



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

**EXTENDED MONITORING VISIT**

**LEITHS SCHOOL OF FOOD AND WINE**

**(2922474)**

Full Name	<b>Leiths School of Food and Wine</b>
Address	16 - 20 Wendell Road, London, W12 9RT
Telephone Number	020 8749 6400
Email Address	registrar@leiths.com
Website	www.leiths.com
Principal	Mr Michael Cropp
Proprietor	Lady Jennie Bland
Age Range	17+
Total number of students	94
Numbers by age and type of study	18+: 94 FE only: 94
Inspection dates	<b>6 November 2024</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.

## CONTENTS

	Page
<b>1 CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3 THE QUALITY OF THE CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENTS</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>4 STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>6 ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>INSPECTION EVIDENCE</b>	<b>11</b>

## 1. CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT

- 1.1 Leiths School of Food and Wine is a privately owned limited company in West London offering professionally focused cookery 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 the director of education, headteacher, and senior leadership team.
- 1.2 The school's mission is to provide exceptional culinary skills for life. It offers the Leiths full-time culinary diploma course from September each year. Students with sufficient prior experience and skills may also join in January, which excludes the initial foundation skills term. Students can also complete only the first term of the diploma course, working towards the Foundation Certificate in Food and Wine. Other shorter professional courses offered are the Essential Cooking Certificate evening course and Chef Skills Patisserie. Leiths also has a partner school program that provides cookery courses in schools and offers online cookery courses, which did not form part of this inspection.
- 1.3 Recruitment for the diploma course is through a face-to-face 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 individual needs or requirements are assessed at the interview. At the time of the inspection, 19 students were identified as having additional learning needs. Four students were studying on a Student Visa.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection, 94 students were enrolled. All of the students are over 18 years old, and the majority are female. Most students are British and speak English as a first language. Other nationalities represented during the inspection include American, Australian, Canadian, and Ukrainian. The school does not provide student accommodation.
- 1.5 This visit took the form of an extended monitoring visit after the school reported a change of teaching staff and course provision. The school no longer offers cookery courses aimed at amateurs or providing courses for children during the school holidays. Consequently, section three of the Educational Oversight Framework concerning the quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievement will be examined in detail.
- 1.6 The school was last inspected on 16 – 18 May 2023 when it met all Key Standards, and the quality of education was judged to exceed expectations. The recommendation from the previous report is:
- Ensure that new recruitment procedures are fully implemented over time to continue to support the safer recruitment of staff.

## 2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1 **The school exceeds expectations.** At the previous inspection of 16 – 18 May 2023 the school 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. Leaders and managers use initial assessment information very effectively to ensure students are recruited onto courses that match their starting points and individual learning objectives well. Leaders ensure that initial assessment information is passed onto teachers so that any learning support arrangements are put in place quickly. The quality of course provision and curriculum is excellent. Leaders have implemented a focused culinary curriculum which provides students of all capabilities with a clear progression pathway to meet their individual needs. The curriculum is very well planned, ensuring that students develop the culinary skills needed to progress and thrive in a busy professional kitchen environment. Almost all students complete the course they enrol on. Courses on offer to students on Student Visas meet the definition of an approved qualification, as set out in the Home Office guidance. Teaching is excellent. Students benefit from the support and guidance of highly experienced vocational experts. Teachers use their subject knowledge and advanced skills very well to plan and deliver highly practical, fast-paced, and engaging lessons that meet student's needs and abilities. Progress and attainment are excellent. Course and qualification attainment rates are consistently excellent.
- 2.3 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is excellent. The school premises are clean, modern and very well decorated and maintained. Students benefit from a range of very well-equipped, furnished and resourced professional kitchens. The high-quality and hygienic practical training facilities support students' culinary skills development and progress very well. Student registration and attendance records are excellent. Leaders and managers maintain a highly accurate admission register and attendance records. Staff have a secure understanding of Home Office requirements regarding the enrolment, attendance, and reporting arrangements for students on Student visas. Attendance rates are consistently very high. The safeguarding arrangements for students under the age of 18 are excellent. Safeguarding is a high priority for the school. Leaders and managers have fully implemented detailed and robust safeguarding policies and procedures that properly regard national guidance.
- 2.4 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is excellent. Leaders provide very clear education direction in line with the school's aim. The board of directors very effectively discharges their responsibilities for overseeing academic standards, safeguarding, and financial matters. Leaders and managers are very effective in their self-evaluation. They accurately identify areas for further development and act when required to ensure that high standards are maintained. Quality assurance arrangements are excellent. Leaders have highly effective procedures to regularly review performance data to ensure that high standards are maintained over time. Following the recent change in course provision and staffing structure, leaders are reviewing the format of the staff appraisal process to ensure it

continues to meet the school's needs. Staff recruitment, qualifications and suitability checks are excellent. Leaders and managers have ensured that the school's recruitment procedures are fully and consistently implemented over time.

### **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 assessment of students prior to and on arrival is excellent. Leaders ensure that students' aptitudes, educational goals, and suitability are thoroughly assessed prior to enrolment. Leaders and managers use initial assessment information very effectively to ensure students are recruited onto courses that match their starting points and individual learning objectives well.
- 3.3 Leaders ensure that initial assessment information, including information relating to students' special educational needs, is passed onto teachers so that any learning support arrangements are implemented quickly. Teachers successfully adapt their teaching and assessment methods to ensure students' individual needs are very well met. Where necessary, students are well supported in developing their English skills to ensure they can learn and make progress.
- 3.4 The quality of course provision and curriculum is excellent. Leaders have implemented a focused culinary curriculum which provides students of all capabilities with a clear progression pathway to meet their individual needs. Students are very well educated in line with the school's aim and educational purpose. Leaders ensure the curriculum is regularly refreshed to ensure it meets the needs of students and employers in the hospitality and catering sectors. The curriculum is very well planned and ordered, ensuring that students develop the culinary skills needed to progress and thrive in a busy professional kitchen environment. Almost all students complete the course they enrol on.
- 3.5 Courses on offer to students on Student visas meet the definition of an approved qualification, as set out in the Home Office guidance. Students complete a full-time course of study that includes over 25 hours a week of classroom-based, daytime study. Courses on offer accurately match those listed on the website and in other marketing materials.
- 3.6 Teaching is excellent. Students benefit from the support and guidance of highly experienced vocational experts. Teachers use their subject knowledge and advanced skills very well to plan and deliver highly practical, fast-paced, and engaging lessons that meet student's needs and abilities. Teachers use a wide range of highly effective learning activities that engage and motivate students. In practical kitchen sessions, teachers carefully model and demonstrate professional culinary techniques that help students understand how to create a range of diverse recipes.
- 3.7 Teachers have high expectations for students and ensure the practical kitchen environment is managed professionally. Teachers use challenging and probing questioning very effectively to help students make accurate links between theory and practice. Teachers consistently encourage and support students to reflect on their

developing skills and take responsibility for their educational progress. Students can confidently critique their work and identify areas for further development. As a result, they can work with increasing independence and demonstrate safe working practices in a busy kitchen environment.

- 3.8 Teachers assess, monitor and review students' progress frequently and thoroughly. Teachers accurately identify students' strengths and provide useful feedback on specific areas for improvement. This ensures that students have a clear and confident understanding of the progress they are making and the skills they need to hone and develop further.
- 3.9 Teaching promotes the 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 others, including those with the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010. Students and teachers have very effective working relationships. Teachers ensure that the curriculum and range of recipes studied enables students to celebrate culinary cultural diversity.
- 3.10 Progress and attainment are excellent. Students receive an excellent standard of education which allows them to develop significant and substantial new knowledge, practical skills and professional behaviours. They develop the fundamental kitchen skills they need to prepare, season and present their food with confidence. Students completing the full diploma develop the advanced culinary skills they need to progress into their chosen sector of the culinary industry. Leaders carefully monitor student performance and success rates in external examinations and final coursework assessments. Course and qualification attainment rates are consistently excellent.

#### **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 standard of the premises is excellent. The school premises are clean, modern and very well decorated and maintained. Students benefit from a range of very well-equipped, furnished and resourced professional kitchens. The high-quality and hygienic practical training facilities support students' culinary skills development and progress very well. Other teaching spaces are suitably furnished and well-equipped. The lighting, heating, sound insulation and ventilation throughout the premises are appropriate. Washrooms are clean and sufficient in numbers. Free drinking water is available. First aid and accident reporting policies and procedures are implemented very effectively. An appropriate number of staff are trained in first aid and as fire marshals. Security arrangements are appropriate. These arrangements help to ensure the school is a safe place to work and learn.
- 4.3 Student registration and attendance records are excellent. Leaders and managers maintain a highly accurate admission register and attendance records. Teachers very effectively monitor student attendance daily. Attendance records are very well maintained. Student attendance is very closely monitored, and staff are aware of students' whereabouts. There are very clear procedures for contacting absent students. As a result, attendance rates are consistently very high.
- 4.4 Staff have a secure understanding of Home Office requirements regarding the enrolment, attendance, and reporting arrangements for students on Student Visas. Attendance rates for students on Student Visas were 97 per cent at the time of inspection. Students are clear about the procedures for collecting and refunding fees and deposits and feel these are fair.
- 4.5 The safeguarding arrangements for students under the age of 18 are excellent. Safeguarding is a high priority for the school. Leaders and managers have fully implemented detailed and robust safeguarding policies and procedures that properly regard national guidance. Staff and designated safeguarding leads are trained in safeguarding at an appropriate level. There are clear and systematic arrangements for reporting and monitoring any safeguarding concerns. These arrangements ensure that staff have a secure understanding of their obligations in relation to safeguarding students.

## 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 The recommendation in this area from the previous inspection report is:
- Ensure that new recruitment procedures are fully implemented over time to continue to support the safer recruitment of staff.
- 5.3 Excellent progress has been made against the recommendation. Leaders and managers have ensured that the school's recruitment procedures have been fully and consistently implemented over time. Clear and detailed safer recruitment policies and procedures are implemented consistently. Arrangements for obtaining and verifying references are clear and implemented effectively. All the necessary identity and right to work checks are completed promptly. Leaders systematically maintain an accurate and comprehensive central record of suitability checks. As a result, suitability checks are highly effective and support the safer recruitment of staff.
- 5.4 Governance and oversight are excellent. Leaders provide very clear educational direction in line with the school's aim. The board of directors very effectively discharges their responsibilities for overseeing academic standards, safeguarding, and financial matters. There is a very effective relationship between the directors and the principal. Leaders and managers ensure that directors receive the information they need to effectively monitor standards and compliance. As a result, the high standard of education and care has been maintained.
- 5.5 Leaders and managers are very effective in self-evaluation. They accurately identify areas for further development and act when required to ensure that high standards are maintained. Leaders have effectively managed a change in course provision and staffing structure to focus the curriculum offer on high-quality professional culinary qualifications which continue to meet the needs and goals of students. The revised staffing structure is clear with well-defined roles and responsibilities.
- 5.6 Quality assurance arrangements are excellent. Leaders and managers systematically gather and review student feedback, taking prompt action when required to respond to student's needs and requests. Leaders have very effective procedures to regularly review performance data to ensure that high standards are maintained over time. Managers complete regular observations of teaching, providing clear and specific feedback to teachers to ensure that students consistently receive a high standard of education and training. Following the recent change in course provision and staffing structure, leaders are reviewing the format of the staff appraisal process to ensure it continues to meet the school's needs.
- 5.7 Staff recruitment, qualifications and suitability checks are excellent. All relevant staff are subject to an appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) suitability check prior to or on appointment.

- 5.8 The provision of information is excellent. The website provides student with accurate and useful information to inform their study choices. Leaders and managers ensured that all the requested information was provided for the inspection promptly.

## **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 the staff appraisal process continues to meet the school's needs and the high standards of education and care are maintained.

## INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Mr Steve Ingle	Lead Inspector
Ms Margaret Arokiasamy	Team Inspector