



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

LOCKERS PARK SCHOOL

**BOARDING WELFARE
INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Lockers Park School

Full Name of School	Lockers Park School
DfE Number	919/6024
Registered Charity Number	311061
Address	Lockers Park School Lockers Park Lane Hemel Hempstead Hertfordshire HP1 1TL
Telephone Number	01442 251712
Fax Number	01442 234150
Email Address	secretary@lockerspark.herts.sch.uk
Headmaster	Mr Christopher Wilson
Chair of Governors	Mr Christopher Lister
Age Range	5 to 13
Total Number of Pupils	147
Gender of Pupils	Boys
Numbers by Age	5-11: 85 11-13: 62
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 126
Number of Boarders	Total: 21 Full: 17 Weekly: 4
Inspection Dates	16 Sep 2014 to 18 Sep 2014

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule* for intermediate inspections, focusing primarily on compliance with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (NMS). The inspection occurs over a period of two and a half continuous days in the school.

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. From September 2011 the inspection of boarding welfare forms part of the inspection process. This inspection focuses on the school's compliance with 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. Boarding inspections were previously carried out by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills. The relevant Ofsted report refers to an inspection in March 2011 and can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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 judgement.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Inspectors

Mrs Jan Preece

Reporting Inspector

Mr Richard Green

Team Inspector for Boarding (Deputy Head, IAPS school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Lockers Park School is a day and boarding school for boys aged between five and thirteen years. It was founded in 1874 on its present 23-acre site in Hemel Hempstead. The school is administered by a board of governors and the present headmaster was appointed in 2013.
- 1.2 Boarding accommodation is on the upper floors of the main building, a Georgian country house, which also includes some teaching rooms. Other, specialist teaching facilities are accommodated in adjacent buildings. School facilities include a chapel, a heated outdoor swimming pool, an all-weather playing surface, a croquet lawn, tennis courts and a sports hall. Since the previous inspection, boarding, dining, catering, washroom and changing room facilities have been refurbished.
- 1.3 The school has 147 pupils on roll. Pupils board in Years 3 to 8. Twenty-one pupils are full or weekly boarders. Fifty others board on a flexible basis. Most pupils come from business or professional families who live within a 30-mile radius of the school. Nine full boarders come from overseas. Eleven pupils have English as an additional language, nine of whom receive specialist help. The 14 pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities all receive specialist learning support. No pupils have a statement of special educational needs.
- 1.4 The school aims to provide boys with a stimulating all-round education in a happy environment. It seeks to encourage individuality and to find and develop boys' talents in all areas, nurture their self-esteem and teach them to behave with tolerance, kindness and respect, within a small family atmosphere in which they are well known to all staff. These are summarised by the school motto: 'Bene agere ac laetar' – 'Good results, good manners, good fun'.
- 1.5 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following tables.

Pre-Preparatory Department

School	NC name
Chestnuts	Years 1 and 2

Preparatory Department

School	NC name
C3	Year 3
C4	Year 4
B5	Year 5
B6	Year 6
A7	Year 7
A8	Year 8

2. SUMMARY

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

- 2.1 The school does not meet all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2013, and therefore it must:
- ensure that a separate check against the barred list is undertaken in the event that the Disclosure and Barring Service certificate has not been received, or is accepted from previous employment [National Minimum Standard 14.1, under Staff recruitment and checks on other adults, and for the same reason, National Minimum Standard 11, under Child protection].

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.2 In addition to the above regulatory action points, the school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Provide increased space and privacy in the shower area.
 2. Ensure that beds are suitable for the size and age of the boarders and afford appropriate comfort.

(iii) Progress since the previous inspection

- 2.3 The previous boarding welfare inspection was undertaken by Ofsted in March 2011. The report made seven recommendations, all of which have been addressed. Records relating to medication and complaints are now thorough, and supervisory staff do not intrude on boarders' privacy. Boarders may easily contact their parents at reasonable times, and the school provides a wide range of recreational activities during the evenings and weekends. The school offers regular formal opportunities for boarders to express their views, which are taken into account in planning improvements, and the appraisal process includes boarding responsibilities.

3. COMPLIANCE WITH NATIONAL MINIMUM STANDARDS

3.(a) Boarding provision and care

- 3.1 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.2 New boarders receive an informative boarding handbook and are allocated a mentor of similar age. Boarders say that they receive support and guidance from their friends as well as the staff, and younger boarders appreciate the matrons' assistance with any personal matters. An independent listener's contact details are displayed throughout the house and she visits several times a term. National helpline numbers are displayed by the telephones and on notice boards. [NMS 2]
- 3.3 Boarding staff, who are all qualified in first aid, are consistent in the application of detailed policies for all medical matters and the welfare of the boarders. The matrons take advice, when necessary, from a part-time registered nurse. Boarders who are asthmatic may self-medicate, and the matrons, who maintain careful records to ensure that prescription medicine is given to the correct boarder, administer all other medication. Care plans covering both welfare and long-term medical conditions are kept securely, and boarders' rights to confidentiality are respected. The sick bay and surgery have recently been relocated to a central position in the house, so that matrons working nearby may check regularly on those who are ill. The school doctor visits when necessary and matrons take boarders to any required dental appointments. [NMS 3]
- 3.4 Full boarders are encouraged to write email messages and letters to their parents on Sunday mornings. Boarders are permitted mobile telephones without camera and internet capabilities, to ensure their online safety. These may be used during the evening in a part of the house that affords privacy. Boarders from overseas may use video messaging and the school makes provision for differing time zones. Two landline telephones are also provided. The school operates an effective system to monitor boarders' use of electronic communications discreetly. [NMS 4]
- 3.5 A rolling programme for upgrading and maintenance of the dormitories provides boarders with a warm, clean, ventilated and well-lit environment. Older boarders report that some bunks and beds are rather small and uncomfortable. Inspectors found that some were small and utilitarian, and were not conducive to a homely atmosphere. Some boarders choose to personalise their space with posters. The common rooms are comfortably furnished and equipped with television and board games; one room is used as a quiet area where boarders may read or telephone home. Older boarders have access to a room for private study. Toilet and washroom facilities have been upgraded and are clean and functional. Curtains on shower cubicles afford only a moderate degree of privacy, and the baths do not have individual screens. In interviews a number of older boarders reported that changing space is limited and that there is nowhere to hang towels adjacent to the shower cubicles. Inspection evidence supports this view. Day pupils and unauthorised visitors do not have access to the boarding accommodation and security arrangements do not intrude on boarders' privacy. [NMS 5]
- 3.6 Boarders' meals are varied and nutritious, and care is taken to cater for medical and religious dietary needs. All food is freshly prepared in the newly renovated and equipped kitchen and most boarders are happy with the standard of meals. Drinking water is always available. Boarders may prepare their own evening snack and drink in the common room. [NMS 8]

- 3.7 The school operates suitable laundry arrangements on the premises. A few older boarders reported that some items of clothing have been lost. Bedding is provided but boarders may supply their own. Matrons supply toiletries and stationery items when requested. In responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires a few boarders were concerned about the safety of their personal possessions and in interviews some confirmed that small items of electrical equipment had been lost. Inspectors found that each boarder has a secure locker for such articles and that staff attempt to locate mislaid items. [NMS 9]
- 3.8 The school offers a popular range of activities during the evenings and at weekends, such as skiing, scouts and cubs. Boarders say that they also appreciate their free time to use computers, indoor recreational areas and the grounds. On Sundays an extensive range of cultural and recreational activities is organised. Boarders have access to television, newspapers and the internet to gain awareness of current affairs. [NMS 10]

3.(b) Arrangements for welfare and safeguarding

- 3.9 The school does not meet two of the NMS under this section.
- 3.10 Thorough health and safety policies promote boarders' safety, both on and off site. These are supplemented by detailed risk assessments, for which staff have recently undertaken training. Equipment and facilities are maintained efficiently and health and safety records are effectively documented. The health and safety committee, which includes two governors, monitors arrangements carefully. [NMS 6]
- 3.11 The school takes all necessary precautions to promote fire safety. Regular fire drills are held, including some at times when boarders are sleeping. Fire-fighting equipment is maintained correctly and all the necessary records kept. All staff undertake fire awareness training and sufficient numbers of resident staff are trained at a higher level. [NMS 7]
- 3.12 The school takes its responsibilities to safeguard pupils and promote their welfare very seriously and its arrangements for safeguarding comply with current requirements in most respects, with the exception of some recruitment checks. The safeguarding policy follows recent guidance and staff receive training, both at induction and regular intervals, to ensure that they are fully aware of their responsibilities. The designated officers have received appropriate higher level training and the school maintains useful links with the local safeguarding children's board. The governors' safeguarding committee monitors arrangements carefully, and the governing body fulfils its responsibilities to undertake an annual review of the policy and procedures. [NMS 11]
- 3.13 The school implements effective policies to promote positive behaviour and guard against bullying, including cyber-bullying. Boarders are happy with the fairness of rewards and sanctions in the house. These mirror those implemented during the school day, and are adjusted to boarding life. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses a small minority of boarders and their parents did not feel that bullying is handled well. Boarders told inspectors that bullying is not an issue in the boarding house. They were confident that should it occur it would be appropriately addressed. Records indicate that instances of poor behaviour are carefully logged to enable staff to identify any patterns, that bullying has occurred rarely and that the sanctions applied were appropriate. Concerns about boarders' behaviour and well-being are communicated in weekly whole-school staff meetings. [NMS 12]

- 3.14 The school undertakes almost all the required recruitment checks, although until recently was unaware of the need to obtain a check against the barred list should a member of staff start work before a disclosure certificate from the Disclosure and Barring Service is received. The recruitment policy has now been amended to include this requirement and the central register of appointments is correctly maintained. Appropriate checks are carried out on all adults who live on the boarding premises and suitable arrangements ensure that visitors do not enter the boarding accommodation. Resident staff are informed of their responsibilities through an appropriate written agreement. The school does not appoint guardians for boarders from overseas but does check that arrangements are working to the satisfaction of boarders. [NMS 14]

3.(c) Leadership and management of the boarding provision

- 3.15 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.16 The principles of boarding are clearly displayed on notice boards in the boarding house and published in handbooks for staff and parents. The cordial and relaxed yet respectful relationships observed in the house reflect these values. [NMS 1]
- 3.17 The leadership and governors, together with those with management responsibilities for boarding, demonstrate a clear commitment to boarding, which is exemplified in the school development plan. Staff new to boarding receive thorough induction training and guidance from more experienced colleagues. The academic and residential aspects of the school are closely interlinked. Weekly pastoral briefings alert all staff to any concerns about boarders' welfare, and comprehensive records allow staff to monitor boarders' progress and well-being. The required boarding records are maintained. [NMS 13]
- 3.18 All boarding staff have job descriptions that reflect their responsibilities and they are offered additional external training for their boarding roles. The newly implemented appraisal scheme, which includes all boarding staff, provides for annual performance review that includes consideration of staff's boarding responsibilities. Duty rotas in the boarding house provide generous numbers of suitably experienced staff to supervise boarders in various locations and activities. Boarders may identify duty staff from the notice board and report that they can always find them. Staff check boarders at key times to ensure that they know their whereabouts and understand the procedures should any go missing. Sufficient staff reside in the boarding house and are easily contactable should a boarder need help in the night. Boarders do not visit adult accommodation. [NMS 15]
- 3.19 The school's inclusive ethos ensures that boarders, including those from overseas, do not experience discrimination. Provision for boarders who speak English as an additional language, or for those who have other needs, is carefully monitored and communicated between parents, the learning enrichment department and boarding staff. [NMS 16]
- 3.20 Boarders have many opportunities to offer their views through regular boarders' meetings and a suggestions box that is prominently sited in the common room. The school also seeks boarders' views through regular questionnaires and responds to some of their suggestions. Boarders and staff say that issues are often discussed informally during the evening with duty staff, but a number of older boarders commented that not all staff are consistently approachable. [NMS 17]
- 3.21 The school has a clear complaints procedure and records show that concerns are resolved promptly and according to procedures. [NMS 18]

- 3.22 Prefects are expected to act as helpers, 'befrienders' and role models for younger boarders. They receive suitable training and support for their roles. [NMS 19]
- 3.23 The school does not arrange lodgings for boarders. [NMS 20]