



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

**MONITORING VISIT**

**LEITHS SCHOOL OF FOOD AND WINE**

**(Company registration no. – 2922474)**

Full Name **Leiths School of Food and Wine**

Address 16 - 20 Wendell Road, London W12 9RT

Parent\Company name Leiths School of Food and Wine Limited

Telephone Number 020 8749 6400

Email Address jenny.stringer@leiths.com

Website www.leiths.com

Principal Ms Jenny Stringer

Proprietor Lady Jennie Bland

Age Range 11+

Total number of students 121

Numbers by age and type of study 16 – 18: 3  
18+: 118  
FE only: 121

Inspection date **18 October 2022**

## 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.

A monitoring visit is for those colleges found at the last inspection to have met or exceeded the 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 Leiths School of Food and Wine is a privately owned, limited company located in West London offering professional and amateur cooking courses. It is owned by a sole proprietor and overseen by a board of six directors, including the principal. The principal undertakes the day-to-day management of the school and is supported by a management committee.
- 1.2 The school's mission is to provide the skills, knowledge and confidence to embark on a life-long love of food through delivering excellent culinary education. It offers the Leiths Diploma in Food and Wine full-time course, run over three terms from September each year. Students with sufficient prior experience and skills may also join in January. Other shorter professional courses offered are the Essential Cooking Certificate, Plant-based Essential Cooking Certificate, Chef Skills Certificate, Chef Skills Patisserie and Nutrition in Practice. In addition, Leiths provide amateur courses ranging from one-day to one-week run throughout the year and courses for children 11 years and over during school holidays. However, none of these courses were running at the time of inspection. Leiths also have an Academy that provides cookery courses in schools and offers online cookery courses, which did not form part of this inspection.
- 1.3 Recruitment onto the diploma course is through a face-to-face and/or telephone interview. There are no formal entry qualifications for the course. Course suitability is assessed at the pre-enrolment interview. International students are required to have achieved an overall International Language Testing Score (IELTS) of 6.5. Any particular individual needs or requirements are assessed at interview. At the time of the inspection 11 students were identified as having additional learning needs.
- 1.4 At the time of inspection there were 121 students enrolled. Nearly all of the students are aged over 18 years and the majority are female. The large majority of students are British or American. Currently, 5 students are studying under student visa arrangements. The very large majority of students speak English as a first language.
- 1.5 The school was previously inspected on 24-26 November 2021 when it met all Key Standards and the quality of education was judged to meet expectations. The recommendations from the previous report are:
  - Ensure that the impact of meetings and action plans is monitored and evaluated by measuring against specific and time constrained targets.
  - Improve recruitment processes and procedures to ensure that all safer recruitment practices are followed.

## 2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

2.1 **The school does not meet expectations.** The quality of education found at the last inspection of 24-26 November 2021 has not been maintained. The school does not meet the following Key Standards:

1. Appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place and are regularly reviewed to keep all students safe. **[40]**
2. The leadership of the college or language school provide clear educational direction which is reflected in the quality of education provided, the care of students, and the fulfilment of the college or language school's stated purpose, or its aims and ethos. **[45]**
3. An enhanced DBS and barred list check is carried out for all staff and volunteers who will:
  - provide unsupervised teaching, training, instruction, care, supervision, guidance on well-being for students under eighteen, or drive a vehicle only for students under the age of eighteen;
  - manage others who carry out the above activities.

Criminal record checks are applied for in good time. Where the DBS certificate is not returned before the individual enters regulated activity,

- barring information is obtained before they commence working in regulated activity; and
- risk-assessed supervision, and any other arrangements indicated by risk assessment, are put in place pending production of the DBS certificate. **[55]**

2.2 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is excellent. Assessment of students prior to and on arrival to the college is good. Course provision is excellent. Programmes are very well matched to students' individual needs. Courses on offer to students on Student visas meet the definition of an approved qualification as set out in Home Office guidance. The quality of teaching and learning is excellent. Lessons are well-planned, enjoyable and challenging. Highly skilled teachers effectively link theory to practice so that students deepen their understanding of nutrition, food preparation and presentation techniques. Students make good or excellent progress in lessons and develop the professional skills needed for employment. Students' progress and attainment is good. The large majority of students successfully complete their qualifications.

2.3 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is unsatisfactory. Excellent arrangements are in place to ensure the health and safety of staff and students. School premises are fit for purpose and well maintained. Students learn safe working practices and feel safe at the school. Student registration and attendance records are well-maintained and highly accurate. Attendance is monitored carefully and absences followed up promptly. All necessary reports are made to the Home

Office. Pastoral support for students is excellent. Safeguarding arrangements for students under 18 are unsatisfactory. A suitable safeguarding policy and a designated safeguarding lead are in place and staff receive appropriate training in safeguarding and understand their responsibilities well. However, arrangements to ensure that Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are made in good time are not effective. As a result, a very small minority of staff do not have the appropriate level of clearance.

- 2.4 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is unsatisfactory. Ownership and oversight of the school is unsatisfactory. The board of directors ensures effective financial planning and sufficient investment in staff, accommodation and resources. As a result, a high standard of health and safety, student welfare and education is maintained and all legal permissions are met. However, they have not ensured the effective implementation of the safeguarding policy and recruitment processes. Safer recruitment practices are not consistently followed. Meetings result in action plans that have specific, time constrained targets which are reviewed. Quality assurance is excellent. Provision 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 excellent. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 3.2 Assessment of students prior to and on arrival to the college is good. Highly effective advice and guidance is given to prospective students which ensures that they are placed on a course that meets their needs and aspirations.
- 3.3 Course provision is excellent. Programmes are very well matched to students' differing individual needs and capabilities. Consequently, few students withdraw early without completing their course. Courses on offer to students on Student visas meet the definition of an approved qualification as set out in Home Office guidance.
- 3.4 The quality of teaching and learning is excellent. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and a wide range of practical experience in relevant roles in the industry. They use this very effectively in the classroom to motivate and enthuse the class. Lessons are planned very effectively so that learning is logically sequenced into small, easily understood steps; thereby enabling students to progress at their own pace. Teachers set challenging tasks and support individuals highly effectively so that they persevere and succeed. Students enjoy demonstrations and find them very useful in preparing for subsequent practical cookery sessions, where they develop the professional skills needed for employment. Teachers use a wide range of high-quality resources effectively to support students' learning.
- 3.5 Teachers very skilfully support students to link theory to practice so that they deepen their understanding of nutrition, food preparation and presentation techniques. Teachers use questions very effectively to check understanding and build on students' prior learning. As a result, students make good or excellent progress in lessons. Teaching promotes awareness and an appreciation of cultural diversity through exploring different dishes and cuisines from around the world. Teachers promote British values, within a tolerant and mutually respectful atmosphere that does not discriminate against students with any protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- 3.6 Students' progress and attainment is good. The school offers additional skills workshops for students who are falling behind or not meeting the required standards of work. These are effective in helping them to catch up. Achievement rates are high and the large majority of students complete the course for which they registered. A small minority of students achieve a lower qualification than the one for which they originally enrolled.

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

- 4.1 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is unsatisfactory. Not all Key Standards continue to be met.
- 4.2 Health, safety and security of premises is excellent. Premises are fit for purpose and very well maintained to ensure the health and safety of staff and students. The school has proper regard for health and safety issues and managers give these a high priority. There is a comprehensive health and safety policy which is effectively implemented to ensure that students and staff are protected from risk of illness or injury. All necessary fire safety measures are in place and suitable first aid provision for students who are ill or injured. Free drinking water is provided, which contributes to the comfort and well-being of students. Safe working practices are adhered to, and promoted, in the kitchens. Students and staff receive detailed training on health and safety and their views are sought and acted upon. Consequently, students feel very safe within the school.
- 4.3 Student registration and attendance records are good. The school keeps highly accurate registration and attendance records. Attendance records are reviewed by managers weekly and prompt action is taken where students fail to attend as expected. The large majority of students' attendance is high. Students studying under Student visa arrangements are monitored regularly and any attendance issues addressed promptly. All necessary reports are made to the Home Office.
- 4.4 Pastoral and personal support for students is excellent. Students find staff approachable and supportive. They benefit from regular meetings with their course tutors where academic and personal support is provided. Relationships between staff and students are excellent. There is mutually respectful environment where bullying and harassment is extremely rare. Students receive a comprehensive and detailed induction that helps them to settle into their course quickly.
- 4.5 Safeguarding arrangements are unsatisfactory. The school has a suitable policy for safeguarding and child protection, the majority of which is effectively implemented. There is a designated safeguarding lead, and two deputies, who are trained to the appropriate level. They understand their responsibilities and know how to make referrals to external agencies if required. All staff receive appropriate training in safeguarding. Students feel safe and know how to raise concerns. However, arrangements for checking the suitability of staff to work with students under 18 years and ensuring the single central register (SCR) is accurate are unsatisfactory.

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

- 5.1 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is unsatisfactory. Not all Key Standards continue to be met.
- 5.2 The recommendations in this area from the previous inspection report are:
- Ensure that the impact of meetings and action plans is monitored and evaluated by measuring against specific and time constrained targets.
  - Improve recruitment processes and procedures to ensure that all safer recruitment practices are followed.
- 5.3 The school has made good progress towards the first recommendation. Meetings at board and school level now have actions recorded which are allocated to specific persons and the majority of the actions have a target date for implementation. Actions are reviewed at subsequent meetings and progress evaluated, leading to improvements in provision.
- 5.4 The school has made unsatisfactory progress towards the second recommendation. Recently revised processes and systems have not resulted in the improvements needed. Two written references are now requested prior to appointment but these are not present in all recently appointed staff files. References received via an external organisation's email are assumed to be valid but the attached documents are not all signed and dated to confirm their authenticity. Interview records do not include confirmation that gaps in employment history are explored and explained.
- 5.5 Ownership and oversight of the school is unsatisfactory. There is an effective relationship between the principal, board of directors and the proprietor that enables the school to successfully maintain its high standard of education and pastoral support for students. Through effective financial planning they ensure that there is sufficient investment in accommodation, resources and staff to meet the school's current needs and future plans. They effectively fulfil their duty to ensure the health and safety of staff and students and that all legal permissions are met. However, the board of directors have not fully discharged their responsibility to ensure the safeguarding of students under 18 years. Whilst the safeguarding and recruitment policies and procedures are appropriate, they have not ensured that they are effectively implemented.
- 5.6 Management structures and responsibilities are good. Leaders and managers provide clear educational direction and communicate key messages successfully across the whole organisation. Suitable policies are provided and successfully implemented leading to the maintenance and improvement of the already high standards of education provided. Leaders and managers support and train staff well for their roles.
- 5.7 Quality assurance is excellent. The school collects the views of students, staff and employers regularly and systematically. This feedback is used highly effectively to

plan and make changes to and improve the curriculum so that it continues to meet the needs of students.

- 5.8 Staff recruitment and suitability checks are unsatisfactory. The school makes appropriate checks to ensure applicants' identity and right to work in the UK prior to commencement of employment. However, the SCR is not complete or fully accurate. Improvements were made during the inspection, however gaps still remain. The process for ensuring that all staff in regulated activity have an enhanced DBS check in good time has not been successfully implemented in all cases. An appropriate generalized risk assessment exists for staff who start work before DBS clearance is received but is not specifically attached to that person's record nor signed and agreed by them and their manager. As a result, it is not clear to which staff it applies.
- 5.9 Provision of information is good. The school website contains detailed and useful information for prospective and enrolled students. All requested information has been provided promptly.

## 6. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The school has not maintained the good quality found at the last inspection.

### **Actions required to meet the Standards**

In order to meet the Standards of Educational Oversight, the school must:

1. Ensure appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place and are regularly reviewed to keep all students safe [40]
2. Manage and monitor the standard of care provided so that the school's responsibility to safeguard students under 18 is fully discharged [45]
3. Fully implement recruitment and safeguarding policies and procedures and ensure that records are complete and accurate [55].

### **Recommendations for further improvement**

In addition to the above action points, the school should make the following improvement:

- Improve recruitment processes and procedures to ensure that all safer recruitment practices are followed.

## 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 managing director. 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

Ms Angela Moir	Lead Inspector
Ms Eileen O'Gara	Team Inspector