



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

**LEITHS SCHOOL OF FOOD AND WINE**

**(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

Telephone Number 020 8749 6400

Email Address office@leiths.com

Website www.leiths.com

Principal Ms Claire Macdonald

Proprietor Mr Christopher Bland

Managing Director Mrs Camilla Schneideman

Age Range 7+

Total number of students 261

Numbers by age and type of study	Under 16:	<b>0</b>
	16 – 18	<b>13</b>
	18+:	<b>248</b>
	FE only:	<b>261</b>

Inspection dates **23 to 25 February 2016**

## 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
<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>
(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	6
(d) Attainment and progress	7
<b>4 STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY</b>	<b>8</b>
(a) Health, safety and security of the premises	8
(b) Student registration and attendance records	8
(c) Pastoral support for students	9
(d) Safeguarding for under 18s	9
<b>5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>10</b>
(a) Ownership and oversight	10
(b) Management structures and responsibilities	10
(c) Quality assurance including student feedback	11
(d) Staff recruitment, qualifications and suitability checks	11
(e) Provision of information	11
<b>6 ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>INSPECTION EVIDENCE</b>	

## 1. CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT

- 1.1 Leiths School of Food and Wine is a privately-owned limited company located in Chiswick, West London. The school is led by three directors, including the current managing director as well as the owner. The directors work with the deputy managing director and principal to provide leadership to the school.
- 1.2 The school aims to be the leader in professional cooking courses that develop students' professional skills and prepares them for a career in the catering and hospitality industry. A range of amateur short courses and workshops from beginner to expert level are offered along with a Level 4 Diploma in Professional Culinary Arts in conjunction with the Leiths Diploma course. The full time Diploma courses run once a year over 9 months, and amateur courses run at various times throughout the year.
- 1.3 Recruitment of professional students is through face-to-face and telephone interview. There are no specific entry qualifications for the courses. For the two-term diploma courses, appropriate theoretical knowledge and cooking skills must be demonstrated. Course suitability is assessed at the pre-enrolment interview. Leiths also works in partnership with a number of secondary schools and offers a variety of evening, weekend and week-long courses for students under the age of 18. One of these evening courses was running during the inspection with 13 students enrolled and supported by their course teacher.
- 1.4 There have been no significant changes to the school since its last inspection or monitoring visit. There has been an increase in courses offered to students under 18 years of age.
- 1.5 At the time of inspection, there are 96 full-time professional diploma students, 12 Nutrition in Practice professional part time students who spend a day a week at the school and 153 amateur students attending a variety of evening classes or one day workshops. Approximately 80 per cent of students are female. The vast majority of students are aged 18 or over and British. Two Tier 4 visa holders from India and America attend a full time course.

## 2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

2.1 **The college 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 range of courses offered is highly effective in catering to the age, aptitudes, language capabilities and differing aspirations of the variety of students. The accredited courses lead to qualifications or outcomes which meet the definition of an approved qualification for Home Office purposes. On arrival, initial assessment is very thorough and ensures the student is on the right course for their needs and career aspirations. Teachers are highly skilled, and have experience within the catering industry. They make good use of this experience, effective demonstration techniques and excellent specialist resources to ensure students learn and make very good progress. Teachers, monitor students very closely and provide effective feedback, enabling the student to improve their culinary skills and build self-confidence. In a small minority of lessons, the over-dependence on instructional teaching methods limits students' ability to develop and test their knowledge and become independent learners. Good use is made of outcomes of the students' assessment to inform lesson planning. The standard of students' work is excellent. They are highly motivated learners who take considerable care and effort when working on recipes and presenting their dishes. Assessment is regular and thorough. Full time students struggle to gain regular access to the library as it is also used as a staff meeting room. This restricts access to these well-used study resources and a space in which to study. Retention and success rates are exceedingly high and many students gain employment within the industry.

Students' welfare, including health and safety, is excellent. Accommodation, facilities and equipment are excellent, providing a safe and secure learning environment. A comprehensive range of health and safety, fire protection, first aid and food safety policies and procedures are well implemented. Regular fire evacuations are undertaken and recorded, showing excellent progress against the recommendation from the last inspection. First aid arrangements are highly effective and well documented. Accurate, timely recording of attendance data enables staff to monitor attendance very effectively and as a result student attendance is excellent. Suitable procedures allow effective reporting to the Home Office if required. Staff have a very good understanding of the needs of their students. Careers advice is highly informative and students speak very positively of the quality of teaching, help and guidance they receive from all staff. Child protection and safeguarding are adequately covered by appropriate policies and staff are well informed. The policy lacks clarity in places. A senior member of staff is now trained and leads on safeguarding responsibilities for the school, however this leadership is not as rigorous as it could be.

2.3 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is excellent. The owner and managing director work very well together to provide a clear vision and education direction. The leadership team are forward thinking and highly effective at

evaluating and monitoring key success measures. This ensures the school meets student need and achieves excellent academic standards, to maintain their reputation in industry. Financial management is robust and supports the high standard of resources. Staff work together extremely well to develop and implement policies and meet development targets. There is a clear focus on student outcomes and quality assurance and the management team make excellent use of data and student feedback to drive improvement. Comprehensive self-evaluation identifies appropriate strengths and priorities for improvement. Good use is now made of information from lesson observations within the teaching staff appraisals. The school is very successful in recruiting and developing high quality, experienced staff. Their performance is monitored and supported through an effective structure of appraisals, training and work experience.

### **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 on arrival is excellent. Comprehensive, accurate advice and guidance is provided to prospective students through detailed course materials, an informative website, regular open days and access to experienced course staff. Prospective students are given clear information about the course requirements for the wide range of courses on offer. This enables them to select the most appropriate course for their needs and aspirations. Student interest and suitability is assessed thoroughly, particularly for the full time courses, through one-to-one interviews with senior staff. This includes identification of English Language skills and the student's interest in food and cooking.
- 3.2 The school relies on students to identify special educational needs or disabilities on the enrolment documentation and during the interview and induction process. When a student's needs are identified, the school is very responsive to providing appropriate additional support.
- 3.3 The initial assessment information gathered during the selection and interview process is accurately recorded for full time students and those enrolled on the short courses. This information is shared effectively with teaching staff to enable them to prepare lessons that meet student needs and expectations.

#### **3.(b) Suitability of course provision and curriculum**

- 3.4 The course provision and curriculum offer are excellent. An extensive range of one-day, weekend, short and full-time courses are well matched to the wide variety of students' specific study needs. The accredited courses lead to qualifications or outcomes, which meet the definitions of an approved qualification for Home Office purposes.
- 3.5 Excellent use of feedback and course reviews guarantees the courses continue to meet emerging industry needs and student demand. This ensures students are very well educated in accordance with their objectives and the school's aims.
- 3.6 The curriculum is very well planned, providing progression into further study or employment. Students are highly satisfied with the provision offered and feel it meets their aims and expectations. The vast majority of students successfully complete their studies and gain employment within the industry.
- 3.7 Highly effective support assists students in selecting the most appropriate course for their career or learning aims. As a consequence, the number of withdrawals or transfers between courses is very low.

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

- 3.8 The quality of teaching and its impact on learning is excellent. Classes are extremely well planned including daily team meetings used to set the days lesson objectives. Teachers have a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of their students. Excellent consideration is given to learning styles, school expectations, lesson objectives and industry standards within the lesson planning process. This assists staff in employing effective teaching methods that develop students' skills and understanding.
- 3.9 Students are taught in very well equipped, modern kitchens, that provide a professional environment fitted with high quality, specialist cooking equipment. These resources are used very well to deliver relevant, interesting and highly informative teaching. The well stocked library is also used as a staff meeting room. This restricts access to this valuable resource and reduces the space available for students to use for study.
- 3.10 Teachers have excellent industry and subject specific knowledge. They have a passion for cooking and are highly effective at using this experience and interest to engage students, building their confidence and enthusiasm. Tutors inspire students to learn and develop their skills through very well prepared practical demonstrations and activities. The high staff-to-student ratio enables teachers to give close attention and regular support and feedback to each student. This enables them to quickly progress and improve their skills to meet industry standards and their own learning objectives.
- 3.11 Teachers are highly effective in using activities and questions to assess students' skill development, knowledge and understanding. Students are set challenging, realistic practical assignments to assess their culinary skills and knowledge. They are monitored very closely during assessments and when working in class. Teaching encourages students to take responsibility for their educational progress. The use of timely, effective verbal feedback allows students to improve, make rapid progress and build in self-confidence. Written feedback is also effective in identifying areas requiring further work. A well planned, clearly documented assessment, individual learning plans and tutorial process is very effective in supporting and recording areas in need of improvement, setting targets and ensuring progress is made.
- 3.12 In a small minority of lessons the teaching methods do not fully engage all students. The teachers focus on providing instruction and direction limits students' ability to think for themselves and apply their knowledge and become more independent in their learning.
- 3.13 High standards are expected of the students and they are very motivated learners with a strong commitment to developing new skills and meeting industry standards. Students work extremely well together in the kitchens, providing peer support and working co-operatively to achieve lesson objectives.

### **3.(d) Attainment and progress**

- 3.14 The progress and attainment of students is excellent based on their starting points and the length of the course. Success rates over the past three years indicate that high levels of attainment have been consistently maintained. Lesson observations and scrutiny of students' marked work indicate that students make very good progress. This prepares them well for employment within the food industry.

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

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

- 4.1 Health, safety and security of the premises are excellent. A comprehensive range of health and safety, first aid, food safety and fire prevention policies and procedures are well managed and consistently implemented. Staff and students have a good awareness of their responsibilities and have received appropriate training at induction. Regular, detailed fire and safety audits and risk assessments are well managed to minimise risk to students and staff. First aid training is offered by the school and therefore there are a large number of trained first aiders on site. First aid arrangements are highly effective and well recorded. Fire safety is managed very well. There are an appropriate number of trained fire marshals and regular checks conducted on all the equipment by a specialist firm.
- 4.2 Fire drills are now conducted every term so newly-enrolled students are fully aware of the procedure. Regular evacuations are now undertaken and recorded, with any actions responded to in a timely manner. Students interviewed were fully aware of the fire evacuation procedures.
- 4.3 The premises provide a high quality, very safe, secure learning environment. The building is well maintained, clean and very well ventilated. The ground floor provides suitable disabled access and toilet facilities. There are a suitable number of washrooms and students are provided with useful locker space and changing facilities. All areas of the school, are well maintained, clean and tidy, providing a comfortable place to work and study. The kitchens and teaching areas are extremely hygienic and fitted out with professional standard catering equipment.

### **4.(b) Student registration and attendance records**

- 4.4 Arrangements for student registration and attendance recording are excellent. Clear admission procedures are implemented very effectively. Admission and attendance registers are accurate and well managed. Staff fully understand the requirements and procedures in relation to enrolment of students and Home Office requirements. All student enrolment records are well maintained.
- 4.5 Student attendance is very well monitored with daily attendance accurately tracked and recorded. Timely contact is made to students who are late or absent and class registers are well managed with consistent recording of attendance and lateness. A suitable system enables the school to identify and report students who do not comply with Home Office requirements. All students are made aware of the attendance requirements at enrolment and attendance rates are very high.
- 4.6 There is a clear, fair procedure for the collection and refund of student fees and deposits.

#### **4.(c) Pastoral support for students**

- 4.7 Pastoral support for students is excellent. A student-focused culture is evident throughout the school. All staff consider student needs and are keen to provide support. There is an excellent relationship between staff and their students and between the students themselves. Staff members provide excellent support to meet specific student need.
- 4.8 Regular tutorials and monthly formal tutor meetings ensure staff have a good awareness of individual students' personal and academic development. This enables staff to quickly identify and provide support if required.
- 4.9 A well planned induction enables students to settle quickly into their studies and understand what is expected of them and what support is available.
- 4.10 An effective student representative system is used to gather student views and these are considered and acted on by the management team to improve the student experience. Feedback obtained from students during meetings indicates that they feel very supported and they state that the school is a safe and friendly environment.
- 4.11 The school has appropriate policies and procedures that are implemented effectively to promote tolerance and prevent bullying, harassment or extremism.
- 4.12 Careers advice is excellent and students speak very positively of the quality of advice and guidance they receive from staff and previous Leiths' students who give their time to attend and support the school careers sessions.
- 4.13 The social programme provides relevant industry related visits that enhance the course offer. Students are also encouraged to attend work experience opportunities arranged by the school at a wide range of professional restaurants and catering businesses to develop their skills and experience.

#### **4.(d) Safeguarding for under 18s**

- 4.14 Safeguarding arrangements are satisfactory. Child Protection and safeguarding are adequately covered by relevant school policy. The current policy meets requirements and staff have a good understanding of this policy. Staff are kept aware of safeguarding issues through induction and at college meetings. The policy lacks clarity in places and makes it difficult for all staff to be confident in their action should a safeguarding issue arise. All teaching staff have undergone enhanced Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) checks prior to recruitment. Teaching staff who work with students under 18 have completed suitable on-line training on child protection. The rest of the staff have been enrolled on this course and are due to complete this training by the end of March 2016.

A senior member of staff is the designated welfare and child protection officer. They are appropriately trained in child protection and tasked to lead on safeguarding matters. This leadership surrounding safeguarding is not as rigorous as it could be.

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

### **5.(a) Ownership and oversight**

- 5.1 Ownership and oversight are excellent. The owner provides very clear strategic vision and educational direction for the school. This vision is shared by the senior team and evident in the high quality of teaching and careful consideration given to meeting student needs in a commercial environment.
- 5.2 The owner has excellent academic and financial oversight and closely monitors the deployment of resources in order to meet teaching requirements and student expectations.
- 5.3 The owner works very effectively with the managing and deputy managing director to evaluate and monitor key success measures. This team is forward thinking with strong emphasis on meeting student expectations and achieving excellent academic standards to maintain the schools strong reputation in industry. They successfully discharge their responsibilities for educational leadership and policy implementation.
- 5.4 Excellent use is made of student feedback to inform strategic decisions. The self evaluation process is highly effective in identifying strengths and areas for development. Clear actions are agreed in order to continue to improve teaching, develop new courses and enrolment numbers.
- 5.5 The senior team ensure that all necessary legal permissions are in place. Policies and procedures in relation to welfare, health and safety and meeting statutory duties for students under the age of 18 are reviewed annually.

### **5.(b) Management structures and responsibilities**

- 5.6 The quality of leadership and management is good. The open style of management is effective in ensuring staff work extremely well together, providing supportive leadership. All staff understand their role and responsibilities and work to achieve the key objective to develop and deliver industry relevant courses for students who are keen to develop a career in the food industry. The management of academic performance is effective and contributes to meeting the aims of the school.
- 5.7 Decisions and actions always give good consideration to meeting student needs and expectations. The clear management structure and good lines of communication ensure staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- 5.8 A highly successful recruitment procedure ensures the school employs well-qualified staff with excellent industry experience, who support the vision of the school.

**5.(c) Quality assurance including student feedback**

- 5.9 Quality assurance is excellent. Data and feedback is used extremely well to inform the development plan, as well as strategic and curriculum developments. Senior management and heads of department are very effective in using this data to identify relevant monthly and annual priorities focused on meeting the aims of school and improving quality.
- 5.10 A comprehensive self-evaluation report accurately identifies key strengths and areas for development and staff have a good awareness of the educational direction of the school. Management are very responsive to any evidence that indicates that improvements can be made. A well-planned meeting structure ensures regular review and implementation of these priorities leading to continued improvements in quality of curriculum offer, teaching and learning.
- 5.11 The thorough six monthly appraisal process encourages staff to review their own performance and provides excellent feedback on a variety of competencies. Teacher appraisals now include relevant information from lesson observations. A wide range of staff development opportunities supports the appraisal process and ensures staff remain technically competent and able to improve their skills and expertise.
- 5.12 A fair, appropriate complaints procedure meets requirements. It is published in student handbook and on the website. Any complaint raised has been resolved effectively.
- 5.13 The school does not have a fee protection policy in place.

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

- 5.14 Staff recruitment is excellent. A robust recruitment and application process ensures staff are suitable and fully qualified for their role. All staff undergo appropriate reference, identity and DBS checks and teaching staff are all subject to enhanced DBS checks prior to appointment.
- 5.15 The single central register is accurate and securely maintained, recording staff identity checks, qualifications and other relevant key information.

**5.(e) Provision of information**

- 5.16 The provision of information is excellent. The website is easy to navigate and contains comprehensive information set out in a clear, attractive manner which assists prospective students in making an informed decision.
- 5.17 The school has been very responsive in providing information for the inspection in a timely manner.

## **6. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Recommendations for further improvement**

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

- Use a variety of teaching methods that encourage students to apply their knowledge and skills and become independent learners.
- Ensure easy access to the library for research and study.
- Ensure all staff complete the necessary safeguarding training.
- Ensure a robust approach is taken to the leadership of child protection.
- Develop clear guidelines that staff can follow should a student report abuse or concern about their well-being that includes receiving disclosures and reference to statutory agencies.

## 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, and attended tutorial and careers advice sessions. The responses of staff and students to confidential pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the college.

### Inspectors

Ms Beth Maloney	Lead Inspector
Mrs Margaret Arokiasmy	Team Inspector