



Boarding Principles and Practices, 2023-2024

Winchester House School
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Statement of Boarding Principles and Practice

At Winchester House Prep School, our Boarding Program is underpinned by a set of principles that reflect our unwavering commitment to creating an exceptional boarding experience for our students. These principles are designed to provide clarity and guidance, ensuring that our boarding community thrives in an atmosphere of care, support, and personal growth.

The Aims of Boarding Are:

- 1. Fostering a Family Atmosphere:** Our primary goal is to create a boarding environment that feels like an extended family. We want our boarders to not only enjoy boarding but also become enthusiastic advocates of it. To achieve this, we promote traditional values of courtesy, honesty, kindness, and fairness, allowing every boarder to fully relax and be themselves. We encourage the children to establish and develop good and valuable friendships with their fellow boarders. In this family-like atmosphere, we cultivate an open and trusting ethos where each boarder can confidently approach any member of the boarding community, be it staff or pupil, knowing they will be treated with respect as a unique individual.
- 2. Providing a Safe and Homely Environment:** Safety and comfort are paramount in our boarding facilities. We go to great lengths to ensure that our boarding environment is secure and homely, offering students a reassuring and welcoming space where they can thrive.
- 3. Preventing Unkindness, Teasing, and Bullying:** Through the family atmosphere we foster and our strong values of respect and kindness, we create an environment in which unkindness, teasing, and bullying find it difficult to take root. We actively work to ensure that our boarding community is built on mutual respect and support.
- 4. Caring for Each Boarder as an Individual:** We recognise that every child is unique, and our commitment is to nurture and care for each boarder based on their specific needs and circumstances at any given time. We maintain open lines of communication with parents, ensuring that each boarder receives equal care and treatment, as informed by the Equality Act, 2010, and its 'protected characteristics.'
- 5. Fostering Independence:** We see boarding as an opportunity for students to develop independence. Kindly encouraging each child to make their own decisions and learn from their mistakes allows them to gain greater knowledge of and confidence in themselves. As boarders grow older, they are entrusted with more responsibilities for their own lives, further nurturing their independence.

6. **Promoting Responsibility and Personal Growth:** We believe that the boarding experience should help students successfully take on more responsibility for their own lives, fostering their growth as they get older. This includes academic responsibility, personal accountability, and self-sufficiency.

7. **Realising Each Individual's Potential:** Our boarding programme aims to help each boarder reach their full potential. We provide caring staff, excellent facilities, and a beautiful setting to support their personal growth and academic development. We believe that every boarder has unique talents and abilities waiting to be realised.

8. **Promoting Links and Communication:** We actively promote links and communication between the boarding and day elements of a boarder's school life, particularly with their tutor. This helps to support their academic progress as appropriate, ensuring that the boarding experience enhances their overall educational journey.

Why Consider Boarding?

When it comes to our children's futures, foresight is key. Many parents recognise that having their child become a happily established boarder at Winchester House opens doors to a wider range of potential senior schools. The expanded choice, in turn, increases the likelihood of finding the perfect school for their child's future. Moreover, boarding offers increased opportunities, both in terms of extracurricular activities and essential life skills.

Boarding at Winchester House

Boarding at Winchester House is designed to be enjoyable for all involved. We offer a wide range of activities that bring children from both boarding houses together, fostering friendships and enriching the boarding experience. Our boarding programme combines tradition with a caring, supportive atmosphere, with house staff who invest a significant amount of effort into the pastoral care of the children.

Boarding is central to what makes Winchester House a preparatory school, as it provides children with the best possible preparation for boarding at their senior school. This preparation is best achieved when children are confidently and happily established as boarders before leaving us. The more time they spend boarding with us, the better prepared they are for this exciting next chapter.

Trial Boarding

Trial boarding nights for Years 3-7 are popular and free of charge. Trial boarding allows children and parents to experience the boarding environment firsthand. It is a valuable opportunity for children to become familiar with the routine and benefits of boarding.

Occasional Boarding

Occasional boarding offers flexibility for families. Children may board for one or more nights a week. For those in **Years 6 and 7**, it is recommended that they aim for at least two nights a week to help transition towards weekly boarding. Occasional boarding nights can be consecutive or flexible depending on individual circumstances.

Children in Year 8

From September 2021, a more flexible approach to weekly boarding for Year 8 students has been introduced. This allows Year 8 students to board for fewer than three nights if desired.

Occasional Boarding Dates

The dates for the first and last nights of occasional boarding per term are published in the school calendar.

Occasional Boarding and Flexi-Boarding

For greater flexibility, we offer additional nights of 'flexi-boarding' throughout the academic year where available. Flexi-boarding nights are charged at the school's current rate and can be booked through the relevant Houseparents, depending on bed space availability.

Boarding and Academic Considerations

We understand parental concerns about how boarding may impact a child's academic progress. It's important to note that all formal academic work for boarders happens within the extended school day for day pupils. Study rooms are available for boarders of all year groups, providing quiet spaces for study and revision. Boarding staff actively support learning work, ensuring that boarders receive assistance and encouragement in their studies.

Boarding After Common Entrance

Boarding can be particularly beneficial during the Common Entrance exam period. The school's extended hours provide additional opportunities for productive study and revision. Parents should not be unduly concerned if there is a temporary 'blip' in a child's academic work when they first start boarding. This adjustment period is natural and often leads to greater academic resilience.

Queries, Enquiries, and Requests

For inquiries, requests, or changes in boarding status, please contact Mr. Beukes, our Head of Boarding. We are here to support your child's boarding experience and make it as seamless and enjoyable as possible.