School inspection report

19 to 21 March 2024

Langley School

Langley Park

Loddon

Norwich

NR14 6BJ

Contents

Summary of inspection findings

1. In recent years, leaders have implemented changes to the character of the school community, including boarding, which have had a positive effect on pupils' emotional wellbeing. In particular, the school's values of kindness, integrity, curiosity and confidence with humility, are evident in the daily lives of pupils and staff. This creates a clear sense of mutual trust and inclusivity in which all pupils are valued as individuals.

2. Leaders actively listen to the views of pupils, including boarders. Their consideration of pupils' views plays an important part in the ongoing process of self-evaluation and development planning, in which the priority is the promotion of pupil wellbeing.

3. Governors are effective in their oversight of the work of school leaders. They ensure that leaders not only have the skills and knowledge for their roles, but also effectively implement policies and procedures to ensure that the Standards are consistently met. Governors monitor the risk mitigation work of leaders to ensure that it is effective and minimises any identified potential risk to pupils' wellbeing.

4. Leaders implement a well-planned curriculum which enables pupils to develop skills and understanding across a full range of subjects. The curriculum includes a recently enhanced programme of emotional wellbeing and personal development which supports the ethos of the school. Pupils are effectively prepared for life in British society, including through guidance on future pathways to higher education and careers.

5. Through effective monitoring, leaders ensure that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported effectively. Staff plan appropriate strategies for use in class or outside lessons in small groups or one-to-one support. This enables pupils to not only access the curriculum but to make progress in line with their peers. The needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) are quickly identified and support is put in place that enables them to become more proficient in their use of English.

6. The relatively new senior team of leaders have accurately identified the need to develop teaching to ensure that it challenges pupils appropriately. This has led to new teaching and learning policies which focus on the rigour of lesson planning and assessment. However, this new approach is not yet fully embedded. Some teaching does not consistently effectively challenge pupils, with a detrimental effect on their rate of progress.

7. Typically, leaders effectively implement the school's appropriate behaviour policy. As the school's values have become embedded in the community, the levels of behaviour have rapidly improved. However, there remain some instances of immature behaviour and thoughtless derogatory language.

8. Leaders provide an extensive extra-curricular programme which enables pupils to participate in a range of sporting, cultural, creative and community-based activities. A large number of clubs and societies are led by pupils which have a positive effective on their leadership skills and self-confidence. Whilst boarders can fully engage in activities during the week, there are more limited opportunities for enhancing their social development at weekends.

9. There are effective safeguarding measures in place. Leaders respond to safeguarding concerns effectively and ensure that appropriate records are maintained. Staff are suitably trained and leaders work closely with external agencies.

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:

- reduce the number of incidents of immature behaviour and thoughtless derogatory language

- ensure that teaching features sufficient academic challenge to ensure pupils' consistent progress

- strengthen the opportunities for boarders to enhance their social development at weekends.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

10. Leaders provide a clear vision for the school and effectively model the school's values of kindness, integrity, curiosity and confidence as evidenced in how they interact with pupils. Whilst the composition of the leadership team is relatively new, their actions demonstrate that they have the skills and knowledge to fulfil their responsibilities effectively.

11. Governors maintain effective oversight of the implementation of school policies. A number of governors have responsibilities for specific areas of school life. They regularly visit to scrutinise and challenge leaders. Detailed reports from relevant school staff are discussed at governor meetings, as typified by the termly focus on safeguarding. Through their ongoing oversight, governors ensure that leaders are not only equipped to carry out their roles but execute them effectively. Leaders and governors ensure that standards are consistently met and pupil wellbeing is actively promoted.

12. Leaders have an effective and consultative approach to ongoing self-evaluation. This enables them to monitor the impact of their decisions on pupil progress and wellbeing. The process of evaluation enables leaders to identify key objectives in the annual development planning, such as further enhancing the level of challenge in lessons. Leaders robustly review the school's progress against their targets and take appropriate decisions, such as changing the assembly and personal development programme to help pupils develop skills for independent learning. This approach to self-evaluation ensures that the impact on pupils is positive and enhances their confidence and wellbeing.

13. In recent years, leaders have strengthened the culture of risk mitigation in the school. Risk assessments across all areas of school life, including those relating to safeguarding, boarding and educational trips, are not only carefully reviewed but are constantly evolving. Rigorous risk management procedures are in place with appropriate and prompt action taken as required. This is further strengthened by the effective links between leaders and external agencies, whose advice leaders typically incorporate into welfare assessments and fire risk mitigation strategies.

14. Academic leaders maintain a thorough oversight of pupils' progress across the school. Recent initiatives to refine the monitoring of pupils' progress have enabled leaders to identify more effectively the strategies needed to promote the learning of individual pupils. The recently appointed leader of provision for pupils who have SEND to the senior team has ensured more effectively targeted support so that all groups of pupils make typically good progress relative to their starting points.

15. Leaders maintain close oversight of teaching and know the professional strengths and weaknesses of teachers. Through a planned schedule of lesson observations, departmental reviews and listening to the views of pupils, leaders are able to identify areas for development to enhance pupil learning. To address inconsistences in teaching, leaders have introduced a more systematic approach to lesson planning. The aim is to ensure teachers provide effective academic challenge to all pupils, but this has not yet had time to become embedded, meaning pupils' progress is currently inconsistent.

16. Boarding leaders know the pupils well and provide a supportive environment in which boarders grow in self-confidence. Boarding and pastoral staff work collaboratively to ensure that boarders' welfare needs are met.

17. Leaders have established a school community in which each pupil is valued as an individual. Leaders ensure that teaching does not discriminate against any individual or group of pupils. An appropriate accessibility plan is in place. The school fulfils its obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

18. Leaders effectively manage any complaints that the school receives with appropriate communication and action is taken as needed. Detailed record-keeping is in place which is periodically reviewed. The school regularly provides parents with reports on their child's progress and ensures that other required information is available to parents and prospective parents.

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

19. All the relevant Standards are met.

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

20. Ongoing curriculum review is a fundamental part of the school's development plan. Senior leaders regularly meet with subject leads to scrutinise schemes of work. This ensures that curriculum planning is effective in meeting the needs of different groups of pupils. Leaders mapping of the curriculum also enables oversight ensuring that the curriculum does not undermine fundamental British values nor discriminate against any group of pupils.

21. The curriculum provides many opportunities for pupils to develop their communications skills. This is evidenced in their ability to express their views and ideas articulately, and often persuasively, in lessons, assemblies and when leading chapel talks. Pupils' creative and aesthetic skills are reflected in the many high-quality portfolios of work, for example, in art, photography and design and technology (DT). From their start in the school, the curriculum enables pupils to rapidly develop and apply their scientific, mathematical and literary skills; the latter typically illustrated by the youngest pupils confidently discussing some of the complex ideas embedded in Shakespearean tragedy.

22. Leaders have developed a well understood digital strategy which underpins the curriculum. Pupils are all equipped with their own laptop computers and have developed extensive technological skills. Pupils are also confident in using their numeracy skills accurately across different subject areas such as science and in the financial curriculum embedded in the school's personal development education (PDE) programme.

23. Leaders effectively implement a carefully planned assessment framework. Detailed monitoring of assessment data informs thorough monitoring of pupils' progress, measured against their respective starting points. Leaders ensure that academic, pastoral and learning support teams work collaboratively to ensure that the needs of individual pupils are effectively identified. Targeted support is then provided through a range of approaches, such as in-class support, additional one-to-one guidance and small group classes outside lessons. Consequently, pupils who have SEND, and those who speak English as an additional language (EAL), make progress in line with their peers.

24. Inspectors found that the majority of teaching is effectively planned with teachers demonstrating good subject knowledge, effective behaviour management, a detailed understanding of the aptitudes of their pupils and using an array of teaching strategies. However, there is inconsistency in the level of academic challenge in some lessons which sometimes leads to slower pupil progress. Leaders have recently prioritised raising the level of academic rigour, but it is too early to see the impact of this on all lessons.

25. Pupils have a positive attitude to their learning and recognise the importance of constantly striving to improve their own learning. They value the regular and helpful feedback from teachers and the opportunities for additional support outside lessons. Pupils gain confidence from seeing the quality of their work improve.

26. The achievement of pupils at A level and GCSE is in line with the grades predicted from their assessed starting points. The attainment of pupils in GCSE and A-level examinations is in line with respective national averages.

27. Leaders implement a wide-ranging extra-curricular programme, including opportunities in sport and increasingly in music, drama, and academic enrichment. These opportunities, as well as the

Combined Cadet Force (CCF) and The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme (DofE), enable pupils to develop their leadership, teamwork and social skills.

28. Boarding leaders work closely with the academic staff so that effective support for boarders is in place, especially if this takes place outside lessons. They liaise with form tutors to ensure that boarders maintain typically good progress in line with their peers. Boarders can easily approach boarding staff, teachers or their form tutor for advice and support. Boarders take part in the school's extra-curricular activities but their opportunities for social development at weekends are more limited.

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

29. All the relevant Standards are met.

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

30. Leaders prioritise pupils' emotional wellbeing in their curriculum planning. In recent years, they have extensively reviewed and implemented effective changes to the content and delivery of the school's PDE programme, which incorporates personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education and relationships and sex education (RSE). Leaders ensure that teachers are well trained to deliver the PDE programme in a sensitive and impartial manner. Teachers develop pupils' understanding of and encourage pupils to share their thoughts and views openly on issues such as consent, misogyny and sexual harassment. Pupils value PDE lessons and recognise that they help to develop their relationships with one another based on mutual respect, honesty and an appreciation of individuality.

31. Pupils' physical health is promoted through a well-planned physical education (PE) curriculum which incorporates a wide range of physical and sporting activities, such as the school's football academy. Teachers deliver the PE curriculum effectively, enabling pupils to develop their understanding of how and why it is important to maintain physical fitness. Pupils participation in sport is high, impacting positively on both their physical and mental health.

32. The growth of pupils spiritual and moral understanding is the central aim of the schools' 'fortnightly themes' programme which runs throughout the year. Leaders ensure that chapel talks, assemblies and tutor time are integrated around issues such as Chinese New Year, multi-cultural winter celebrations, Ramadan and diversity. Inspectors found that pupils value the opportunity for reflection, as found, for example, in chapel services. This often gives them the chance for consideration of the world beyond the school, which enhances their self-awareness and the inclusivity of the school community.

33. Leaders implement an appropriate behaviour policy. Leaders react swiftly when behavioural problems occur and are proactive in not only applying sanctions, but helping pupils to reflect on the consequences of their actions. The school's records are robustly monitored and leaders are able to identify patterns of pupil behaviour, associated with specific groups or individuals, and take appropriate action. In recent years leaders have made progress in improving behaviour by working towards ensuring a consistent approach from staff in implementing the behaviour policy. However, consistency has not yet been achieved and incidents of inappropriate and immature behaviour, including derogatory language, still occur.

34. A clear policy on anti-bullying is implemented effectively. Staff are trained effectively to identify signs of bullying and have an appropriate understanding of the thresholds for child-on-child abuse. Records are rigorously maintained enabling leaders to identify any trends or patterns of behaviour. When a bullying incident does occur, leaders put in place appropriate strategies to support both victim and perpetrator.

35. Leaders implement suitable health and safety protocols and policies. The school premises, including boarding accommodation, are maintained to a high standard with regular maintenance checks recorded and remedial action taken as required. Leaders ensure that the risk from fire is mitigated through comprehensive fire risk assessments which are reviewed regularly. Fire drills occur at least termly, with appropriate nighttime practices for boarders.

36. Suitable arrangements and medical accommodation are in place to care for pupils, including boarders, who become ill or are injured during the school day. Appropriate numbers of staff are qualified to deliver first aid. Levels of staff supervision across the school are appropriate.

37. Admissions and attendance registers are maintained appropriately. Unexpected absences are systematically followed up. The school conscientiously follows up the destinations of pupils who move to other schools, to ensure that the risk of pupils missing education are minimised.

38. Boarding leaders ensure that the health and welfare needs of boarders are met. The privacy of boarders is respected. Supervision levels in the boarding houses are appropriate. Boarders are able to contact a member of staff, including at night, if needed and they feel secure in the boarding setting. Pupils are able to share their views on boarding life through regular boarding meetings.

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

39. All the relevant Standards are met.

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

40. The school community has evolved positively in recent years into one that is characterised by inclusivity and equality. Leaders have embedded the values of the school into all aspects of daily life, which has enabled mutual respect between pupils to grow swiftly, although some use of derogatory language still remains. Pupils consistently talk about being respected as individuals regardless of their race, faith, gender, any disability or sexuality. This sense of belonging and being valued has a very positive impact on pupils' emotional wellbeing and self-confidence.

41. Pupils typically demonstrate a clear sense of wrong and right which is reflected in their understanding of the 'Whole School Pupil Charter', which leaders have developed after listening to the views of pupils. As they progress through the school, pupils develop an increasingly mature understanding of cultural differences. They respect the diversity of ideas that emerge within the school community. Pupils develop an increasing understanding of the different perspectives on world events, such as conflict in Ukraine. The use of tutor time to follow up assembly themes with pupil-led discussion has a positive impact on pupils' cultural and social awareness.

42. Boarding leaders have created an environment in which boarders, representing diverse cultures, learn to live together in harmony. They understand the importance of mutual respect and taking responsibility for their actions. Boarders respect each other's property and private space, and they appreciate that this is important preparation for living in the wider world.

43. Leaders implement a curriculum which emphasises fundamental British values, such as individual liberty and the rule of law. The importance of democratic values is evident in the many opportunities for pupils to elect their peers to positions of responsibility including the prefect body and school council. Pupils understand the importance of representing others and listening to their views, which they recognise is a crucial preparation for life in British society. The delivery of the curriculum by teachers enables pupils to develop their understanding of democracy. They are given numerous chances to engage in democratic arguments and to understand the role of the judiciary and parliament, as seen when older pupils debated different perspectives on cabinet responsibility in a politics lesson. Teachers discuss political issues impartially and ensure that pupils understand all sides of an argument.

44. Leaders encourage pupils to take responsibility though the many opportunities for pupil leadership, such as giving talks in assemblies, leading societies and pupil groups and taking up mentoring responsibilities for younger pupils. Over the last two years pupil-led groups have led a number of initiatives, typified by the organisation and management of an 'Empowering Girls Day' which attracted a number of local schools. These events, actively supported by school leaders, have a positive impact on pupils' self-confidence and social awareness.

45. Pupils develop a secure sense of economic wellbeing by the time they leave school. The well-planned curriculum, and its effective implementation by teachers, enables pupils to apply their numeracy skills to real life financial decision-making. For example, older pupils consider how to budget at university, the challenges posed by gambling, understanding investments and associated risks, while younger pupils explore how salaries are taxed and the interest applied to different types of savings accounts.

46. Pupils' social development is enhanced by opportunities to help others, not only in school, but through volunteering in the local community. Leaders have established a number of links with external charities and volunteer groups. Pupils are actively involved, for example, in charity fund-raising, coaching at local sports clubs, and helping at the nearby foodbank.

47. Leaders have established a suitable careers programme which supports pupils in making decisions about their future pathways. Pupils value the range of opportunities to engage with professionals from the world of employment, through bespoke events and the weekly lunches with alumni.

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

48. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

49. The school has a clear and appropriate safeguarding policy, in line with current statutory guidance. Leaders implement the policy effectively and have created a culture in which safeguarding is prioritised. This culture is enhanced by a well-structured safeguarding team who have a visible presence throughout the school.

50. Through the delivery of the PDE curriculum, pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including when they are online. Pupils are reassured by the many contact points with trusted adults to whom they turn to if they have concerns. Staff know the pupils well and are able to identify changes of behaviour or signs that could possibly indicate a concern. This allows the safeguarding and pastoral teams to be proactive in ensuring that appropriate support is put in place.

51. Governors conduct a thorough annual review of the safeguarding policy and procedures. They monitor the implementation of safeguarding arrangements through regular onsite visits and termly safeguarding reports for review at governors' meetings. Appropriate oversight of the school's filtering and monitoring of online activity is in place.

52. Staff and governors are suitably trained in child protection procedures, including how to report matters of concern, online safety and the possible contextual risks in the local community from radicalisation, extremism and county lines. Staff understand the importance of reporting allegations about adults working in the school and will do so if required.

53. Safeguarding concerns are recorded and monitored appropriately. When required, referrals are made promptly to the relevant external agencies, with whom leaders maintain an effective working relationship. Any safeguarding records are transferred efficiently to leavers' subsequent schools, should the situation arise. Low level concerns regarding staff are monitored closely, to ensure patterns of behaviour are identified and appropriate action is taken as needed.

54. Required recruitment checks are completed for all staff and volunteers, including for those involved in boarding. Checks are also completed appropriately for supply staff and governors. A suitable central record of appointments is in place and staff files include the evidence to confirm that checks have been made.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

55. All the relevant Standards are met.

School details

School	Langley School
Department for Education number	926/6005
Registered charity number	311270
Address	Langley School Langley Park Loddon Norwich NR14 6BJ
Phone number	01508 520210
Email address	office@langleyschool.co.uk
Website	www.langleyschool.co.uk
Proprietor	Governors of Langley School
Chair	Mr David Stanbridge
Headteacher	Mr Jonathan Perriss
Age range	10 to 18
Number of pupils	428
Number of boarding pupils	45
Date of previous inspection	25 April 2022

Information about the school

56. Langley School is a co-educational independent day and boarding school located in Loddon, Norfolk. The school comprises of a senior school which includes a sixth form. The school is owned by a charitable company, whose trustees form the school's governing body. The current chair of governors was appointed in 2022.

57. Boarders are accommodated in two sections of the school's main building. One area is for male pupils, while the other is for female pupils.

58. The school has identified 174 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Nine pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.

59. English is an additional language for 17 pupils.

60. The school states its aims are to equip pupils with the skills of creativity, resilience and adaptability for an ever-changing world in which they can be lifelong learners. These aims sit alongside the school's values of kindness, curiosity, integrity and confidence with humility.

Inspection details

Inspection dates   19 to 21 March 2024

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

62. 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.

63. 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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