



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
LEIGHTON PARK SCHOOL**

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Leighton Park School

Full Name of School	Leighton Park School		
DfE Number	870/6001		
Registered Charity Number	309144		
Address	Leighton Park School Shinfield Road Reading Berkshire RG2 7ED		
Telephone Number	0118 9879600		
Fax Number	0118 9879625		
Email Address	info@leightonpark.com		
Head	Nigel Williams		
Chair of Governors	Jeff Beatty		
Age Range	11 to 18		
Total Number of Pupils	474		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (310 boys; 164 girls)		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	5-11:	
	3-5 (EYFS):	11-18:	474
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	327	
Number of Boarders	Total:	147	
	Full:	101	Weekly: 46
Inspection Dates	18 Nov 2014 to 21 Nov 2014		

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in November 2010.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, can be viewed on the website www.legislation.gov.uk. Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

The inspection was also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This inspection contains specific judgements on the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection and evaluates the quality of the boarding experience and its contribution to pupils' education, personal development and welfare. Until September 2011, Boarding inspections were carried out by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills.

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, although inspectors comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment law.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to in the published report but will have been considered by the team in reaching their judgements.

Both Ofsted and ISI inspect and report on the Independent School Standards Regulations. However, they apply different frameworks and have different criteria for judging school quality that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. Both use a four point scale when making judgements of quality but, whilst the ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by Ofsted, they also reflect the differences in approach. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement on each aspect of the school's work at the beginning of each section. These headline statements must include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory', and where Achievement is 'exceptional' that term may be used for the top grade. Elsewhere in the report, inspectors may use a range of different adjectives to make judgements. For EYFS registered provision (for pupils aged under three), reports are required to use the same terminology ('outstanding', 'good', 'requires improvement' and 'inadequate') as Ofsted reports.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of governors/the proprietor/a governors' representative/governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited boarding houses and the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Bill Burn	Reporting Inspector
Mr David Bell	Team Inspector (Former Head, ISA School)
Mrs Joanne Stone-Williams	Team Inspector (Former Assistant Head, ISA School)
Mr Jeremy Gladwin	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding (Head, HMC School)
Mrs Denise Hammersley	Team Inspector for Boarding (Deputy Principal, ISA School)
Ms Katherine Haynes	Team Inspector (Head, HMC School)
Mrs Lynne Horner	Team Inspector (Head, Society of Heads School)
Mr Matthew Judd	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, HMC school)
Dr Richard Brookes	Director of Teaching and Learning, HMC school)

CONTENTS

1	THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL	1
2	THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL	2
(a)	Main findings	2
(b)	Action points	3
	(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	3
	(ii) Recommendations for further improvement	3
3	THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS	4
(a)	The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning	4
(b)	The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)	5
(c)	The contribution of teaching	6
4	THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	7
(a)	The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils	7
(b)	The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care	8
(c)	The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety	8
(d)	The quality of boarding	9
5	THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	11
(a)	The quality of governance	11
(b)	The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians	11

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Leighton Park is located on the southern outskirts of Reading in Berkshire. It was founded in 1890 by the Religious Society of Friends, or Quakers, to be a boarding school for boys and it has broadened in succeeding years, admitting day boys in 1930, 11 and 12 year olds in 1985, and girls throughout the school in 1993. It aims to enable young people to grow and develop as open, honest and a force for good. Its education places Quaker testimonies at the heart of all it does, valuing truth, justice, peace, integrity, equality and simplicity. Environmental awareness and global citizenship are now also high priorities. The school encourages its pupils to be reflective about their beliefs and values, both as individuals and as a community. The proprietors of the school are the Leighton Park Trust, whose trustees are directors of the company and governors of the school.
- 1.2 Pupils in Years 7 and 8 join the junior house and then move to one of four senior houses, which are all mixed and which all include both boarders and day pupils. One-fifth of the pupils come from overseas, and they represent 20 different nationalities.
- 1.3 Since the previous integrated inspection in 2010, the school has appointed a new headteacher, and there have been significant changes in both the structure and the personnel of the senior leadership team.
- 1.4 There are 474 pupils aged from 11 to 18, 310 boys and 164 girls. There are 327 day pupils, and a total of 147 boarders, of whom 101 are full boarders, 33 are weekly boarders, and 13 board on a flexible basis. Tests administered by the school show that the ability of pupils at entry is above the national average, including to the sixth form. One hundred and twenty-one pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and 75 receive support from the school. Fifty-six pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) and receive tuition to support them. No pupils have a statement of special educational needs.
- 1.5 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Pupils achieve a good academic standard benefiting from excellent curricular provision and a wide range of opportunities beyond the classroom. They are increasingly achieving success in national competitions in mathematics, in music, drama, debating and games; and they bring a positive and thoughtful attitude to their learning. The school makes effective provision for all groups of pupils to do equally well, through its careful teaching of pupils with particular educational or language needs. The flexibility of the curriculum ensures an appropriate range of subjects up to GCSE and an option to follow the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme as an alternative to A level. Teaching, and especially marking and assessment, is sound overall but, especially in challenging the full range of abilities and in effective marking, is inconsistent in meeting the needs of all the pupils.
- 2.2 Pupils are confident and assertive, but also respectful, and they embrace the school's distinctive Quaker ethos. The high quality of the relationships throughout the school exemplifies its values, and is characterised by a particular understanding of what it means to be part of a community, based on equality and mutual respect. The notion of service, too, is central to the school, and manifested in community service, fundraising, and also in everyday behaviour. Pupils' personal development is excellent, and they fulfil the school's aim to educate young people to have integrity and honesty, and be a force for good. They see the appropriate behaviour modelled by the adults in the community, and benefit from outstanding support, guidance and care.
- 2.3 Governance, leadership and management support the school's aims effectively. Recent reviews have led to the establishment of a committee structure for the governing body to enable it to monitor both statutory compliance and the quality and direction of the school's educational provision. Senior leaders in the school have a clear sense of the school's current needs, and are acting to address them, while also exemplifying the qualities which the school seeks to promote. Previous inspection recommendations have all been fully met, with the exception of engaging the full attention of pupils.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

- 2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.
- 2.5 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2013.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Ensure that all houses adopt and implement consistently the most effective management practices already in existence within boarding.
 2. Ensure that all teaching challenges all pupils to perform as highly as possible.
 3. Ensure that marking of pupils' work is used consistently well to enhance their learning and progress.
 4. Establish a regular system of reviewing and updating policies and the effectiveness of their implementation.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

3.(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is good.
- 3.2 Pupils receive a good quality of education in accordance with the school's aims for a broad and holistic learning experience, whereby pupils develop strong values and an appreciation of the value of learning, and achieve academic success.
- 3.3 Pupils demonstrate good subject knowledge, skills and understanding. They show good reasoning skills when explaining their work and ideas, or when challenging the views of others. They are very articulate and can express themselves with great confidence in speaking and writing. Their listening and reading skills are well developed. They make effective use of mathematics to enhance their understanding of other subjects, as seen in a Year 8 geography class, where the drawing of climate graphs deepened their understanding. They benefit from the growth of good practical skills in science. Pupils throughout the school achieve individual recognition in regional and national competitions in mathematics. Numbers gaining gold and silver awards, and those qualifying for the next round, of the Senior and Intermediate Maths Challenge have steadily and significantly increased over the past four years.
- 3.4 Pupils of all ages demonstrate strong creative skills, performing to a high standard in and beyond the classroom, for example in several jazz bands and in producing some excellent ceramic artefacts. Many pupils have gained high grades in music theory and practical examinations, while individuals have participated in orchestras at a national level. The pupils' physical skills develop well, with pupils competing at regional and national levels in a variety of sports including trampolining, swimming, hockey and rugby. Large numbers of pupils gain recognition through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme (DofE) at bronze and silver levels.
- 3.5 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2011 to 2013. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are available. Results at GCSE have been above the national average for maintained schools. The A-level results over the same period have been above the national average for maintained schools and similar to that for maintained selective schools. International Baccalaureate (IB) results have been above the world-wide average and similar to the UK average. Results for the IB in 2011 and 2012 were higher than in 2013, being well above the world-wide average and also above the UK average.
- 3.6 Progress is good overall. Inspection evidence shows that at all levels, girls and boys make similar progress in relation to their starting points. Analyses of results show that up to GCSE, progress is good. This is supported by inspection evidence from lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work, discussions and examination of the school's own attainment records. In the sixth form, progress is in line with the level expected for the pupils' abilities at entry, and there has been a slight decline in the last three years.
- 3.7 Analyses and observation show that pupils who have SEND and EAL make good progress, thanks to the support that they receive. More able pupils generally make good progress in relation to their starting points, but in 2014, in a significant minority of cases, their GCSE results fell below the levels expected.

3.8 Pupils generally have positive attitudes to work. In most classes, they settle quickly to work and listen to one another respectfully; in a small minority of lessons, however, some are restless and relatively inattentive. Pupils' written work is generally well organised and adequately presented. Pupils generally work well together, and also do so independently when given the opportunity.

3.(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision

3.9 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.

3.10 The curricular provision is excellent, and the extra-curricular provision is of high quality, supporting the school's aims and meeting the diverse needs of the pupils. Throughout the school, the curriculum provides excellent coverage of the mathematical, creative, scientific, aesthetic and practical spheres of study underpinned by the holistic school values. The extra-curricular provision includes an extensive range of activities and trips for all ages. This confirms the very positive view of the curriculum given by the overwhelming majority of parent and pupil responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire.

3.11 Personal, social, health and careers education (PSHCE) is well integrated within the curriculum and the pastoral system, reflects the school's aims, and is delivered by form tutors and specialist staff. The scheme is well planned, but the quality of its delivery is inconsistent. The curriculum for Years 9 to 11 has recently been changed and pupils now benefit from its increased range and flexibility, as well as from a study skills course. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the school's innovative linguistics-based introduction to languages in Year 7 which leads to Mandarin and Spanish options, with French introduced in Year 8. Pupils study a broad and balanced range of subjects to GCSE, including compulsory religious studies. In the sixth form, pupils select options from a wide range of A-level courses or undertake the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme.

3.12 Pupils with SEND and EAL benefit from very effective individual learning provision. This is supported by weekly one-to-one sessions with one of six specialist teachers. Individual learning plans, drawn up in consultation with the pupils, give appropriate and specific targets to enable pupils to develop their learning skills. More able pupils are increasingly extended in the sixth form by the Extended Project Qualification.

3.13 Pupils enjoy cross-curricular projects that encourage wider reading and independent research. Within those projects, philanthropic and fundraising activities reflect the ethos of the school, encouraging pupils to care for others in the wider community. Careers provision is effectively planned and fully integrated in the PSHCE programme and pastoral system.

3.14 The range of extra-curricular activity is diverse: drama, sport, music, debating, cake decoration, animation, bridge and chess all enrich the pupils' lives. The quality, planning and monitoring of the programme is highly effective, with pupils consulted termly to ensure that their views are taken into account.

3.15 The school has strong links with the local community, and community service contributes strongly to pupils' learning. Pupils from other schools in the area attend music workshops and concerts, there is a good programme of guest speakers, and links are strengthened further by library-based activities such as film festivals and reading groups.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.16 The contribution of teaching is sound.
- 3.17 Most teaching enables pupils to make good progress. It is characterised by good subject knowledge and the use of a suitable variety of teaching methods. Relations between teachers and pupils are generally excellent, reflected in a positive atmosphere in lessons. Teaching makes good use of an appropriate range of learning resources, such as graphical calculators in mathematics or internet searching to support individual learning in a number of subjects. Simple aids such as individual small whiteboards are also used to good effect, allowing the teacher to check on the progress that individuals make during the lesson.
- 3.18 In most cases, teaching is well planned, taking proper account of the different learning needs of the pupils. In the best examples, teachers make clear the learning objectives of the lesson, sharing them with the pupils and checking periodically to make sure that they are being met. Most teaching makes good use of time and offers appropriate challenge to the range of pupils in the class. As a result, those who have SEND or EAL make good progress. Teaching supports the school's aim of fostering a greater independence in learning. All pupils benefit from the school's "Approaches to Learning" programme, developing study skills. Able pupils also benefit from opportunities to extend their knowledge and skills in extra sessions and through additional targeted reading.
- 3.19 In a very small minority of lessons, teaching is less successful. In such cases, time is not well used, and work is not always challenging enough, so that focus is lost and the pace of learning is slow, including for the most able. As a result, some pupils lose interest and, in isolated cases where this leads to low-level disruption, it impedes learning. The previous inspection's recommendation to 'ensure pupils are engaged and attentive throughout all lessons' has not been fully met in such cases. In the pre-inspection survey, a small minority of pupils, and a few parents, felt that homework did not help with learning, and inspectors found that pupils' exercise books and files often contained a limited volume and range of written tasks.
- 3.20 Assessment has shown some improvement since the previous inspection, but is still not being used consistently well in all teaching. The school uses a range of tests and other programmes to assess how well pupils are doing against their peers nationally. As a result, pupils who have SEND or EAL are identified and their needs set out in individual learning plans. Most teaching is based on these plans, but some takes insufficient account of them when preparing or delivering lessons.
- 3.21 The school also collects internal information about each pupil's attainments over time, sets targets for them and monitors progress against them. Pupils attach great importance to their effort and achievement grades, which are shared with parents. Against this, marking is inconsistent in its quality and impact. The scrutiny of work shows that where it is effective, marking is frequent and regular, with work being returned quickly with clear written guidelines on its strengths and how it could be improved. In contrast, some marking is infrequent and cursory, with few written comments to guide improvement.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

4.(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 Pupils' personal qualities develop well in accordance with the aims of the school to learn high standards of integrity and honesty as well as espousing the values of peace, equality, truth, justice, global citizenship and sustainable development. As a result, pupils have a very high standard of personal development by the time that they leave the school.
- 4.3 Pupils demonstrate emotional maturity by the time they leave the school. They are confident and assertive, courteous and self-aware, and show a strong awareness of the priorities of Quaker thinking. They question things which they find unfair or inadequate. They say that these priorities are reinforced by the annual Quaker Schools Week and are enthusiastic about the activities which take place, such as an austerity lunch, a pilgrimage and the production of a film promoting peace. Pupils also readily understand and explain the significance of the Meeting for Worship, a weekly school event emphasising reflection and personal testimony. The parkland environment, enhanced by pupils' art and ceramics, also makes a distinctive contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
- 4.4 The great majority of pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong, and show respect for the norms of good behaviour. They develop their understanding of moral dilemmas in a range of lessons, as seen in a debate on moral decisions faced by two characters in a novel being studied in Year 7, in a discussion of issues about old age in a drama lesson, and in a purposeful consideration of the effects of organ transplants in science. Pupils develop an understanding of the over-arching nature of the criminal and civil law of England, and on occasions of the conflicts that may result.
- 4.5 Pupils are socially responsible, generally accommodating differences in others and supporting them emotionally and practically. The well-constructed PSHE programme includes formal instruction on the public institutions and services of England. Pupils embrace with enthusiasm links to primary schools which enable them to run activities using the school's grounds and facilities, and they relish the opportunities to enhance their collaborative and leadership skills. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small minority of pupils felt they did not have enough opportunity to take responsibility. Inspectors judge that the ethos of the school avoids hierarchical structures, and that responsibility therefore extends beyond formal office. Pupils understand that they have responsibilities towards those less fortunate than themselves. A pupil-led sixth-form group successfully oversees the links the school has made with four African countries, with one-third of all sixth-form pupils contributing personal energy and skills to the biennial Africa trip based on development projects. The sum raised in 2013 exceeded £30,000. Younger pupils recently launched a fundraising activity for a charity which promotes peace-building initiatives across the world. Within the school, younger pupils speak very highly of the sixth-form peer mentoring scheme, which involves over 50 senior pupils. They have been trained, and are supported effectively, by senior staff.
- 4.6 Pupils have a good understanding of, and respect for, the achievements of those from cultures and faiths other than their own. At the same time they also develop an awareness of the Western cultural tradition. Through the school's even-handed

emphasis, pupils develop an understanding of the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance.

4.(b) The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care

- 4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.8 Staff provide very effective support and guidance in line with the school's aims. Teachers know their pupils very well, and relationships between teachers and pupils are very good, in line with the aims of the school. The system of small tutor groups is strong. Tutors have an overall responsibility for the welfare and development of pupils. Academic, behavioural and welfare issues are all recorded and plans developed for pupils who cause concern.
- 4.9 Pupils appreciate the need to keep healthy through regular exercise and diet. The quality of the food provided is excellent, and there is plentiful guidance on healthy eating. Pupils also enjoy a wide range of opportunities to exercise in either competitive or recreational games.
- 4.10 The school is effective in promoting good behaviour and guarding against harassment and bullying. Policies and procedures meet requirements. Pupils understand the school's anti-bullying policy to be one of zero tolerance, and believe that the school would deal promptly and constructively with any instances. Pupils were clear, too, that any victim of bullying would be supported effectively by staff and pupils. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, a minority of pupils expressed concern that teachers were inconsistent in the way they applied the school's reward and sanctions arrangements. Inspectors found that there is some support for this view.
- 4.11 In the pre-inspection survey, a small minority of pupils suggested that the school took insufficient account of their views. Inspectors found that the formal structure for consulting the pupils is well developed, and includes a safeguarding council, a food council, house councils and the school's monthly meeting. Furthermore, excellent relationships make it easy for views to be expressed informally.
- 4.12 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND, and effectively supports pupils with additional needs.

4.(c) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety

- 4.13 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is good.
- 4.14 Welfare, health and safety practice makes a proper contribution to pupils' personal development. The arrangements for safeguarding of pupils in the school are highly effective on a day-to-day basis. Deficiencies in the written policy identified prior to the inspection were quickly and thoroughly remedied and the policy now meets the latest guidance, is published on the school website, and more accurately reflects the good practice that is already in operation within the school. The safeguarding policy is known by all staff, and there are strong links with the local children's social care services. Any child protection issues arising have been dealt with appropriately and include early referrals according to the needs of pupils. The senior person in charge of safeguarding matters has been taking part in a range of inter-agency dialogues concerning the needs of pupils attending the school. The staff are all fully aware of their responsibilities and all have received the appropriate training. Recruitment checks on all staff are thorough, and accurately recorded.

- 4.15 Health and safety policies and procedures promote a safe environment for pupils. All necessary measures are taken to reduce risk from fire and other hazards, including holding termly fire drills in both day and boarding time, undertaking a fire risk assessment, and carrying out regular checks and maintenance of equipment. Fire evacuation procedures and exits are clearly indicated around the school. All checks are carefully documented with comments and action points where necessary. Thorough risk assessments are carried out on premises and before curriculum activities and school trips. Medical care of all pupils who are injured or ill is effective.
- 4.16 All attendance and admission registers are maintained accurately and records are suitably maintained and stored.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.17 The quality of boarding is good.
- 4.18 Boarders are friendly, well-rounded, considerate and give freely of their opinions. They have access to the outside world through a variety of media. They understand and value the Quaker ethos of the school and they are part of a caring and mutually supportive community. They enjoy life in the family atmosphere of the houses and show strong loyalty to them and to the dedicated teams of staff that run them.
- 4.19 Induction of new pupils is effective, welcoming pupils of all faiths and cultures and embracing this diversity. Many boarders acknowledge the opportunity that boarding gives them to develop their social skills within this diverse group. While integration of some nationalities is not uniformly successful, the school is supportive and takes steps to seek to encourage the fullest participation in school life.
- 4.20 Boarders' behaviour is good and they show respect for their built and natural environments as well as for those with whom they live. In some houses, prefects are active and support effectively the running of the house, but differences in practice and in the number in each house means that this is not true in all houses. The work of peer mentors is generally excellent.
- 4.21 The quality of provision and care for boarders is good. Pupils' and parents' responses to questions about boarding in the pre-inspection questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive. Boarders feel safe and secure and get on well with one another. Their individual welfare is well supported by a strong team of housemasters, deputy housemasters, matrons, residents and tutors, who are effectively inducted and trained, and who benefit from well-established pastoral structures to enable good communication.
- 4.22 The school has met in full the recommendation of the previous inspection to improve the weekend activity programme, which boarders enjoy and value, and which is now attracting some day pupils as well. Boarders especially enjoy cultural and sporting trips as well as activities such as paint balling, go-karting, bowling and shopping.
- 4.23 Boarders have access to excellent medical care and this represents an improvement on the previous report. The health centre is well equipped and run by a team of well-qualified and caring nurses, who adopt appropriate protocols and provide overnight supervision if required. Communication with house matrons is excellent and all information is recorded appropriately. Boarders have access to doctors, ophthalmic and dental services as well as a counsellor and an independent listener.

- 4.24 Boarders benefit from good facilities, including those for recreation. All houses are mixed and boys and girls are appropriately and securely segregated. A significant minority of questionnaires indicated dissatisfaction with the food for boarders and with the provision of snacks, but scrutiny of menus, sampling meals and conversation with pupils did not support this.
- 4.25 The boarding accommodation varies in quality. The school has a programme of refurbishment to address this disparity of provision. While bedrooms and common rooms meet the required standard, in some houses, bathroom facilities and decorative order are in need of updating. Pupils can easily communicate with parents by telephone or the Internet.
- 4.26 The school's procedures for ensuring the welfare and safeguarding of boarders are good. The school has responded effectively to the requirements in the boarding intermediate inspection report of 2012 to develop more efficient systems for monitoring key welfare matters such as training in safeguarding, fire safety and first aid, and the drawing up of risk assessments. Likewise all appropriate checks to ensure safe recruitment are carried out and suitably recorded.
- 4.27 All boarders have people to whom they can turn for support and guidance when necessary. Recording of welfare concerns and care plans responds to the school's policy, although the computer network is reported to be unreliable. Pupils are confident that the rare examples of bullying are dealt with effectively. The policy on sanctions and rewards is not always communicated clearly to pupils, and its implementation across the houses lacks consistency.
- 4.28 The leadership of boarding is good and in line with the stated aims of the school. Two senior staff oversee boarding provision, with responsibilities which are evolving within the new management structure. Communication between houses and within house teams is regular and effective, with meetings appropriately recorded and action plans developed. The housemasters conduct their own evaluation of their houses and develop targets for improvement.
- 4.29 The boarding houses are characterised by positive relationships and the school's Quaker ethos is embedded in the kindness and thoughtfulness shown by boarders. Boarding is a centrally important and well-regarded part of the school.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 The governing body provide generally effective oversight of the school, although they have yet to address fully standards of teaching and learning, and the safeguarding policy was found to be in need of updating. They ensure that the school's aims and objectives always keep its distinctive Quaker ethos firmly in view. The majority of its members are Quakers, and their influence is evident in the pattern of formal meetings for worship, in the spiritual development of the pupils, and in the way in which members of the Leighton Park community treat one another.
- 5.3 An effective new committee structure enables them to monitor more closely welfare, health and safety. The whole governing body carries out the annual review of safeguarding policy and practice. They work in a collaborative way to support the senior managers in the school, giving freely of their time and expertise. They discharge their responsibilities for educational standards, financial planning, and the school's accommodation and resources.
- 5.4 All governors now undergo appropriate training for their roles. They are increasingly effective in monitoring how the school meets statutory requirements. They are obtaining a good insight into the work of the school by being linked formally to academic departments. Governors are increasingly accessible to parents and visible at public events.
- 5.5 The school has responded effectively to the recommendations of the previous boarding inspection, but has not fully met the recommendations of the previous integrated inspection in respect of challenge in teaching and use of marking to enhance pupils' learning.

5.(b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians

- 5.6 The quality of leadership and management is good.
- 5.7 Leadership and management are effective in promoting the aims of the school, which are largely met. The senior leadership structure has been streamlined with changes to roles and personnel since the previous inspection. Senior management responsibilities have been re-defined. Senior leaders provide educational direction in accordance with the Quaker ethos, serving to reinforce its distinctive identity and its strong sense of purpose. Pupils' excellent personal development is clearly apparent. In boarding houses the core values of the school are promoted well.
- 5.8 Since the previous inspection, the school has been through a period of considerable change, and both governors and senior leaders have seen it as a priority to restore a sense of stability. They have achieved this and, in addition, they have done much to establish a new sense of direction for the school. The curriculum is now more flexible and so more responsive to the diverse needs of the pupils, and the leadership team has been reduced from thirteen to a core of five, with others added as appropriate. An exhaustive self-evaluation process has enabled the school to identify the school's needs and form a plan to address them, although it is too early

to see the full impact on outcomes for pupils. The school has taken important first steps, among which is the appointment of several new staff to positions in middle management. This accounts for some of the inconsistencies noted between departments and houses. Likewise the school is beginning to use data more effectively for the purposes of target-setting so as to ensure that all pupils' needs are fully assessed and met.

- 5.9 The governors see the central role of senior leaders as exemplifying the attitudes, standards and values they hold to be essential to the community, and in this respect they are highly successful.
- 5.10 The school monitors effectively the quality of the programme of extra-curricular activities, and this makes a significant contribution to pupils' experience in this area.
- 5.11 Senior leaders have a well-developed sense of the school's needs, especially in the area of teaching: they are taking measures to address teaching standards, but these measures have not yet been fully effective. The school has responded effectively to the requirements of the previous boarding inspection report, but has not yet resolved the matter of ensuring that boarding accommodation, and consistency on the matter of sanctions, are all up to the standard of the best, nor has it fully met the recommendations of the previous integrated inspection concerning the degree of challenge in teaching and the effective use of marking to enhance pupils' progress. The school also recognises the need to update the IT network, which will help consistency and communication.
- 5.12 Policies are thorough and mostly well implemented. Effectiveness is not always fully monitored, and there is some inconsistency between policy and practice. Academic departmental management is inconsistent, as was identified in the previous inspection. Monitoring is undertaken within subjects, but marking and teaching standards remain uneven. Pastoral care systems are strong, and result in a happy and supportive school community. Management at all levels plays a significant part in maintaining the caring culture.
- 5.13 Whole school development planning is evident, and priorities are identified. The whole school development plan is articulated to heads of department, and is reflected in departmental planning. The senior leadership team is aware of the need for increased monitoring and prior to inspection had already started to establish strategies to achieve this. Structures have recently been set up to monitor academic subjects and this is welcomed by heads of department.
- 5.14 Staff training needs are identified in appraisal findings, and whole-staff training is well established. There is some effective use of data, so that pupils and departments are set targets for improvement.
- 5.15 Appropriate attention is given to child protection, welfare, health and safety. Thorough systems are in place for the safe recruitment of staff. Recruitment and retention of staff is well conducted and the induction of new staff generally well managed. Senior managers with specific responsibilities for safeguarding, welfare, health and safety are appropriately trained for their roles.
- 5.16 The school has further strengthened links with parents, with formal and informal consultation effective and making increasing use of e-bulletins and social media. Parents of current and prospective pupils are provided with appropriate information about the school. Parents who responded to the pre-inspection survey were highly supportive and appreciative of the school's care of pupils and quality of provision.

- 5.17 The required information for parents is readily available on the website. Information provided to parents is clear and helpful. The complaints procedure is clear and complaints are recorded in accordance with policy. Termly reports provide welcome regular feedback on pupils' progress, targets and achievements. Parents' evenings are well attended, and the recent introduction of additional triangular meetings of parents, pupils and tutors has been successful.

What the school should do to improve is given at the beginning of the report in section 2.