



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

MONITORING VISIT

ALBEMARLE INDEPENDENT COLLEGE

(3387138)

Full Name	Albemarle Independent College
Address	18 Dunraven Street, Mayfair, London, W1K 7FE
Telephone Number	020 7409 7273
Email Address	admin@albemarle.org.uk
Website	www.albemarle.org.uk
Principals	Mr James Eytle Ms Beverley Mellon
Proprietors	Mr James Eytle Ms Beverley Mellon
Age Range	14+
Total number of students	117
Numbers by age and type of study	Under 16: 02 16 – 18: 65 18+: 50 FE only: 117
Inspection date	21 March 2023

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 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.

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
1 CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT	2
2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS	3
3 THE QUALITY OF THE CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENTS	5
4 STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY	7
5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	8
6 ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	9
INSPECTION EVIDENCE	10

1. CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT

- 1.1 Albemarle Independent College is a private sixth form college located in Mayfair, London. The principals, who are also proprietors, founded the college in 1997. The aim of the college is to provide tuition focused on individual students, empowering them to achieve and progress to their chosen higher education course. The principals are actively involved in the management of the college and are supported by a vice principal and a team of academic and administrative managers.
- 1.2 The college offers a wide range of A-level subjects, which may be taken as a two-year programme or a one-year intensive programme. It also offers an intensive one-year GCSE programme. Most students follow A-level programmes.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection 117 students were enrolled. The majority are male and the majority are aged 16 to 17. The large majority are from the United Kingdom (UK) with the others recruited from 23 countries around the world. A minority of students spoke English as an additional language and 38 had identified learning difficulties or disabilities.
- 1.4 The college accepts applications throughout the year, with most students enrolled in August. All applicants are interviewed by a senior manager prior to selection. Students are recruited from a broad range of schools and colleges, both in the UK and internationally. Most of those from the UK live with their families, while international students either live with family or in accommodation arranged by a guardian.
- 1.5 The college was previously inspected on 22–24 June 2021 when it was judged to exceed expectations and the quality excellent.
- 1.6 The recommendation from the previous reports is:
 - Ensure a consistent approach to the challenging of students who arrive late to lessons.

2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1 **The college exceeds expectations.** At the previous inspection of 22–24 June 2021 the college 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. Students are very well educated in accordance with their objectives and the college's aims. The curriculum is well organised, flexible and is highly effective in meeting the needs and educational aspirations of the students. 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 programme of study in accordance with their academic abilities and future needs. Overall, teaching is excellent. Teachers are experienced, have comprehensive subject knowledge and use highly effective teaching methods to engage and motivate their students. As a result, students make excellent progress across the range of courses and qualification levels. There are clearly defined processes in place to monitor students' progress to ensure that they are successfully progressing towards their learning aims. Students' achievement and attendance rates are high.
- 2.3 Arrangements for the health, safety and welfare of students are excellent. Health and safety are very well managed and monitored. The college's building is very well maintained and provides a safe and comfortable environment for students to learn and staff work. 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, very well managed and are highly effective in monitoring attendance and taking necessary action. Procedures for reporting to the Home Office are highly secure. Pastoral support and guidance for the students is excellent and in accordance with the college's aims. Arrangements for the safeguarding of students under the age of 18 are excellent, fully implemented and reflect official guidance. Relationships between staff and students are excellent. Students report that they are happy, safe and very well supported.
- 2.4 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is excellent. The proprietors provide excellent oversight and discharge their responsibilities well for financial planning and investment in the future. A clear vision for the college is shared by all staff, who work very well together for the good of the students. Consequently, very high levels of education, welfare, health and safety are maintained. A comprehensive and well-developed management structure, with clear roles and responsibilities, ensures that the college is very well run and meets all its legal obligations. The college is very successful in attracting and retaining highly qualified and experienced administrators, teachers and managers. Procedures for the recruitment of staff are excellent, in accordance with legal requirements, with all

appropriate checks undertaken. As a result, all required employment and suitability checks are completed on staff before their employment is confirmed.

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 recommendation in this area from the previous inspection report is:
- Ensure a consistent approach to the challenging of students who arrive late to lessons.
- 3.3 Satisfactory progress has been made against the first recommendation. A review of the college's lateness policy has been undertaken by the senior management team and guidance on how to deal with students who are late provided to staff. As a result, a more consistent approach is taken by the vast majority of teachers. However, in a very small number of instances lateness is not effectively challenged, such as when returning late from breaks.
- 3.4 The quality of course provision and curriculum is excellent. Students are very well educated in a friendly and highly supportive environment and in accordance with their needs and the college's aims. The curriculum is based on a clear policy statement, is well planned and provides a wide range of courses to meet the needs and educational aspirations of the students. Testing of students prior to and on arrival is excellent. The process is accurate and ensures that students are placed on the most appropriate programme of study in accordance with their academic abilities and future needs. As a result, students report that they are very satisfied with the provision offered. The courses on offer to students on Student visas meet the definition of an approved qualification as set out in Home Office guidance. Courses offer suitable progression routes, with A levels having a clear progression route into higher education, for which students receive excellent support and guidance on their university choice and its subject and entry grade requirements.
- 3.5 Overall, teaching is excellent and results in high levels of student progress. Teachers plan their lessons well. They use their in-depth understanding of the needs of their students to successfully adapt lessons to meet individual learning requirements and effectively challenge students. Teachers are enthusiastic and have extensive subject knowledge and an excellent rapport with their students. In classes, a wide range of teaching and learning methods are used to deliver engaging lessons. Teachers effectively organise work to ensure that students of different abilities make excellent progress. Students work very well individually and in small groups, showing excellent co-operative learning and independence. Classroom resources are of an excellent quality, quantity and range and are used very effectively by teachers to support learning.
- 3.6 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 all people, including those with protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

- 3.7 Assessment is excellent. There are clearly defined processes in place to monitor students' progress to ensure that they are successfully progressing towards their learning aim. Tutorials are held regularly and effectively support students to review their progress. As a result, the progress of each student is carefully tracked and allows managers, teachers and students to monitor their progress effectively. Overall, students' make excellent progress and achievement and attendance rates are high.

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 college's premises are fit for purpose, very well maintained and support and enhance the students learning experience. Classrooms are tidy, clean, with good lighting, heating, sound insulation and ventilation. Detailed health and safety, first aid and fire safety policies and procedures are consistently implemented. All necessary measures to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards have been taken. Fire precautions, drills and evacuations are systematically undertaken and are clearly understood by all students and staff. An appropriate number of fire marshals and staff trained in first aid are in place. Free drinking water is readily available throughout the college.
- 4.3 Systems for recording registration and attendance are excellent and very well-managed. Admission procedures are detailed and strictly observed. Staff work very closely with senior managers to maintain clear and accurate admission registers and records. Online and paper-based student files are accurately maintained and provide a clear record of checks on identification, previous academic experience, and visa status. Attendance records are accurate and daily attendance is very closely monitored. Relevant staff have a clear understanding of Home Office requirements regarding the enrolment and attendance requirements for students on Student visas.
- 4.4 Pastoral support for students is excellent. Student welfare is a key priority for the college and detailed policies and procedures ensure that the college provides a safe and supportive environment where students can progress quickly. On arrival students receive a comprehensive induction which is effective in helping them settle quickly in their course, the college and the local area. Relationships between staff and students, and amongst the students themselves, are excellent with a strong culture of mutual respect, integration and tolerance. A wide range of policies and procedures reinforce this culture and the expectations of appropriate behaviour and conduct.
- 4.5 The safeguarding arrangements for students under the age of 18 are excellent. Arrangements have proper regard to official guidance and 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 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

- 5.1 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is excellent. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 5.2 The quality of governance is excellent. The proprietors provide excellent oversight and discharge their responsibilities well for financial planning and investment in the future of the college. They are highly active in the day-to-day business of the college and provide excellent support and guidance when required. A clear vision for the college is shared by all staff, who work very well together to ensure the very best learning and social experience for the students.
- 5.3 The quality of leadership and management is excellent. A comprehensive and well-developed management structure, with clear roles and responsibilities, ensures that the college is very well run and meets all its legal obligations. Policies and procedures are well defined, appropriate and regularly reviewed. Self-assessment is well developed, accurate and is used effectively to ensure the necessary resources are in place to meet the changing needs of the college. Performance data are used effectively to evaluate the provision and to highlight key issues for leaders and managers. Replies to the pre-inspection questionnaire and meetings with staff show that they are highly supportive of the college.
- 5.4 Arrangements to check the suitability of staff are excellent. Staff files are well maintained, with all required employment and suitability checks completed on staff before their employment is confirmed. A comprehensive central record of appointments is effectively monitored by senior staff.
- 5.5 The complaints policy and procedure are clear and appropriate, and includes provision for outside adjudication if necessary. Students confirm that they are aware of the policy.
- 5.6 The provision of information is excellent. The college's website is clear and user-friendly. Prospective students are able to access accurate and highly relevant information to inform their study choices.
- 5.7 The college was highly responsive in providing information for the inspection in a timely manner.

6. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The college has maintained the excellent quality found at the last inspection.

Recommendations for further improvement

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

- Ensure a consistent approach to the challenging of students who arrive late to lessons following breaks.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons. They held discussions with the proprietors, senior members of staff and attended registration 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

Dr Nigel Chambers	Lead Inspector
Ms Jane Beeson	Team Inspector
Mr Saul Hyman	Team Inspector