

School inspection report

3 to 5 December 2024

Luckley House School

Luckley Road

Wokingham

Berkshire

RG40 3EU

The Independent Schools Inspectorate is appointed by the Department for Education to inspect association independent schools in England. Our inspections report on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards and other applicable regulatory requirements are met, collectively referred to in this report as 'the Standards'.

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Summary of inspection findings

1. The school's leaders and governors display a clear sense of purpose and have established high expectations for what they want staff and pupils to achieve. Leaders have established an environment structured around the school's Christian ethos and espouse a motto of love and service clearly to all stakeholders.
2. All required maintenance and checks across the site areas are carried out systematically by the site team. Leaders utilise support from external specialists as a further check.
3. Leaders have recently carried out a successful drive to develop the approach to teaching and learning. In most lessons, teaching enables pupils to focus on their learning and make good progress. However, in some lessons, pupils' progress is sometimes slowed by a lack of challenge and expectations are lower than those typically communicated across the school.
4. The school takes great care in identifying the specific learning needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The leader of provision for those who have SEND provides teachers with useful guidance about how to support the pupils, including through enabling them to make effective use of online notes and their electronic devices.
5. The school's 'life skills' programme, taught by subject specialists, covers a wide range of themes that help to promote the physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing of pupils.
6. Leaders encourage pupils to take on responsibilities within school and the opportunities for leadership occur at every age. Pupils can contribute their ideas on the school through various forums and have influenced changes, for example, to the school uniform and the rewards system for good behaviour. Pupils demonstrate a sense of commitment towards the school community.
7. The safeguarding team respond appropriately to any safeguarding concerns and support pupils affected by these. They maintain regular and effective links with external agencies. Staff understand the importance of safeguarding, their responsibility to report concerns, and how to implement the school's procedures.

The extent to which the school meets the Standards

- Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance are met.
- Standards relating to the quality of education, training and recreation are met.
- Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing are met.
- Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society are met.
- Standards relating to safeguarding are met.

Recommended next steps

Leaders should:

- ensure that teaching consistently features high expectations of the pupils and challenges them to think deeply so that they learn as effectively as possible and make consistently good progress.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

8. The school's leaders convey a clear vision of what they want to achieve, centred around their declared aims and the school's Christian ethos. In recent years, they have put in place a number of strategies to drive the school further forward, and the positive impact of these can already be seen, especially in the academic sphere.
9. The governors maintain effective oversight of the school through a system of committees with specific responsibilities. They check that the school's leaders have all the necessary skills and knowledge and carry out their responsibilities successfully so that the school consistently meets the Standards. Governors review the published policies annually and meet regularly with leaders, staff and pupils.
10. Leaders understand their responsibilities to manage risk and make effective use of external consultants to guide them in their identification and mitigation of risk. Staff are trained on how to complete risk assessments and use an online form to guide them through the process. Risk assessments identify potential risks thoroughly and then explain how these will be controlled. All risk assessments are signed off by senior staff and the process is reviewed by leaders and governors annually.
11. There is effective leadership of boarding. Leaders ensure that boarding staff receive appropriate training for their role and that boarding facilities are suitable and secure. Leaders ensure that effective co-ordination exists between all pastoral leaders. Communication between the medical team, teaching staff and pastoral staff is frequent and professional. Leaders prioritise the safety and security of boarders and there are frequent individual meetings with pupils to assess their wellbeing.
12. Leaders' effective self-evaluation provides them with a clear understanding of what the school's successes and areas for improvement are. They have a clear focus on achieving the best outcomes for all pupils. Leaders ensure that there are clear and well-defined systems in place for monitoring the performance of departments. In addition to a forensic analysis of examination results, leaders carry out regular scrutiny of work, surveys of pupils' thoughts and learning walks. They have introduced new systems for assessment and monitoring pupils' progress, developing a common framework across departments.
13. Leaders implement a suitable complaints policy effectively. They respond suitably and within published timescales to any complaints that are submitted, with an attempt to understand and resolve concerns at an early stage. Leaders maintain a suitable record of complaints and any actions taken as a result of these.
14. Leaders provide parents with all required and other helpful information about the school through their website. Parents receive regular reports on their children's progress and attainment. Leaders provide the local authority with the required information relating to any pupils who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan whom they fund.
15. Leaders ensure that the school meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, including by treating pupils equally and not discriminating against them in any way. Leaders implement a suitable and detailed accessibility plan which identifies clear actions designed to enable any pupils with a disability to access the premises, the curriculum and pertinent information about the school. They

liaise effectively with external agencies, including with regard to support for pupils who have SEND and, when appropriate, those affected by safeguarding concerns.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance

16. All the relevant Standards are met.

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

17. The school's leaders and governors provide a curriculum that covers all required areas of learning and support pupils in their studies with a range of appropriate resources. The curriculum for creative and practical subjects in particular is planned to enable pupils to develop an extensive range of skills.
18. School leaders have put in place policies and procedures that include a central emphasis on advancing pupils' progress and attainment. This approach, with its more specific and precise character than previously, is based around the effective and regular use of data and is helping this progress to be made. Whilst last year's results at A level were not quite as expected, the overall trend at both GCSE and A level is for pupils to achieve grades that are above national averages. The evidence from the regular points of assessment over the year indicates that pupils across the school are making steady progress in line with their abilities.
19. Teaching features careful planning and effective use of resources, including online materials. Teachers apply their good subject knowledge to explain sophisticated concepts clearly. Teachers utilise effective teaching strategies that lead to typically successful outcomes in pupils' learning. Staff typically manage the behaviour of pupils in their lessons effectively so that pupils remain focused. Staff maintain a relationship with pupils that is based on mutual respect and promotes a positive learning environment.
20. In most lessons effective teaching leads to pupils making good progress. However, in some less successful lessons, teaching does not feature sufficient challenge or high enough expectations to prevent a loss of focus and momentum, leading to progress that is more limited.
21. In most subjects, teachers provide pupils with helpful and constructive feedback that helps increase their confidence and understanding. They provide them with clear targets for development. Pupils make use of comments to further improve their work.
22. Leaders of provision for pupils who have SEND use effective assessment to identify any specific learning needs that pupils might have when they join the school. This identification of need informs individual education plans which contain clear targets for pupils' next steps and identify strategies for teaching staff to use to enable pupils who have SEND to meet these. Consequently, pupils who have SEND make good progress and achieve well in public examinations.
23. Staff assess the language needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) carefully. They provide effective support when it is required so that these pupils make good progress with their development of English skills and comprehension.
24. Pupils across all years engage in the wide range of activities that are available. The provision of a timetabled lesson during the school day for the co-curricular programme enables pupils to develop further skills in areas such as leadership, creativity and physical development. There are opportunities for pupils to broaden their academic knowledge through subject-based activities and to participate in national competitions in areas such as science, mathematics, drama, English and food technology. The school organises a variety of trips at home and abroad to support pupils' studies. Those pupils in boarding benefit from the school's facilities in the evenings and at weekends, as well as opportunities to go out on trips. Boarders discuss with staff what they can do with their recreational time, and this helps develop their independence. They also improve their physical and musical skills through the activities available.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to the quality of education, training and recreation

25. All the relevant Standards are met.

Section 3: Pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing

26. Leaders have recently broadened the broad physical education (PE) programme to further develop pupils' understanding of the importance of maintaining physical health. Alongside the provision of competitive team sports, pupils learn through the programme that physical activity develops new skills and improves their health. Pupils learn new sports and develop a greater understanding of the benefits of health-related exercise. The current PE and sports programme is in its initial stages, but is already effective. It is enhanced by the physical activities within the co-curricular programme.
27. The school promotes the development of pupils' self-confidence and wellbeing through both the curriculum and the wider opportunities made available in their daily life. Pupils take responsibility for suggesting new clubs and activities and set about organising them, encouraging their sense of independence. The 'life skills' programme, which includes personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, has three strands to it: living in the wider world, relationships and sex education (RSE), and health and wellbeing. Within these weekly lessons, teaching covers topics such as resilience, aspiration and self-esteem, all of which develop pupils' sense of self-worth.
28. In 'life skills', teaching encourages pupils to contribute their own ideas to the lessons and makes use of a range of resources to enhance their learning. Supporting pupils with their wellbeing is a central element of the teaching, through topics such as emotional literacy and coping with anxiety and stress. These themes help develop pupils' self-understanding and ability to deal with everyday life.
29. Leaders and governors have consulted with parents in the development of the RSE curriculum and publish in advance the course content. Teaching presents the topics at a level appropriate to pupils' age, from forming positive friendships, the many types of relationship and how some of these can become unhealthy ones, through to contraception and sexual harassment. Teaching stresses the importance of individuals being in control and avoiding external pressures that might be put upon them. Consequently, pupils understand how to recognise warning signs in relationships and ask for support when required.
30. The school helps to develop in pupils an understanding of social and cultural knowledge, building on work in the creative subjects. Pupils' spiritual awareness is developed through teaching about a range of different religions and faiths and through the central ethos of love and service, which takes place in their lessons and in weekly assemblies. From this emerges a sense of community that pervades the school and gives it a particular character, in which pupils can feel comfortable and confident to develop their own individuality.
31. The premises and accommodation provide a suitable and appropriate physical environment for pupils to play and learn. The school implements a systematic programme of checks and maintenance across the site. Leaders and governors monitor the effectiveness of health and safety arrangements, closely informed by advice from external specialist consultants.
32. The school has put in place suitable fire safety arrangements. Staff receive regular training on the procedures to follow in case of an emergency and the use of fire-fighting equipment. External reviews are undertaken to check on fire safety measures and every building has a suitable fire risk assessment. Fire evacuation drills take place each term alongside personal evacuation plans when needed.

33. There are suitable procedures in place for medical care during the school day. There is a school nurse on site and all staff receive training in first aid. The facilities for pupils who are sick or injured are appropriate and the nurse liaises closely with pastoral staff on matters of both physical and mental health.
34. Leaders ensure effective supervision of pupils during both the school day and during boarding hours through a clear day-duty rota. Two members of staff are always on duty during boarding hours, with another member of staff on call.
35. The accommodation for boarders is well maintained, both in respect of the sleeping areas and bathrooms and in the communal areas. Staff liaise regularly with the nurse over medical matters and keep a log of medicines provided to boarders. There is appropriate access to external medical professionals when needed. Fire practices are held regularly, including at night, and records of these are kept. Appropriate fire notices and equipment are clearly displayed in the boarding houses.
36. The school ensures that the school's admission and attendance registers are maintained in accordance with current statutory requirements. Leaders inform the local authority of any pupils leaving or joining the school at non-standard times of transition.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing

- 37. All the relevant Standards are met.**

Section 4: Pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society

38. The school promotes pupils' understanding of moral principles and the differences between right and wrong through the curriculum and the wider ethos of the school. Pupils explore and debate ethical themes, such as abortion and the death penalty. Different departments also contribute to the teaching of these themes, often by relating their subject to relevant current issues, for example in history, where pupils explore the role of women in different eras and the different perceptions of social class across the centuries.
39. Pupils develop their understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity through learning about issues of racism and other forms of prejudice and discrimination, and about the dangers of stereotyping and how this can promote disrespect and unfair treatment. Themes of human rights are discussed in the 'life skills' curriculum, as well as in other subjects, such as geography. Pupils learn about themes such as the way that people's individual rights also bring responsibilities with them. Pupils learn about society's treatment of different groups, such as through studying *The Other Side of Truth*, which looks at the life of Nigerian refugees who have fled to London.
40. The school encourages pupils to think about the wider local and international community. Pupils work together to raise funds for a variety of charities, through events ranging from baking cakes to 'rag weeks'. Pupils volunteer on a weekly basis to support a local food and clothing bank.
41. The school's leaders encourage pupils, including boarders, to develop social skills of cohesion and teamwork across the year groups, through a variety of opportunities. There are competitions between the houses, which the pupils organise and lead. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme (DofE) activities require pupils to work together successfully to complete their expeditions.
42. The school teaches pupils the principles of living in a democratic society and the concepts of justice, law and order. They gain further understanding about these through debates and occasions such as elections for prefects. The 'life skills' programme includes topics on the law and the criminal justice system. It looks at current problems connected to gangs and raises pupils' awareness of issues such as county lines. The school's leaders ensure that any political discussion is presented in an impartial manner, and that external speakers and their materials are always vetted carefully before their arrival in school.
43. The school provides pupils with effective careers guidance from Year 7 upwards. The older pupils experience a range of higher education events, including fairs, talks and interviews. They meet with potential employers and take part in work experience placements, often enabled by the school's alumni. Pupils receive individual sessions to discuss their future plans and are given impartial advice on the different options available to them, including apprenticeships and university application. Past leavers have chosen both these options, as well as others such as direct employment.
44. Leaders provide a range of opportunities for pupils to develop leadership skills. There are a number of roles available, ranging from form captains to prefects, in the different sections of the school. Pupils take on responsibility for specific areas, such as charities and drama. A pupil forum meets regularly and is an opportunity for any pupil to attend and put forward ideas about the school. These meetings have resulted in changes such as the move towards a gender-free uniform, the move of 'life skills' lessons into the timetabled curriculum and changes to the rewards and sanctions system.

45. The school promotes pupils' economic awareness, from considering the concepts of want and needs in the younger years, to looking at student loans, taxation and mortgages with senior pupils.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society

46. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

47. The safeguarding policy on the school's website is comprehensive in its coverage, reflects current statutory guidance and is implemented effectively.
48. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and others with designated safeguarding responsibilities are suitably trained for their roles. They respond quickly and effectively whenever any safeguarding concerns are raised, including by liaising with relevant external agencies and, when the situation requires it, referring concerns to them. The DSL maintains appropriate records of safeguarding concerns that have arisen and the school's responses to these. The school implements effective procedures, including with regard to any allegations or low-level concerns about staff.
49. Governors receive appropriate safeguarding training and monitor the safeguarding policy and procedures effectively. They do this through formal meetings each term between the governor with specific responsibility for safeguarding and the school's team, as well as through regular informal contact. There is an annual formal review of safeguarding, which involves talking with pupils and staff. Safeguarding is always an agenda item for governors' meetings.
50. Staff, including those with boarding responsibilities, receive regular safeguarding training, including detailed training at induction. As a result, staff understand the school's procedures and the importance of adhering to them and remaining alert to any possible safeguarding issues.
51. There are robust systems in place to monitor and filter pupils' access to the internet and any concerns are reported immediately. Pupils receive guidance on keeping themselves safe, including when online, and have a number of ways to express any concerns they might have.
52. All required suitability checks are carried out before any adults commence work at the school. These checks are accurately and fully recorded in the single central record of appointments, which is regularly scrutinised by governors.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

- 53. All the relevant Standards are met.**

School details

School	Luckley House School
Department for Education number	872/6000
Registered charity number	309099
Address	Luckley House School Luckley Road Wokingham Berkshire RG40 3EU
Phone number	0118 978 4175
Email address	office@luckleyhouseschool.org
Website	www.luckleyhouseschool.org
Proprietor	Luckley House School Ltd
Chair	Mrs Claire Tao
Headteacher	Mrs Areti Bizior
Age range	11 to 19
Number of pupils	377
Number of boarding pupils	28
Date of previous inspection	1 July 2024

Information about the school

54. Luckley House School is a co-educational, independent day and boarding school situated in Wokingham. Luckley School was founded as a school for female pupils in 1918 on the same site as today. Oakfield School, a school with similar characteristics, was established in the Lake District in 1895. The two schools were amalgamated on the Wokingham site in 1959 and continued as Luckley-Oakfield School until 2013, when its name changed to Luckley House School. The school became co-educational in 2015. It is a charitable company overseen by a board of governors.
55. Boarders are accommodated in two boarding houses situated on the main school site.
56. The school has identified 141 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Very few pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
57. English is an additional language for 26 pupils.
58. The school states its aims are to enable pupils to reach their potential within a secure and caring community and equip them with the qualifications, skills and attributes they need to succeed in an ever-changing world. The school seeks to promote high aspirations and offer a wide range of intellectual, cultural and sporting activities, in order to encourage independence of thought, intellectual curiosity, ambition and resilience. The school intends there to be a central ethos of love and service.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

3 to 5 December 2024

59. A team of five inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

60. Inspection activities included:

- observation of lessons, some in conjunction with school leaders
- observation of registration periods and assemblies
- observation of a sample of extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection
- discussions with the chair and other governors
- discussions with the head, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils
- visits to the learning support area and facilities for physical education
- visits to boarding houses accompanied by pupils and staff
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

61. The inspection team considered the views of pupils, members of staff and parents who responded to ISI's pre-inspection surveys.

How are association independent schools in England inspected?

- The Department for Education is the regulator for independent schools in England.
- ISI is approved by the Secretary of State for Education to inspect independent schools in England, which are members of associations in membership of the Independent Schools Council.
- ISI inspections report to the Department for Education on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards, the EYFS statutory framework requirements, the National Minimum Standards for boarding schools and any other relevant standards are met.
- For more information, please visit **www.isi.net**.

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