



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

LEITHS SCHOOL OF FOOD AND WINE

(Company registration number – 2922474)

Full Name	Leiths School of Food and Wine
Address	16 - 20 Wendell Road, London W12 9RT
Company Name	Leiths School of Food and Wine Limited
Telephone Number	020 8749 6400
Email Address	info@leiths.com
Website	www.leiths.com
Acting Principal	Mr Michael Cropp
Proprietors	Lady Jennie Bland
Age Range	11+
Total number of students	99
Numbers by age and type of study	18+: 99 FE only: 99

Inspection dates **16 – 18 May 2023**

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the Framework for Educational Oversight of private further education colleges and English language schools. The inspection consists of a three-day team inspection of the institution's educational provision.

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.

CONTENTS

	Page
1 CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT	2
2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS	3
3 THE QUALITY OF THE CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENTS	5
(a) Assessment of students prior to or on arrival	5
(b) Suitability of course provision and curriculum	5
(c) The quality of teaching and its impact on learning	5
(d) Attainment and progress	6
4 STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY	8
(a) Health, safety and security of the premises	8
(b) Student registration and attendance records	8
(c) Pastoral support for students	9
(d) Safeguarding Under 18s	9
5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	10
(a) Ownership and oversight	10
(b) Management structures and responsibilities	10
(c) Quality assurance including student feedback	10
(d) Staff recruitment, qualifications and suitability checks	11
(e) Provision of information	11
6 ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	12
INSPECTION EVIDENCE	13

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 provides 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 no students were identified as having additional learning needs.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection there were 99 students enrolled. All of the students are aged over 18 years and the majority are female. The large majority of students are British or American. The very large majority of students speak English as a first language. The school does not provide student accommodation.

2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1 **The school exceeds expectations for the quality of education.** At the time of the inspection, all Standards for Educational Oversight were met and quality is excellent.
- 2.2 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is excellent. The school has clear educational aims and objectives and very well-planned curriculum. The courses offered are of a very high quality that fully meet the needs of the students and the culinary industry. 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 abilities and future aspirations in the culinary sector. Teaching is outstanding. Teachers are very well-qualified, industry professionals and are highly skilled in passing on their knowledge and skills to their students; effectively linking theory to practice so that students deepen their understanding of nutrition, food preparation and presentation techniques. Lessons are well-planned and the use of highly effective teaching methods ensures that students are motivated and engaged in their learning. As a result, students make excellent progress across the range of courses. Regular assessments are used very effectively to check student progress and to provide teachers with up-to-date information to ensure that they effectively plan to meet individual students' needs. Overall, students' achievement and attendance are excellent.
- 2.3 Arrangements for the health, safety and welfare of students are excellent. Health and safety is extremely well managed and is a priority of the school. Students learn safe working practices and feel safe at the school. The school's building is excellent. It is very well maintained and provides high quality facilities that effectively support learning. Detailed health and safety policies and procedures are 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, well managed and are highly effective in monitoring attendance and taking necessary action. Procedures for reporting to the Home Office are highly secure. The school's pastoral structure provides excellent support and guidance for the students. Relationships between staff and students are outstanding. Students report that they are happy, safe and extremely well supported. Safeguarding is excellent and fully reflects national guidance and requirements.
- 2.4 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is excellent. The board of directors are highly effective in ensuring that high levels of education, welfare, health and safety are maintained. A clear vision for the 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 the school is very 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. The school is highly successful in attracting highly qualified and experienced staff. Procedures for the recruitment of staff are excellent, in accordance with legal and safer recruitment requirements, with all appropriate checks undertaken.

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

3.(a) Assessment of students prior to or on arrival

- 3.1 The assessment of students prior to and on arrival is excellent. There are no specific entry requirements for courses. Students are assessed for suitability for courses at interview. The interview is used very effectively to provide accurate and appropriate advice and guidance to prospective students. On arrival, students undergo ongoing assessment to ensure they have the appropriate level of ability for their selected programme of study. As a result, initial assessment is highly accurate, and students are very satisfied with their courses.
- 3.2 Regular reviews between students and their teachers effectively identifies any issues that they may have with the demands of their chosen course. Teachers make excellent use of this information to guide their lesson planning and provide any necessary support or guidance.
- 3.3 High quality information, advice and guidance are made available to students through the schools' website. The website is detailed, professional and includes accurate information about the school, its premises and the range of culinary courses on offer. Students confirm that they are highly satisfied with the pre-enrolment advice they receive.

3.(b) Suitability of course provision and curriculum

- 3.4 The suitability of course provision and curriculum is excellent. Students are well educated in accordance the school's aims and their objectives. The curriculum is very carefully planned and meets the different needs and future culinary aspirations of students. The range of courses available provides students with excellent progression opportunities within the culinary sector and opportunities for future study. Where required, students are given effective support in using standard English so that they can benefit from their studies. Where students have been identified as having learning or language difficulties and/or disabilities, the curriculum effectively meets their needs.
- 3.5 As a result, retention on all courses is very high, with almost all students completing their programme of study successfully.
- 3.6 The courses on offer to students on Student visas meet the definition of an approved qualification as set out in Home Office guidance. Courses match those listed on the website and in other marketing materials.

3.(c) The quality of teaching and its impact on learning

- 3.7 The quality of teaching and its impact on learning is outstanding. Teachers plan their lessons meticulously. They have an extensive understanding of the needs of their students, which allows them to adapt lessons successfully to meet individual

learning needs and challenge students effectively. Teachers use a wide range of highly appropriate learning activities and resources which engage and motivate students. As a result, students make very high levels of progress in relation to their ability and starting points.

- 3.8 Teachers are very well-qualified, industry professionals and are highly skilled in passing on their knowledge and skills to their students. They link theory to practice very effectively so that students deepen their understanding of nutrition, food preparation and presentation techniques. Relationships at all levels are outstanding. They are extremely productive, with teachers and students working collaboratively to enhance learning and progress. Lessons are well paced and provide excellent opportunities for students to participate and develop their culinary skills. Teachers ask searching questions that prompt students to think and respond successfully and build on students' prior learning.
- 3.9 Teachers readily offer individual help and support to ensure high levels of practical skills, knowledge and understanding are developed. Lessons address the needs of students through tasks designed to meet their varying abilities and meet the assessment requirements of their course. The high expectations of teachers ensure that all students are consistently challenged and well supported to meet their learning goals.
- 3.10 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.
- 3.11 Assessment is regular and thorough, accurately identifies strengths and weaknesses in students' progress and highlights areas for improvement. Feedback to students is positive, encouraging and accurate. It clearly identifies areas for improvement and details how to improve their practical skills. As a result, students effectively develop their confidence and independence.
- 3.12 Arrangements for tracking students' progress are excellent. The progress of each student is very carefully tracked, allowing students, teachers and managers to monitor their progress effectively. Students meet with their teachers regularly to review their progress. As a result, students know how they are progressing and what skills need further development.

3.(d) Attainment and progress

- 3.13 Progress and attainment are excellent. Students receive an excellent education which reflects the aims of the school. They quickly master and build confidence in their learning, demonstrating excellent levels of knowledge, understanding and development of their practical culinary skills. The evidence from lesson observations and scrutiny of work shows that the overall standards being reached are excellent, and that outcomes are high in relation to the students' starting points. Most students successfully progress into their chosen sector of the culinary industry.

Attendance levels are excellent. Students report that they are extremely happy with the progress that they make. The school has in place a framework by which overall student performance can be evaluated by reference to norms derived from external agencies.

4. STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY

4.(a) Health, safety and security of the premises

- 4.1 Arrangements for the health, safety and security of the premises are excellent. A comprehensive range of detailed policies and procedures ensure that the health and safety of students and staff is prioritised. The building is secure, fit-for-purpose and very well maintained. Teaching areas are spacious, light, well-furnished and practical teaching areas reflect those of a professional kitchen. All electrical equipment is tested regularly as required. Toilet facilities are adequate in number and well maintained. Security arrangements are excellent. As a result, the premises provide a well-resourced learning environment which enhances the students' education. Students report that they feel safe, secure and comfortable.
- 4.2 All necessary measures are taken to reduce risk from fire and other hazards. A detailed health and safety policy, with clearly allocated responsibilities is fully implemented. Up-to-date general and fire risk assessments are carried out with clear follow-up actions, which are regularly reviewed. An appropriate number of trained fire marshals and first aiders are in place as well as first aid kits and accident books. Fire action notices are clearly displayed, and fire exits are well signposted. Fire protection equipment is properly sited and regularly checked. Regular fire drills are carried out which are well recorded. Free drinking water is readily available throughout the school. Staff and students report that they are aware of their responsibilities and have received appropriate health and safety training, including specialist training for working practices in the schools' kitchens.
- 4.3 Proper provision is made for students who are ill or injured. All areas of the school are accessible by students with mobility difficulties.

4.(b) Student registration and attendance records

- 4.4 Arrangements for student registration and the recording of attendance are excellent. Detailed admission procedures are in place and properly observed. A central register is accurately maintained and individual student files contain all required information.
- 4.5 Daily attendance is accurately recorded and closely monitored. All unexpected absences are followed up the same day. Managers and staff have a clear understanding of Home Office requirements regarding the enrolment and attendance requirements for students who are studying under Student visa arrangements. Accurate student records are maintained on the school's database and in students' individual files. As a result, attendance rates are high.
- 4.6 Appropriate policies and procedures are fully implemented for the collection and refund of student fees and deposits. The policy is fair and applied consistently.

4.(c) Pastoral support for students

- 4.7 Pastoral support for students is excellent. Comprehensive personal support and guidance is provided by staff in accordance with the students' needs. A detailed induction ensures that students' settle into their course quickly. Students report that they know who to go to if they have a personal problem and feel confident to approach any member of staff for help.
- 4.8 Relationships between staff and students and amongst the students themselves are outstanding, with a strong culture of mutual respect, integration and tolerance. A comprehensive range of policies and procedures reinforce this culture and the expectations of behaviour and conduct. The school has clear anti-bullying and harassment policies and procedures, and students report no instances of such behaviour.
- 4.9 Good careers advice ensures that students are well prepared for further study choices and life beyond the school. Students participate in an appropriate range of enrichment and social activities which effectively enhances their learning.

4.(d) Safeguarding Under 18s

- 4.10 The safeguarding arrangements for students under the age of 18 are excellent and have proper regard to official guidance. 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 the 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.(a) Ownership and oversight

- 5.1 Governance and oversight are excellent. The Board of Directors provides highly effective oversight, with a clear emphasis on supporting students and developing and maintaining very high academic standards. They effectively monitor performance and provide excellent support to staff. The educational direction of the school is clear and fully communicated and understood by staff. Policies and procedures are well developed, regularly reviewed and effectively contribute to the quality of education and the care of students. Relationships between the board of directors, managers and staff are excellent.
- 5.2 Financial management is excellent. Detailed financial planning, and excellent investment in staff, premises and resources, effectively contributes to the success of the school and its provision. All necessary legal permissions are in place for the use of the premises, including relevant insurances and licenses. As a result, leaders fully discharge their duty to ensure the health, welfare and safety of students and to safeguard students under the age of 18.

5.(b) Management structures and responsibilities

- 5.3 Management structures and responsibilities are excellent. The quality of leadership and management is excellent. Self-evaluation provides an accurate account of the school's key strengths and areas for development. Leaders are highly successful in sharing the organisational vision with staff. All decisions and actions are made with consideration of the impact on the student experience and their needs.
- 5.4 A detailed and appropriate management structure ensures that the school operates well. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and have been effective in developing excellent lines of communication between managers, staff and students. Replies to the pre-inspection questionnaire, and meetings with staff, show that they are highly supportive of the school.
- 5.5 The school is highly successful in securing and retaining well-qualified staff. A comprehensive system of staff review ensures that staff are well qualified for the work they do, and appropriately supported by the management team. A comprehensive programme of staff development ensures that staff are appropriately trained for their roles.

5.(c) Quality assurance including student feedback

- 5.6 Quality assurance including student feedback is excellent. Managers are very successful in identifying priorities for improvement. Self-evaluation results in a clear and realistic review of the school's strengths and areas for development. Student feedback is regularly and systematically collected. This feedback is effectively analysed and shared with staff and managers. It is used regularly to inform teacher

development and to identify priorities for the school. Student performance data is available and effectively summarised to ensure key issues are highlighted for leaders and managers.

- 5.7 The complaints procedure is clear and appropriate and includes provision for independent adjudication. Complaints are few and students confirmed that they are aware of the policy.

5.(d) Staff recruitment, qualifications and suitability checks

- 5.8 Staff recruitment, qualifications and suitability checks are excellent. Comprehensive new recruitment procedures have been successfully introduced, which include detailed suitability checks. As a result, all required recruitment checks have now been carried out in a timely manner and appropriately recorded. The process to validate references and qualifications is excellent, with due regard to statutory requirements concerning the identity of staff. A comprehensive central record is maintained and monitored by senior staff.

5.(e) Provision of information

- 5.9 The provision of information is excellent. The website is clear and user-friendly. Prospective students are able to access accurate and highly relevant information to inform their study choices.
- 5.10 The school was very responsive in providing information during the inspection in a timely manner.

6. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for further improvement

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

- Ensure that new recruitment procedures are fully implemented over time to continue to support the safer recruitment of staff.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Inspectors

Dr Nigel Chambers	Lead Inspector
Ms Christine-Reba Edge	Team Inspector