inspection, the average attendance rate for the five students studying on a student visa was 88 per cent. Leaders and managers have a secure understanding of their responsibilities for reporting to the UKVI as required when a student fails to enrol or otherwise discontinues study or does not fulfil Home Office requirements for attendance. Students are clear about the procedures for collecting and refunding fees and deposits and feel them fair.
- 4.7 The safeguarding arrangements for students under the age of 18 are good. Leaders and managers implement effective safeguarding policies and procedures, including the reporting and recording of any safeguarding concerns. Staff receive suitable safeguarding training at the appropriate level. This ensures they have a secure understanding of their roles and responsibilities to keep students safe. All staff are subject to an appropriate enhanced 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 good. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 5.2 The recommendations in this area from the previous inspection report are:
- Support managers in using data more effectively to inform evaluations of performance and action planning.
 - Fully implement the staff development programme to help teachers share best practices and further enhance teaching quality.
- 5.3 Good progress has been made against the first recommendation. Managers have been well supported in using progress data to evaluate students' performance. Weekly progress tests are systematically implemented and recorded to track and monitor students' progress over time. This helps managers to evaluate where students are making less than expected progress and to act where necessary, such as putting in place additional support where required. As a result, most students make good progress towards attaining their individual learning goals given their starting points.
- 5.4 Good progress has been made against the second recommendation. Managers have fully implemented a suitable development programme for teachers to help enhance the quality of teaching. Academic managers have devised and implemented a detailed programme of training linked to specific areas for enhancement identified through the lesson observation process. Teachers also benefit from a good range of helpful resources on the virtual learning environment to further support the development of their teaching skills. A programme of peer observations has been implemented well to ensure teachers share good practice. As a result, students benefit from a good standard of teaching, which helps them progress and achieve.
- 5.5 The quality of governance, leadership and management is good. Leaders provide clear educational direction and ensure students make progress in developing their subject knowledge and practical language skills. There is a clear management structure in place. Leaders manage their oversight responsibilities for financial management, safeguarding, and health and safety appropriately. There are positive and effective relationships between leaders and managers.
- 5.6 Quality assurance arrangements are good. Leaders and managers collect and analyse accurate achievement data and use it effectively to manage their provision and maintain a good standard of education. However, managers have not been able to improve overall attendance rates significantly. The academy has a clear and transparent comprehensive complaints procedure. Formal complaints are rare, but they are handled and reported effectively when raised. There are appropriate systems for independent adjudication of complaints. Arrangements to check staff suitability are good. Leaders and managers ensure the necessary checks are completed to confirm staff identity, right to work in the UK, and suitability to work with students

under 18. Staff files are well-organised, and a central record of completed suitability checks is appropriately maintained.

- 5.7 The quality of information is good. The website is clear and professional. It provides prospective students with accurate details of the courses offered, as well as access to the complaints procedure, safeguarding information, and other key policies. The information provided for inspectors was well organised and accessible.

6. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The academy has maintained the good quality found at the last inspection.

Recommendations for further improvement

In order to further improve the good quality provided, the academy should:

- Implement measures that ensure all students attend their lessons regularly.
- Ensure all students routinely complete homework and benefit from constructive written feedback that helps them improve further.
- Provide a wider range of general English classes at different levels which challenge the most able students to make more substantial progress.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with students and examined samples of students' work. They held discussions with the managing director, director of studies, and other senior members of staff. Inspectors 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 academy.

Inspectors

Mr Steve Ingle	Lead Inspector
Mr Duncan Gregory	Team Inspector
Mr Patrick Lawlor	Team Inspector