



HEATHFIELD SCHOOL

Boarding Principles and Practice

Policy Area:	Boarding
Relevant Statutory Regulations:	NMS Part A Standard 1
Key Contact Personnel in School	
Nominated Member of Leadership Staff Responsible for the policy:	Assistant Head (Pastoral and Boarding)
Version:	2024.01
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Date of next review:	01 September 2026

This policy will be reviewed at least biennially, and/or following any concerns and/or updates to national and local guidance or procedures.

Boarding Mission Statement and Aims

Overview for Boarders (to be published in all boarding areas):

Boarding is fundamental to the ethos of Heathfield School (“the School”). It defines who we are and allows us to fulfil the School’s Aim: to discover and develop every pupil’s unique talents to enable them to excel. Boarding exemplifies the attitudes that the School takes as a community; it is proactive, warm, collaborative, inclusive and mutually respectful as well as fun. Boarding enables every pupil to be known and appreciated. It is also a safe forum for young people to engender a sense of belonging, independence, and empowerment (the School’s Values) which feed into their academic progress and pastoral growth. Boarding underpins the ethos of the School for all our young people whether they sleep in school or not. All pupils are welcome into the living areas, share the communal spaces and are welcomed by House staff. Heathfield prides itself on extending the hand of opportunity equally to all.

In practice, pupils live in year groups, allowing them to develop close bonds within their own age group. House Parents and Deputy House Parents live among those pupils and they are supported by a team of Boarding Assistants. Pupils in Forms I, and II board in rooms which range in size from singles to dormitories. From Form III upwards, most pupils have their own room, leading towards a more transitional point in the UVI, where through structured independence our pupils are prepared for the next stage in their lives. Through a well-structured system of busy weekends in school including activities and days out, there is a healthy balance between school and home.

Aims:

- To develop a sense of community and belonging, where everyone shows respect for self, each other and the environment, whilst taking responsibility for their actions
- To create a culture of positivity, kindness and respect, honesty and selflessness, compassion and service

- To use the richness of our boarding environment as a springboard to provide our pupils with an inspiring and holistic education in which they are enabled to flourish, immersing themselves in our Curricular and Co-Curricular activities in order to get the most out of their time at Heathfield
- To encourage all pupils and staff to lead a healthy lifestyle and help address any issues in regard to wellbeing, adhering to codes of conduct and policies, displaying mutual respect and empathy to one another
- To employ staff who are totally dedicated to the wellbeing and development, both socially and intellectually, of all boarding pupils. Staff will be invested in building rapport and connection with their pupils, evoking a positive working relationship.
- To safeguard and promote pupil welfare in an environment which allows for risk and challenge but is, as far as possible, safe from physical hazards and dangers
- To produce an open and trusting atmosphere in which all members of the community feel able to approach any other member (staff or pupil) confident that they will be treated with respect and courtesy
- To value and nurture each individual pupil within a warm, supportive connection, where pupils' happiness and well-being are cared for in an inclusive, supporting environment
- To enable pupils and staff to engage with the wider world and see the value of service through leadership and community programmes and educational, community and charitable projects locally, nationally, and overseas
- To provide an environment which enhances and supports the pursuit of academic excellence for all pupils at a level appropriate to their abilities and needs, where we foster an ability to learn from failure and celebrate success, in all that the pupils do
- To help prepare and develop skills which are necessary to organise both their academic and Co-Curricular lives and those which are imperative for future life at university and beyond. Enhancing pupils' organisation, courtesy, confidence, leadership, self-discipline, independence, determination and motivation, both in and out of the classroom
- To develop and deepen supportive and collaborative relationships between pupils, parents and staff
- To provide an ethos of support, understanding and kindness where bullying and harassment are not tolerated, ensuring that pupils are not discriminated against, paying particular regard to cultural background, linguistic background, special educational need, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or academic, creative or sporting ability
- To be attentive and responsive to the wishes of the pupils, involving them in decisions made about the boarding environment and practices
- To welcome, with warmth, new boarders whenever they may join us, help them to settle into their new lives and understand the routines and customs of the school
- To maintain our reputation for excellent pastoral care by continually investing time and resources in accommodation, facilities, staff training and development
- To provide a range of opportunities through our support of the positive education programme to proactively learn about our mental health and how to evoke wellbeing
- To provide a range of opportunities and activities, appropriate to age and maturity, that will help in the cultural, social and personal development of each pupil
- To ensure as far as possible that life in School and in Houses is free from hazards and dangers and to ensure that a pupil's environment is safe and healthy
- To create an atmosphere where pupils can relax and enjoy community life

Outcomes for Pupils:

- Independence: From Brontë to Wyatt House, the pupils become increasingly self-disciplined, resilient, resourceful and self-reliant. Enjoying the experience of living away from home, learning to organise their schedules, their leisure time, their personal routines and navigate friendships.
- Understanding: Pupils develop an understanding of themselves, gaining a balanced perspective about life and how to approach difficulties and learn from their mistakes. Pupils foster an understanding of communal living, learning how to be tolerant, kind, culturally aware and are able to show care, compromise and consideration towards others as they all experience challenges and successes. Pupils recognise the value of working hard and being kind.
- Community: Pupils grow to appreciate the value of community through living in a boarding house. They develop a strong sense of loyalty, promoting and sharing its ethos and spirit, recognising their role in guiding and supporting others through participation, contribution and leadership.
- Safety: Pupils feel safe in their boarding environment and therefore able to flourish. They are confident to raise their opinions and to express their voice knowing they will be listened to. They live in an environment that is free from bullying or unkindness and are confident to be upstanders against any negative behaviours. Pupils are aware of the safeguarding policies, e-safety guidance and codes of conduct in order to keep themselves safe.

Structure of boarding at Heathfield:

