



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

LONDON BROOKES COLLEGE

Full Name of College	London Brookes College
Address	40-42 The Burroughs, Hendon, London NW4 4AP
Telephone Number	02082022007
Email Address	info@londonbrookescollege.co.uk
Vice Principal	Ms Sandra Poulton
Principal/Director	Mr Ishtiaq Ahmed
Age Range	15-26
Total Number of students	34
Numbers by Age and type of study	Under 16 2
	16-18: 23
	19+: 9
	FE only: 34
Inspection dates	22-24 February 2012

PREFACE

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

The ISI is an approved educational oversight body authorised by the UK Border Agency to inspect privately funded further education colleges in England and Wales offering courses on the Qualifications and Credit Framework, and English language colleges.

ISI inspections are required to:

- Report on the extent to which colleges comply with the published Standards for private colleges;
- Assess and report on the quality of educational outcomes and provision;
- Where applicable, make recommendations to colleges 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.

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COLLEGE

- 1.1 London Brookes College is a small independent sixth-form college, based in Hendon, North London, which was established in 2008. It provides GCE (AS and A2) and GCSE courses to thirty-four full-time students, all of whom are British, except for one Nigerian, one Rwandan and one Iranian student, all of whom speak proficient English as their second language. The gender mix is equal. Twenty-five students are under eighteen, and three under sixteen.
- 1.2 The college staff structure comprises a board of four directors and a management team consisting of the principal, who is also a director, a vice principal, supported by two administrators and teaching staff. Students are recruited via word of mouth or advertising. All students are interviewed for suitability by the management team throughout the year. The college expects hard work and commitment from its students, and focuses on fulfilling students' academic potential. The college has course approval from a number of awarding organisations.
- 1.3 Courses are offered over a wide range of, academic subjects, and are delivered either on a one- or two-year basis. The college offers small class sizes and additional support in examination and study skills and for university applications. Teaching takes place over a three-term academic year.
- 1.4 The college aims to provide students with the skills, knowledge and understanding to fulfil individual potential and build confidence. The development of a love of learning, together with a lasting intellectual curiosity, is a key college aim. It is committed to providing a friendly and informal educational setting with an environment of academic discipline.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE COLLEGE

2.(a) Executive Summary

	Section of the Standards	Grade awarded 1-4
3.	The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievement	2 Meets expectations
4.	Students' welfare, including health and safety	2 Meets expectations
5.	The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management	3 Needs improvement

- 2.1 The quality of teaching has a very good impact on learning and nearly all students meet their objectives and obtain good results. Most achieve their target qualifications with above national average results, and build their confidence. Although initial assessment information is not used extensively to inform teaching, teaching plans are focused on learning outcomes in the courses chosen. Provision matches that advertised in marketing materials and is developed to meet the students' aptitudes and capabilities. Students are academically well educated to achieve their goals of progressing to university. Student retention is excellent. Students are engaged, enthusiastic and respond well to excellent teacher subject knowledge and to the benefits of small class sizes. Ongoing assessment and tutorial arrangements are informal but mostly effective, although little formal analysis of assessment data is undertaken.
- 2.2 Necessary measures are taken to reduce risk. Students, including those under 18, feel safe and secure. They appreciate the strong support offered by staff. Although there is little provision for those with mobility issues, the listed building meets educational needs and is conducive to learning, although the sound-proofing between classrooms is, in some cases, poor. Procedures to monitor individual student attendance and to make appropriate reports to UK Border Agency (UKBA) are effective. Students receive high levels of support, particularly for the completion of university applications. Although students and staff receive an induction, the monitoring and recording of this requires improvement. Relations between staff and students are positive and, although the process for the identification of any special learning requirements is poor, students feel secure in raising such issues. The college promotes integration and tolerance and is sensitive to cultural and linguistic diversity. The anti-bullying policy is effective, and safeguarding arrangements for all students, including those under 18, are appropriate and meet all requirements.
- 2.3 The governance of the college ensures that all legal requirements are met, and although the principal has good oversight of the college, the senior manager has ineffective support from the directors for her to carry out the role, particularly regarding quality assurance and policy development. Although the college is successful in providing clear direction, it is not effective in monitoring, identifying priorities for improvement or supporting and developing staff to sustain success. Self-evaluation generates some strategic aims, but these are not prioritised or subject to action planning and monitoring. Student feedback is gathered and teaching observations undertaken although outputs are not analysed against targets. Student and staff views are very positive, particularly regarding the level of individual support received, although this support is informal and not monitored adequately. Resources are managed well to secure satisfactory outcomes for students. All appropriate checks on staff are made including for those involved with younger students. There are some omissions in the information provided.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with standards for Private Colleges

2.4 At the time of the inspection, the college did not meet one of the key standards for private further education colleges. **The college needs improvement** and therefore it was required to:

- Create a leadership and management structure and develop effective relationships which clarify accountability for directing self-evaluation, and responsibilities quality assurance and policy development across the whole college, and which support and develop staff at all levels. [Standard 37/38/40]

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.5 In addition to the above action points, the college is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Create robust systems for the development and regular review of policies and procedures across the college, including those for complaints.
2. Create management systems for self-evaluation and monitoring of teaching, health, safety, welfare and management which result in action plans in line with stated aims.
3. Develop timely and consistent initial student assessment and tutorial processes to plan teaching, improve individual student performance and meet their progression needs to higher education.
4. Develop management systems for staff performance management, including induction and appraisal, leading to planned development activities to support stated college aims.

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

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

- 3.1 Assessment of students prior to and on arrival is satisfactory. Accurate information, advice and guidance are provided, particularly regarding progression to higher education, and all students are interviewed to ascertain their suitability. Students are advised and supported in their choice of course, based on the overall college aim of delivering traditional, academic subjects. Initial assessment information is based on previous performance, references and academic records.
- 3.2 The college aims to add value to the education students receive through, for example, building confidence and developing study skills. However, little initial or diagnostic testing is carried out to ascertain what students need and thus any additional support is dependent on students identifying their specific needs. Individual learning plans and objectives are based on the syllabus and examination framework and initial assessment information is not used to inform teaching plans.

3.(b) Suitability of course provision and curriculum

- 3.3 The course provision and curriculum are satisfactory and very good in some areas. Students are well educated and attainment data shows that most achieve their aim of progression to higher education. The courses provided match those on the website and in the prospectus. The college also offers private one-to-one tuition and operates an examination centre. All students complete the course they initially register for.
- 3.4 The range and content of provision are effective and meet the needs of students' of all ages within the college very well. The timetable is effective, broad, balanced and meets external requirements, although there are no planned one-to-one tutorials.
- 3.5 Students in general are not consulted on the design, planning and delivery of programmes. They are not involved in the evaluation of the provision, except through brief, formal student feedback questionnaires, the analysis of which is inconsistent. Learning programmes and activities match the students' ages, aptitudes and language capabilities.

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

- 3.6 Teaching makes an excellent impact on learning. Students are motivated and engaged, whilst being challenged in their learning. Teachers have very good knowledge of their subject areas and students gain relevant knowledge and understanding continuously and consistently. Teachers encourage discussion and verbal contributions, ensuring that opportunities for linguistic development and building confidence are maximised.
- 3.7 Learning activities are planned and structured very well. They are delivered to small groups, using a variety of very effective activities. Assessment and reviews of student work and progress are through mock examinations. Teachers provide constructive feedback in preparation for formal assessment clearly and effectively, including giving predictive grades based on student work and their contributions to lessons.

- 3.8 The outcomes for students are mostly very good, and students feel supported by teaching staff.

3.(d) Attainment and Progress

- 3.9 Attainment and student progress are satisfactory and in some cases are excellent. Student achievement rates are good and the majority of students make the expected progress towards the achievement of their chosen qualifications. Students' knowledge and understanding generally meet the requirements for progression to higher, academic education, which is the stated aim in all cases.
- 3.10 Students are motivated and enthusiastic; they are focused on external examinations, and are given appropriate support in preparation for these. Students make steady progress through their programme. Marks for internal examinations are not moderated, and comparisons between predictive and actual grades are not systematically made. However, many teachers are trained as examiners for external assessment and give clear predictive grades. The college is experienced in giving support for the process of application to higher education, clearly understanding the levels required.

4. STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY

4.(a) Health, safety and security of the premises (in line with expectations of educational institutions)

- 4.1 The health, safety and security of the premises, within the confines of the listed building occupied by the college, meet expectations. The college takes necessary measures to reduce risk from hazards and fire for students, staff and visitors. Off-site activities are subject to risk assessments and adequate information is provided through induction for staff and students. Internal risk assessments are carried out at appropriate times.
- 4.2 Students report that they feel safe and free from risk and that security arrangements are good. There is little provision for students with mobility issues and the college makes this clear. Students are satisfied that they understand how to raise issues, including illness or injury, regarding their safety, security and welfare.
- 4.3 The building is suitable, although some teaching rooms are not well sound-proofed. The standards of maintenance, decoration and acoustics are satisfactory. There is no systematic evaluation of risks and hazards to plan actions for improvement although the proprietors have identified the development of the premises as a strategic aim.

4.(b) Student registration and attendance records

- 4.4 Arrangements for student registration and attendance records are satisfactory. Procedures for the collection and refund of fees and deposits are clearly documented, and these procedures are fair and clear.
- 4.5 The college has procedures in place to monitor student attendance daily and by session. Attendance is accurately recorded and procedures are in place to report to the UKBA where necessary. Student success data is also accurately recorded, based on external examination results, and this is detailed in marketing material.

4.(c) Pastoral support for students

- 4.6 Pastoral support for students meets expectations. Effective support and guidance are provided, focused on progression to higher education, as stated within the college aims. Clear and effective guidance on the university application process is given, which adds value to studies at the college through the development of effective personal statements.
- 4.7 Students receive an induction that allows them to settle into their studies quickly, and with an understanding of the course demands. A student handbook is provided but induction training is not documented or assessed in any way.
- 4.8 Relationships between staff and students and between students themselves are positive and effective, and informally staff are very supportive of students. Formal policies and procedures for identifying and addressing personal or social issues are ineffective, but the students report that they understand how to raise any issues, and feel able to do so.
- 4.9 The college promotes integration and tolerance, and is sensitive to cultural and linguistic diversity. Students report that the anti-bullying and harassment policies are effective.

4.(d) Child protection

- 4.10 Although the child protection policy requires review, the safeguarding arrangements in place are appropriate, effective and take proper regard of students who are under 18. Legal requirements are met and arrangements have regard for minimum requirements.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) Ownership and oversight

- 5.1 The oversight of the college requires improvement. The principal has very good oversight of the operation of the college, but does not keep his fellow directors regularly informed. The board of directors meet regularly on a formal basis and communicate consistently informally. However, records of agreed decisions and actions taken are not kept and such decisions are not based on clear and accurate management information. Consequently, the directors' monitoring role is unplanned and ineffective as are the procedures needed to identify areas for improvement and provide stimulus and challenge for growth.
- 5.2 The board of directors ensures compliance with all legal requirements. Responsibilities are met for educational standards, financial planning and investment, although planned generation and analysis of management information do not enable consistent and continued self-evaluation.
- 5.3 The directors fulfil their responsibilities for safeguarding, welfare, health and safety within the college and for those who are under 18. Appropriate legal permissions are in place.

5.(b) Management structures and responsibilities

- 5.4 Management structures and responsibilities are inadequate because they are too informal and poorly defined. The college is successful in recruiting high quality staff in both their teaching and administration departments. All staff are appropriately vetted through an Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check. Staff are motivated and committed to their jobs and feel supported by the management team.
- 5.5 The college is managed in a very informal way. There is little written evidence of management processes being undertaken or management information produced, particularly in regard to policy and procedure development, and review of staff performance. The college is successful in its aims, and provides clear educational direction and high quality teaching, but the leadership of the college is not effective in monitoring this success, nor in identifying priorities for improvement, and for support and development of staff.
- 5.6 Planned self-evaluation has not been completed by the senior management team, nor has the board instructed them to undertake this. Although there are some strategic aims identified, these are not based on clear management information. Priorities have not been formally set, nor have staff or students been consulted on these. Directors have stated aims for improvement, but there are no action plans in place or methods of monitoring the achievement of these aims.
- 5.7 The quality of staff is high, particularly administrative staff. However, there are no processes for setting individual aims and objectives, performance monitoring and review, or the identification of staff development needs in line with the aims of the college. Induction of new staff, or for staff in changing roles, has taken place, including for health and safety, but is not recorded or documented.

5.(c) Quality assurance including student feedback

- 5.8 Quality assurance arrangements require improvement. Some processes are in place, based on students' feedback and results, teaching observation and parent/teacher liaison. However, results are not rigorously and consistently analysed. Quality assurance does not encompass the full range of activity.
- 5.9 Overall targets, aims and objectives are not set, and there are no formal action plans which focus on securing improvement. However, resources are managed well to secure good outcomes for students, and staff and students work effectively together. Students are all positive about their college experiences.
- 5.10 The college handles concerns raised by students and parents with care and consideration, and generally addresses these concerns on an informal basis. However, the complaints policy and procedures are badly written and out of date.

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

- 5.11 Processes for carrying out checks on staff prior to appointment are excellent. All appropriate checks on staff have been completed prior to their appointment and enhanced CRB checks have been undertaken and recorded for all staff. The approach is reliably systematic and rigorous.

5.(e) Provision of information

- 5.12 Some minor items are omitted from the information provided about the college on the website and to inspectors prior to the inspection, although updated information was available during the inspection.

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 a governors' representative. The responses of staff and students to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined policy and management information documentation made available by the college.

Inspectors

Ms Helen Chambers	Lead Inspector
Ms Abigail Nwakolo	Team Inspector