

# **PASTORAL CARE, SAFETY, WELFARE & WELLBEING OF BOARDERS**

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## PART 1 - PASTORAL CARE

The Welfare, Wellbeing and Pastoral Care Protocol for boarding at Wymondham College Prep School fits around the whole school **Safeguarding Policy**, the whole school **Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy**, the **Boarding Discipline, Rewards and Sanctions Protocol**, and, most importantly, the Statement of **Boarding Principles and Practice**.

### SAFEGUARDING

Wymondham College Prep School recognises its responsibility in promoting the welfare and wellbeing of its students especially its boarders for whom this is their home. It is the responsibility of all staff involved in Underwood Hall to fully recognise their responsibility to safeguard against any form of neglect or abuse. They should have read and be fully aware of the whole school **Safeguarding Policy**. Staff should know who the Designated Senior Person and Deputy Designated Senior Persons are and should know the procedures to follow if they have concerns or wish to make an allegation of risk to harm to boarders. Boarding staff should recognise and be alert to the symptoms of neglect or abuse and should know how to deal with a disclosure by a child.

All boarding staff, and indeed all other staff employed by the school, are subject to the relevant DBS checks on appointment. All boarding staff have copies of and are familiar with the documents *Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, Sept 2022)* and *Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, July 2018)*. Boarding staff frequently revisit DfE guidance on safeguarding and child protection in addition to being aware of school policy and requirements. Regular checks are made on those individuals and organisations involved in providing activities for boarders but not employed by the school and the relevant documentation is requested (DBS, Safeguarding Policy & Public liability insurance policy) regardless of whether or not the activity has been set up by the parents.

### PASTORAL CARE

Pastoral care of boarders in Underwood Hall is centred around a clear set of principles, aims and values as set out in the **Boarding Principles and Practice** document and around high expectations of behaviour, clearly defined house rules in each boarding house and firm-yet-fair discipline and sanctions. Extensive knowledge of each boarder, recognition of their talents and personalities and sharing of their successes is also at the heart of the pastoral care that each individual receives.

### AIMS OF PASTORAL CARE

- To treat all boarders fairly and with respect
- Offer support and guidance for boarders in a caring and secure environment characterised by good relationships, respect, tolerance and acceptance.
- Create an environment where boarders feel that they are safe, where their belongings are safe and where they feel that they can safely discuss their feelings and concerns.
- For staff to recognise, be interested in and have knowledge of the numerous attributes and qualities of the boarders under their care and also to have knowledge of issues surrounding each boarder as they relate to academic work, extra-curricular activities, relationships and welfare.
- To record pastoral information about each boarder in order to build an ever more detailed picture of them.
- To recognise, celebrate and share achievement and success within houses, with the boarding community and with parents.
- To ensure that there is excellent communication between school, boarding houses, parents, guardians and external agencies.
- To enhance self-esteem, self-confidence and resilience
- To encourage a sense of belonging amongst all members of the community

- To ensure that there are sufficient evening and weekend activities in which all boarders can participate.
- To encourage healthy lifestyles both from a physical and mental point-of-view including safe and healthy digital usage.

## **PASTORAL CARE STRUCTURE WITHIN BOARDING**

All boarding house staff have a responsibility to offer social and emotional support to boarders outside of the school day. Through daily contact, both formal and informal and planned and unplanned, house staff build up a relationship with each boarder providing help and encouragement and acknowledging achievements whenever necessary. Boarding house staff will also provide academic support as far as is possible and will implement the necessary arrangements to ensure that the right environment is created to allow each student to complete work and assignments and to ensure that issues are communicated to the relevant academic staff.

## **A PROACTIVE APPROACH TO WELLBEING**

There lies a real opportunity in Underwood Hall to prepare boarders for the next steps of their boarding education, and life generally, by taking a proactive approach to the various strands of their wellbeing. These include, but are not limited to, being connected, being active, taking notice, learning and giving ([www.mind.org.uk/workplace/mental-health-at-work/taking-care-of-yourself/five-ways-to-wellbeing/](http://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/mental-health-at-work/taking-care-of-yourself/five-ways-to-wellbeing/) and [www.nhsinform.scot/healthy-living/mental-wellbeing/five-steps-to-mental-wellbeing/](http://www.nhsinform.scot/healthy-living/mental-wellbeing/five-steps-to-mental-wellbeing/)). By taking such an approach, the aim is to build resilience. It is also to ensure that boarders know what constitutes good mental health so that as they embark upon their senior schooling they can continue to look after and make good decisions around the key strands of their own mental health. Below summarises how we promote common strands of mental health:

Connection	By living around others of the same age provides opportunity to feel connected and to do things that help and give to others.
Being Active	Organised physical activity in free time during evenings and at weekends which boarders are encouraged to take part in.
Taking notice	Structured activities around mindfulness for example mindful colouring and yoga.
Learning	Learning to play new games and learning new skills including simple life skills.
Giving	Opportunity to give to others both informally and more formally perhaps through organised fund raising activity.
Eating	Boarders are encouraged to eat healthily at all meals and staff can intervene when it becomes apparent that boarders are not making healthy food choices. Boarders are permitted tuck (ie less healthy food) but only at very limited points in the week i.e. at weekends.
Sleep	The shape of the day and daily routine ensures good sleep patterns.
Digital health	Parameters around electronic devices mean that they can stay 'digitally' healthy in terms of what they can access and for how long. Safe and responsible internet use is discussed with boarders.

## **PASTORAL TRAILS**

A 'trail' of non-trivial conversations, observations, notes, discussion with colleagues and email exchanges with parents/colleagues/agencies of boarders with significant behavioural and/or emotional needs is kept.

## **ONE-TO-ONES & CHECKING IN**

The staff in Underwood Hall have a scheduled one-to-one meeting with each boarder at least once every half term. This is more frequent for those boarders for whom it is felt necessary. As well as ensuring that we are catching up with every student individually and acknowledging their achievements, this is an opportunity to address or follow up any issues arising from pastoral needs, behaviour records and

strategies, academic progress (especially after school reports or prep concerns), survey responses, activities and personal development. Students are encouraged to play a full part in boarding life and to fulfil their potential, and can be challenged to broaden their horizons and take advantage of all the possibilities that boarding offers. Notes of each conversation are kept and, if necessary, can be followed up with additional action or meetings. Subsequently, an email or phone conversation with parents or guardians to update, share concerns or provide positive feedback may be appropriate.

### **BOARDING PASTORAL CARE PLANS (BPCPs)**

It may be necessary for boarders with significant behavioural and/or emotional needs, including those who do not return home to their parents at least three times a year, to require a Pastoral Care Plan. Plans will include start date, recognised emotional needs, the reason for the implementation of the plan, special arrangements to be made, support to be given, and interventions from external agencies, targets, indicators of progress and review dates.

## **PART 2 - GUESTS OF RESIDENT STAFF & VISITORS DURING TERM TIME**

As stated in their Staff Family Confirmation Form, all resident staff are entitled to request permission for guests over the age of 16 to stay in their accommodation during term time for a short period of time (not exceeding 3 nights in 30).

Should a member of staff wish to have a guest residing overnight during term time, a written request should be submitted. Resident boarding staff should submit a written request to the Head of Underwood Hall. The Head of Underwood Hall should submit a written request to the Headteacher. The Head of Underwood Hall, or the Headteacher, will reply in writing. There may be exceptional circumstances when it is not practical or feasible to submit a request. In this case Head of Underwood Hall, or the Headteacher, should be informed as soon as is possible.

Guests who stay with resident staff during term time are under the responsibility of the staff member for the duration of their stay. Whilst arrangements may change, and appreciating the need to be flexible, you may request an extension beyond the agreed dates. This request must be submitted as soon as possible in advance of the required extension. During term time a request for guests to stay will not normally be agreed for more than one week.

It is of high importance that guests are accompanied by the resident member of staff at all times when they are moving around the school site or in one of the boarding houses. They must not be allowed unsupervised access to boarders who will be resident during the time of their stay.

It is the responsibility of the resident member of staff to ensure that guests are made aware that the accommodation in which they will stay is either in close proximity to one of the boarding houses or even part of a boarding house and, therefore, not necessary with its own access.

Resident members of staff should ensure that guests are made aware of the following information:

- The action necessary in the event of a fire or any other evacuation.
- The times when boarders will be in house.
- The school site is a no-smoking zone.

- The child protection issues relevant to being resident in or close to a boarding house during term time.
- The expectations in terms of conduct as they relate to internet usage, WiFi access, alcohol consumption and noise.

For occasional visit not exceeding 3 days in 30, a DBS check will not be carried out. However, should visits be more frequent (exceeding 3 days in 30), then a DBS check and all other vetting will need to be carried out as would be the case for all other family members who are residing onsite. This would include completion of Annex D to the **SET Safer Recruitment Policy** and the necessary amending to the **Annual Staff Family Confirmation Form**.

All guests should be recorded as being present in the boarding house but, in order to respect the privacy of the staff member, they do not have to sign the house visitor's book. Guests arriving during the school day from Monday to Friday are required to be met by the staff member at Reception to sign in. They will be issued with a visitor's badge. If resident staff envisage that guests will be arriving at the weekend or after school hours then they should collect the appropriate number of visitor's badges from Reception and sign in at Reception as soon as is practically possible. Visitors must have their badge visible when moving around the site, and must restrict their movements to their transit to and from their host's accommodation unless supervised.

All other persons visiting Underwood Hall in boarding time (early morning, after school evening and weekends) are properly supervised and are not permitted access to the first floor. This includes parents of boarders who are required to notify staff of their intentions to visit. Access control prevents unauthorised visitors gaining entry any further than the entrance lobby. All work being undertaken by contractors in Underwood Hall is completed strictly within the hours of the school day.

### **PART 3 - E-SAFETY IN UNDERWOOD HALL**

The E-Safety Protocol for boarding at Wymondham College Prep School exists in conjunction with the whole school **E-Safety Policy including Acceptable Use**.

#### **EXTRA E-SAFETY MEASURES FOR BOARDERS**

- Mobile phones and devices belonging to boarders are collected in prior to bedtime on a daily basis.
- Therefore no boarder would be able to have access to the internet late at night and/or into the early hours of the morning.
- Age restrictions are in place for social media use which mirrors the age restrictions that are set by the social media companies themselves.
- VPNs, or any other system that can bypass the school's own restrictions, are not permitted. Boarding staff work proactively to ensure that boarders understand this expectation.
- Boarding staff work proactively to ensure that there is ongoing guidance and education with regards to e-safety and screen time. This will include individual advice as well as the display of practical advice in the form of posters in common rooms and on landings.
- Daily screen time is limited primarily by restricting when boarders have their mobile devices.
- Whilst boarding staff do not insist that mobile phones and other devices are equipped with apps that can monitor, limit screen time and ultimately prevent, boarders from using the internet, we ensure that parents are aware of such apps as 'Our Pact' and 'TeenSafe' so that they can impose their own restrictions should they so wish.
- Boarders sign an **Electronic Devices Agreement** prior to joining which highlights expectations when using such devices.

## **PRIVACY AND RESTRICTED AREAS**

- Boarders are not permitted to use their mobile devices in the Dining Room during breakfast, lunch and supper.
- Boarders are not permitted to take their mobile devices upstairs.
- Boarders are not permitted to take mobile devices or laptops into communal bathrooms.
- Boarders are not permitted to take photographs or video when in dorms nor are they permitted to make recordings or take photographs or video of others without permission.
- They are advised about the risks and potential harm associated with doing so.

With younger boarders, particularly those new to the School, house staff may choose to impose extra restrictions for individuals or groups. For example, keeping phones in office and boarders requesting devices for a short window of time before having them returned for safe keeping.

## **PART 4 - PROVISION & PREPARATION OF FOOD & DRINK**

### **CHOICE & MEETING DIETARY NEEDS**

Boarders consume their meals at the Prep from Monday to Friday. At the weekend, they consume their meals in The College Refectory. Sunday breakfast is had in house. There is a choice of food at all meals. At breakfast there will typically be a hot option, toast, cereal, fresh fruit, yogurt and a choice of fruit juice. For lunch there will be a choice of two hot meals, a jacket potato option, a dessert as well as fruit and yogurt. During supper there is one hot option, a dessert, fresh fruit and a choice of diluted squash. Jugs of drinking water are available at all meals. At least one vegetarian option is offered with all meals.

In addition all boarders can state their particular dietary needs, whether it be for medical reasons, religious reasons, personal moral commitment or simply personal preferences. Each House keeps a list, which is regularly updated, and the kitchen has a copy.

Boarding Staff strive to have absolute understanding of and empathy for cultural differences and encourage both interest and respect among the different cultures. They will always endeavour to help children from another culture to cope with the differences they experience and to adjust to life in the UK.

### **PROVISION OF SNACKS**

Outside of the day school, boarders in Underwood Hall always have access to bread and spreads, fresh fruit and drinking water. Under supervision, including every day at 7:30pm, boarders may make toast, squash and hot drinks. There are other times of the week when a greater choice of snack will be offered, for example with film night on a Saturday or by incorporating culinary activities like toastie making or smoothie making into the weekend programme.

### **OTHER FOOD & DRINK**

As outlined in the boarders' handbook and in the parent handbook, boarders may have a tuck box which is primarily for consumption at the weekends. There are strict guidelines about what food items can be kept in tuck boxes. Occasionally, it might be that boarders wish to bring in their own food items for snacks.

These should be declared and presented to staff in order that staff can ensure that they are healthy and nutritious as well as ensuring that they are safely and hygienically stored.

## **PART 5 – SIGNING OUT, WEEKEND LEAVE AND GROUNDS**

### **SIGNING OUT**

Boarders currently are not permitted to leave Underwood Hall unless being supervised by a member of staff. Staff must however be aware of who is in the building and who is not in the building as might be the case when part of the group have opted to go to another part of the College grounds (the Astro pitch for example) during free time and others have chosen to stay in the house. Currently this is achieved by having a sign out board in the foyer of Underwood Hall where each boarder can indicate whether they are in the house or not.

Although it is quite normal that boarders may have knowledge of the whereabouts of their peers and that they may provide boarding staff with this information, this information will never be taken as final and will always be followed up by boarding staff. It is quite common for boarders to leave with parents/carers for various offsite activities at times between the end of school (1515) and the end of prep (1645). During this time, office staff will communicate directly with boarding staff so that boarding staff can be certain of the whereabouts of boarders during these times.

Boarders are permitted to go into the house garden without having to sign out using only the main back door i.e. via the cloakroom. Boarders know that they should not leave the garden when they are playing outside. Boarders must be supervised when moving around the College campus from one venue to another. For example, boarders must be accompanied when walking to the college refectory, pool, sports hall, Astro pitch and playing fields.

### **ACCESS TO BOARDING HOUSES**

Boarding Houses open at a pre-arranged time at the beginning of term and close at a pre-arranged time at the end of term. This is communicated to parents well in advance and is published in the school calendar. During the school day, boarders are not permitted access Underwood Hall. The only exception to this would be for those boarders who are ill and under the care of a matron or member of the Medical Team.

### **MIDWEEK LEAVE**

Midweek leave involving an overnight stay is considered as exceptional. Written permission is required for such leave from parents or guardians.

### **WEEKEND LEAVE**

Boarders are entitled to weekend leave (in addition to calendared exeats) to parents and guardians. The arrangements for collection and return are agreed in writing by the respective boarder's parent or guardian with the Head of Underwood Hall. Currently, parents complete an online form in order to request weekend leave. The form **MUST** be completed for exeat weekends, half terms and school holidays. For other weekends, the form need only be completed if you are planning for your son or daughter to return home for all or any part of the weekend. Parents are requested to note the following:



- The deadline for completion of the form is 9am on the Thursday preceding the weekend in question.
- For exeat weekends, collection must be from The Prep at 3:15pm.
- For all other weekends (including half term and end of term), collection before 4:45pm should be from The Prep and after 4:45pm should be from Underwood Hall. Underwood Hall will close at 5:30pm. Pick up must be no later than this.
- Sunday drop off (which is preferred and which is compulsory after half terms and holidays) should be between 6pm and 7pm at Underwood Hall.
- Monday drop off should be at 8:15am at The Prep.

For boarders who have returned on a Monday morning, boarding staff must check that all boarders are present at Monday morning registration before going off duty. Any extension of these times will be at the discretion of the Head of Underwood Hall. Should any uncertainty arise about the granting of extended leave requests, the matter should be discussed with the Head of Underwood Hall.

**Any overnight leave to visit anyone other than parent or guardian requires permission and approval from the host family as well as from a parent or guardian. These must be completed by Wednesday to allow House Staff to make weekend arrangements. Weekend leave to a host family are a privilege and will not be granted if the School is not confident that secure and satisfactory arrangements can be made. House Staff have every right to stop a boarder taking leave, whether to their own parents or to friends if the necessary written consent has not been received and approved or if they have concerns over the safety of a boarder. Host families are expected to formally take over responsibility for child welfare and security.**

## **GROUND'S & ENGAGING WITH THE PUBLIC**

At certain times and under supervision, boarders may go into the College grounds. If there are members of the public on the college campus it may well be that they are there for good reason. However, in the event that they do encounter members of the public either on or off site it is important that boarders know how to deal with any uncomfortably, risky or dangerous situation and House Staff should ensure that boarders know what to do. This could potentially be an issue both when onsite and offsite. Boarders are advised to walk away from what could develop into a dangerous situation and alert House Staff at the earliest possible moment.

## **PART 6 – OFFSITE TRIPS**

In boarding, we aim to provide a broad and balanced schedule of offsite trips and activities. We aim to achieve a balance between organised trips and activities and free time when boarders are able to learn to fill such time safely and productively. We also aim to provide variety in terms of trips where it is necessary to commit at an early stage and those where boarders have the freedom to be a little more spontaneous when it comes to committing to their attendance on trips.

All trips require approval via EVOLVE. Given that individual families' weekend plans may not be firmed up until the Wednesday evening preceding any given weekend, the EVOLVE submission need only be completed 48 hours in advance of the trip, but should be done sooner if possible.

All trips require parental consent. Parental consent is obtained via the weekly weekend leave form. All trips require a risk assessment to be carried out. These must be approved by the Headteacher and submitted by

attaching to the above online form. An itinerary and a list of pupils attending must also be submitted on the same form.

When taking an offsite trip, staff must carefully consider staff to pupil ratios. For low impact (non-physical) local trips with small numbers of, say, fewer than a dozen boarders, it may well be that for one suitably trained and experienced staff member to take the trip is sufficient. For medium to high impact trips with bigger group sizes which are travelling further field then at least 2 staff members should be in attendance. There should always be at least two staff members in attendance for outdoor, adventurous and water-based activities, or when there is a significant degree of risk.

Minibus requirements should be finalised and bookings made as far in advance as is possible.

Some trips may be subsidised by the School in order to keep additional cost to boarders' parents at a minimum. If boarders remove themselves from a trip after booking and payment has been made, they should expect to be charged unless they have a reason that prevents them from participating (e.g. injury or illness) or a replacement can be found to fill the space.

Staff taking offsite trips should always take with them the trips pouch which is stored in the house office. This includes a checklist of things to take and action to have carried out prior to the trip itself:

- Mobile phone
- First aid kit
- Individual pupil medication
- Emergency contacts
- Medical information
- GP details
- Risk assessment
- Pupil list (take with)
- Pupil list (in house office)
- Trip leader contact card

In addition, staff should ensure that a copy of trip details including itinerary, travel arrangements and pupil lists are left in the House Office prior to departure.

## **PART 7 - PERMISSIONS**

Parents of boarders are required as a matter of course to give their permission for the following. This may be done through the issuing of a permissions form at the beginning of the academic year or it might be via communications via email as and when the need arises:

- Transport with house staff by coach, minibus or school vehicle.
- Accompanied or unaccompanied public transport travel (depending upon age and most likely to occur for international travel).
- Lifts with other parents.
- Visits to homes of day-pupils, attending social events with friends.
- Participation in weekend activities and/or trips.
- Viewing of 12 certificate films.

## **PART 8 - ADDITIONAL NEEDS**

### **RELIGIOUS NEEDS**

Boarders at Wymondham College Prep School attend Sunday Chapels with older college students. Non-Christian boarders will be encouraged to attend but will not be put under undue pressure to participate. Arrangements can be made for non-Christians who also wish to attend their own place of worship. Any boarders who wish to follow their own religion's observations will be supported by staff, in consultation with parents, as far as it is practicable to do so. For example, Ramadan observation which requires eating at a certain time can be organised with the kitchen staff; Hindus who say regular uninterrupted prayers are respected when doing this, maybe in a quiet area. Where a parent wishes to have a boarder home for a religious holiday or observance, this would be acceptable within guidelines provided by the DfE for all maintained schools. However, a boarder would not be allowed to take a religious holiday and simply remain within the boarding house. Any religious intolerance is handled either at a simple level involving adult input of discussion, education and encouragement of empathy and understanding, or, in serious cases, following the school Bullying Policy.

### **DIETARY NEEDS**

There is a choice of food at all meals. During supper there is typically a choice of a hot meal and a vegetarian option. In addition all boarders can state their particular dietary needs, whether it be for medical reasons, religious reasons, personal moral commitment or simply personal preferences. Each House keeps a list, which is regularly updated, and the kitchen has a copy.

### **CULTURAL NEEDS**

Boarding Staff strive to have absolute understanding of and empathy for cultural differences and encourage both interest and respect among the different cultures. They will always endeavour to help children from another culture to cope with the differences they experience and to adjust to life in the UK.

## **PART 9 - ACCESS TO RISKY AREAS OF THE SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS (AREAS WHICH ARE OUT OF BOUNDS)**

In general, boarders are supervised when they leave the house. This typically happens when moving around the College campus to access, for example, the sports hall, wall weather surface and swimming pool. Pupil access to these occurs at clearly indicated and planned timings and is staffed only by adults who are appropriately qualified.

The house garden is Underwood Hall does potentially give access to a number of storage sheds and the plant room for the building. Doors to these areas are kept locked at all times when not in use.

No tools, equipment or machinery are left unsupervised or in an inappropriate area on the school grounds. Any potential hazard must be immediately reported to duty staff and immediate action taken to remove the risk, secure it or declare the area out of bounds.

### **SECURITY**

The school grounds are partially monitored by CCTV. Duty caretakers patrol the school site in the evening and makes sure it is secure. All doors that provide access to the main school buildings and/or classrooms areas are locked. House staff ensure that Underwood Hall is kept properly secured and that doors are only left open when there is an adequate level of staff presence in the immediate vicinity. Underwood Hall is equipped with an intruder alarm which is set daily from 9pm to 7am.