



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

EXTENDED MONITORING VISIT

LEITHS SCHOOL OF FOOD AND WINE

Company registration no. – 02922474

Full Name	Leiths School of Food and Wine	
Address	16 – 20 Wendell Road, London, W12 9RT	
Telephone Number	020 8749 6400	
Email Address	office@leiths.com	
Website	www.leiths.com	
Principal	Ms Claire Macdonald	
Proprietor	Lady Jennie Bland	
Age Range	12+	
Total number of students	142	
Numbers by age and type of study	16 – 18	1
	18+:	141
	FE only:	142
Inspection date	27 February 2018	

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 Tier 4 of the points-based system for 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 Leiths School of Food and Wine is a privately-owned limited company located in West London. Four directors, including the managing director and owner, lead the school. The directors oversee the work of the deputy-managing director and the principal who undertake day to day management of the school.
- 1.2 The school aims to be the leader in professional cooking courses preparing students for a career in the catering and hospitality industry. The school provides a range of short courses and workshops ranging from beginner to expert level along with a level 4 Diploma in Professional Culinary Arts as well as the Leiths Diploma course. The full time diploma courses run once a year over nine months and short courses run at various times throughout the year.
- 1.3 Recruitment onto the diploma courses is through face-to-face and telephone interview. There are no entry qualifications for the courses. Course suitability is assessed at the pre-enrolment interview. International students are required to have achieved an overall International English Language Testing score (IELTs) of 6.5. No students were identified as having additional learning needs during the inspection.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection there are 96 full-time diploma students, 14 Nutrition in Practice students who spend a day a week at the school and 32 students attending evening classes. Over 80% are female. The evening class was not inspected. The vast majority of students are aged 18 or over and are British. Thirteen Tier 4 visa holders from a variety of countries including the USA, South Korea, Australia, India and Turkey attend the full time diploma courses.
- 1.5 The school was judged to be exceeding expectations at the time of the last inspection in February 2016. This monitoring visit has been extended due to a change of proprietor. For this reason, Section 5 of the Educational Oversight Framework will be looked at in detail.
- 1.6 The recommendations from the previous report are:
 - Use a variety of teaching methods that encourage students to apply their skills and knowledge and become independent learners.
 - Ensure easy access to the library for research and study.
 - Ensure that all staff complete their safeguarding training.
 - Ensure a robust approach is taken to the leadership of child protection.
 - Develop clear guidelines that staff can follow should a person report abuse or concern about their well being that includes receiving disclosures and reference to statutory agencies.

2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1 **The college exceeds expectations.** At the previous inspection of February 2016 the college was 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. Students receive high quality culinary training that meets their needs and career aspirations. Teachers make good use of a variety of teaching methods, which assists students in applying their skills and knowledge and also helps them to become more independent learners. The accredited courses lead to qualifications that meet the definition of an approved qualification for Home Office purposes. Teaching is outstanding. Teachers are enthusiastic cooks and share their excellent knowledge and professional experience to enthuse their students and develop their cooking skills very well. The carefully planned courses result in the very large majority of students successfully completing their studies. Assessment of students' culinary skills, through working on challenging practical tasks, is thorough and students benefit from the coaching feedback teachers provide to further refine their skills. Students achieve very high standards against their starting point and length of course and many diploma students progress into employment within the food industry.
- 2.3 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is excellent. Managers adopt a robust approach to safeguarding that ensures all staff are clear about their responsibilities and undertake appropriate safeguarding training. A comprehensive range of appropriate policies is effectively implemented to guard against fire and other hazards. The teaching accommodation is of a very high standard with well-equipped kitchens providing an excellent environment for learning culinary skills. Registration and attendance registers are accurately maintained and up-to-date. Appropriate procedures for reporting to the Home Office are adhered to. Pastoral care is excellent. Students report that they are highly satisfied with their courses and feel very well supported within the school.
- 2.4 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is excellent. A new owner, has taken over. This transition has been managed very well to ensure that there has been no adverse impact on the high quality training of the school. The owner and managers work very well together to provide clear educational direction and close oversight. Financial management is secure and supports the high standard of resources. Quality assurance arrangements are outstanding. The senior team know their school well and make effective use of student feedback to inform strategic decision-making and improve the quality of teaching and learning. Staff recruitment is good. All teaching staff undergo appropriate identity and reference checks prior to appointment but Enhanced Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) checks are not always completed until the completion of the three-month probationary period.

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 The recommendations in this area from the previous inspection report are:
- Use a variety of teaching methods that encourage students to apply their skills and knowledge and become independent learners.
 - Ensure easy access to the library for research and study.
- 3.3 Excellent progress has been made against this recommendation. Teachers now make good use of a variety of teaching methods, which assists students in applying their skills and knowledge and also helps them to become more independent learners. Cooking skills are very well demonstrated by teachers with students given ample opportunities to develop their techniques in both individual and group situations.
- 3.4 Excellent progress has been made against this recommendation. Students now have easy access to the library as a result of the creation of another room for meetings that previously took place in the library.
- 3.5 The assessment of students on arrival is excellent. Prospective students are provided with clear and comprehensive guidance, advice, and information about the course requirements and content prior to starting to ensure that they are placed on the most appropriate course. Student interest in food and cooking and their suitability for the course is carefully assessed, particularly for the diploma courses.
- 3.6 The curriculum offer is excellent. An extensive range of courses are well matched to the age, aptitude and abilities of the students. The accredited courses lead to qualification or outcomes, which meet the definitions of an approved qualification for Home Office purposes.
- 3.7 Courses are very well planned resulting in the students making good progress and the very large majority of students successfully completing their studies, achieving high standards and securing positions in the catering industry. As a result students make excellent progress developing their skills and understanding.
- 3.8 The quality of teaching and its impact on learning is excellent. Lessons are effectively planned. Teachers meet at the beginning of each day to plan the approach to develop the cooking skills and techniques required for the day's activities. This facilitates the sharing of good practice and helps to ensure students develop consistently high quality standards of skills and understanding. Training is highly effective in meeting the needs of students.
- 3.9 Teachers are enthusiastic cooks and share their excellent knowledge and professional experience to enthuse their students and develop cooking techniques

very effectively and set challenging tasks. Through very well prepared practical activities, guest lectures from industry experts, and excellent coaching support students quickly grow in confidence and competence in the kitchen.

- 3.10 The assessment of students' progress is excellent. Assessment is thorough and used well to plan teaching and give useful feedback to students. Students' culinary skills are assessed in a timely, reliable and consistent manner through working on challenging practical tasks. Their progress is monitored carefully and feedback helps them to quickly improve.
- 3.11 The progress and attainment of students is excellent based on their starting points and the length of their course. The success rates over the last three years have been consistently high and most students achieve merits or distinctions on their diploma course and progress into employment within the food industry.

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 The recommendations in this area from the previous inspection report are:
- Ensure that all staff complete their safeguarding training.
 - Ensure a robust approach is taken to the leadership of child protection.
 - Develop clear guidelines that staff can follow should a person report abuse or concern about their well being that includes receiving disclosures and reference to statutory agencies.
- 4.3 Excellent progress has been made against the first of these recommendations. All teaching staff have obtained a certificate of achievement in a course on safeguarding children. The course has further developed teachers' understanding of their child protection responsibilities and allows them to feel confident in recognising the potential signs of abuse, reporting concerns, and acting appropriately to promote the welfare of all children and vulnerable adults.
- 4.4 Good progress has been made with regard to the second recommendation. The safeguarding lead has been fully trained in all aspects of leading safeguarding including interagency working. The training is updated every two years. The lead fully understands the process for helping early intervention. Good relationships and effective communication with the local authority safeguarding board are working well. Procedures and policies are monitored and evaluated to ensure that all safeguarding requirements are met. Each staff member has access to, and understands, the child protection policy and procedure, especially new and part-time staff. Records of any safeguarding issues raised are kept where appropriate.
- 4.5 Excellent progress has been made with regard to the recommendation to develop clear guidelines on reporting abuse or concern. The safeguarding policy clearly states that all concerns raised with staff must be reported to the safeguarding lead and outlines the procedure for staff to follow in responding to any evidence of abuse or disclosures. The policy and procedures include the whistleblowing procedure and all emergency contact numbers for reporting. All staff receive training in these procedures and undertake an online safeguarding course.
- 4.6 Health, safety and security of the premises are excellent. Many staff are trained in first aid and fire safety. Procedures to ensure the safety of all at the school are very well organised. The premises provide a very high quality, safe and secure place to work and study.
- 4.7 The building is clean and very well maintained. The teaching accommodation is of a very high standard with well equipped kitchens providing an excellent environment for learning culinary skills.

- 4.8 Arrangements for student registration, and attendance are excellent. Admission procedures are accurate, detailed and observed. Attendance is accurately recorded and monitored by the principal.
- 4.9 Communication between the tutors, the administrators and principal is excellent and identifies students who are late or who fail to attend sessions. Staff have a good understanding of the Home Office requirements in relation to Tier 4 students and undertake their reporting responsibilities in this regard.
- 4.10 Pastoral support for students is excellent. Students have a personal tutor who supports them effectively with both personal and academic issues. Learning takes place within an environment of mutual respect and the needs of students are a key focus of all staff. Regular tutorials and more formal tutor meetings ensure that staff have a good understanding of students academic progress and personal development. As a result, staff are able to quickly identify and provide support if required. Students report that they are highly satisfied with their courses and feel very well supported within the school.
- 4.11 Safeguarding arrangements are good. A comprehensive range of well co-ordinated procedures is in place that meets the school's safeguarding obligations. Staff responsibilities are clearly established and understood. Safeguarding policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and amended to take account of changes in legislation. All staff have undergone DBS checks.

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 There has been a change in proprietor since the last inspection. The transition has been managed very well and as a result the change of the proprietor has not had an adverse impact on the running of the school and its high standards. The new proprietor attended board meetings for six months prior to taking over to ensure smooth succession planning.
- 5.3 Ownership and oversight are excellent. The new owner has a very good knowledge of the school and is able to call on considerable experience as a governor of charities and other schools. The owner monitors the school's progress very well. The owner provides clear educational direction and a strategic steer.
- 5.4 The owner has a very good working relationship with the school's managers and provides an excellent academic and financial oversight to ensure that the high standards are maintained. The owner attends weekly management meetings and chairs the monthly directors' meetings in order to closely monitor the use of resources, to ensure that the students' needs are met and that statutory requirements are fulfilled. The proprietor ensures that all the necessary legal permissions are in place and that policies in relation to health and safety and safeguarding are reviewed annually. The proprietor is successful in recruiting, supporting and retaining high quality staff with considerable expertise in the food industry.
- 5.5 Self-evaluation is highly effective. The managers know their school well and make effective use of student feedback to inform strategic decision-making and improve the quality of teaching and learning. Managers have been very effective in successfully responding to all the recommendations identified at the time of the last inspection.
- 5.6 The quality of leadership and management is excellent. Staff work very well together within a supportive environment with clear roles and responsibilities. Management is effective resulting in students' very high success rates.
- 5.7 Quality assurance is outstanding. The observations of teaching and learning, student representative meetings and termly student evaluations are used very well to gather information to inform improvements. Data is analysed to identify trends and to respond quickly if improvements are required.
- 5.8 A thorough staff appraisal process encourages staff to review their performance and identify areas for development. Staff benefit from a wide range of training and development opportunities. This ensures that they remain technically competent and are fully aware of the emerging trends within the food industry.

- 5.9 A fair complaints procedure is in place so that any complaints can be handled properly with appropriate records to be kept, and it is clearly available on the school's website. The procedure includes reference to an external adjudicator if required. The school does not have a fee protection policy in place.
- 5.10 Staff recruitment is good. A robust recruitment, selection and application process ensures that the school recruits highly suitable staff for the roles available. Teaching staff are required to demonstrate their cooking skills within the selection process. All staff undergo appropriate identity and reference checks prior to appointment but DBS checks are not consistently completed until the three-month probationary period is completed, although no teachers have unsupervised access to students during their probationary period. The single central register is securely maintained, accurate and records staff identity checks, references, qualifications and other appropriate information.
- 5.11 The provision of information is excellent. The school's website is very professional, easy to navigate and provides all the necessary information to enable potential students to make well informed choices regarding their course of study. The school responded to all request for information regarding the inspection in a timely manner.

6. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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

Recommendations for further improvement

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

- Ensure that all staff undertake DBS checks before they start at the school.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with students and examined samples of students' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the proprietor. The responses of staff and students to confidential pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Roger Pilgrim	Lead Inspector
Mrs Margaret Arokiasamy	Team Inspector
Mr Saul Hyman	Team Inspector