



BOARDING POLICY

Members of Staff Responsible for this Policy: Head of Boarding

POLICY CONSULTATION & REVIEW

This policy is available on our staff shared drive.

Details of review and ratification can be found below.

Author	Date	Date of next review	Details	Approved
L. Spencer	01/09/2024	01/09/2025	New Head of Boarding. Policy overhauled. Changes to reflect new personnel, procedures and general operations	CMW/ADS (01/09/2024)
L. Spencer	01/09/2025	01/09/2026	New personnel, updated fire protocol, use of school app for comms added	

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Statement of the School's boarding principles and practice

The following are principles upon which boarding in this school is based:

- The development of the whole person and the communication of values are vital.
- Being an open and trusting school, boarding is based upon mutual respect for all its members.
- Each boarder has the right to be able to work, play and relax free from abuse, intimidation, harassment, teasing and bullying.
- There is equality of opportunity and respect for all boarders, regardless of ethnicity, culture, gender, sexual orientation or disability.
- Each boarder and each member of staff is to be treated as an individual and with respect by other pupils and staff.
- Although living together, staff and boarders acknowledge the right of each other to privacy.
- Each boarder has the right to extend his or her intellectual growth in an atmosphere of positive encouragement and in conditions that are conducive to learning.
- All boarders should be able to develop physically, spiritually, intellectually, morally and socially.
- Despite the distance separating boarders from their families, links with parents, carers and/or educational guardians are seen as an indispensable part of the support and development of boarders.

Statement of boarding aims

In this school, the aims of boarding are as follows to:

- Develop the ability to live and work with others peacefully and respectfully.
- Produce an open and trusting ethos in which each boarder feels able to approach any other member of the community (staff or pupil), confident in the knowledge that he or she will be treated and respected as an individual.
- Create an atmosphere of tolerance, openness and trust in which unkindness, harassment or bullying would find great difficulty in developing.
- Provide the conditions for boarders to develop their intellectual talents through well structured homework conditions, access to staff and other pupils, participation in activities and in an atmosphere which values effort.
- Provide a range of activities, hobbies and opportunities related to age and maturity that will assist in the personal, social, emotional and cultural development of each boarder.
- Safeguard and promote the welfare of each boarder, by providing an environment that is, as far as possible, free from physical hazards and dangers of any sort.
- Provide accommodation that is comfortable and suited to the needs of boarders, according to age and maturity, and which provides adequate levels of privacy.
- Develop boarders' responsibility for self, for others and for the environment.
- Develop boarders' qualities of leadership and ability to work as part of a team.
- Encourage boarders to contribute to the needs and welfare of others in the house and school, as well as those in the wider community.
- Provide suitable conditions for boarders to feel able to turn to members of staff to share the good things in their lives, as well as seeking advice, counselling and support during times of difficulty.
- Create a fun and relaxed home for boarders which goes beyond the idea of a home-from-home, and enriches their lives in ways that are different from their family home.
- Acknowledge the importance of family in a child's boarding journey, working with parents and guardians to provide the best holistic education for boarders.

Personnel, responsibilities and contact details

Management

Member of staff	Position	Responsibility	Contact details
Mr Andrew De Silva	Headmaster	Overall responsibility for all children and staff in the school	07872 140951
Mr Chris Winterbottom	Deputy Head	Organisation and responsibility for all children and staff in the school. Line manager of Head of Boarding	07867 871858
Mrs Leanne Spencer	Head of Boarding	Organisation and running of boarding house and boarding staff and provision. Welfare and development of the boarders.	07757 720737
Miss Melinda Papp	Deputy Head of Boarding	Assisting the Head of Boarding with all organisational matters relating to the boarding house. Shared responsibility for the welfare and development of boarders.	07554 532668
Miss Lorraine Coombes	Houseparent	To oversee the organisation of the house during the day and assist the Heads of Boarding in the running of the boarding provision	07872 146008

Medical

Member of staff	Position	Responsibility	Contact details
Sister Caroline Crowe	School Nurse	Overall responsibility for all medical matters for all pupil, including boarders. Oversight of medical training for boarding staff. Medical and wellbeing.	07805 645006

House Tutors

Member of staff	Responsibility
Mr James Baker	Duty Nights in house. Some weekend duties. These staff work alongside four residential gap students.
Miss Claire Knights	
Mrs Carly Sizer	
Mr Chris Sizer	
Miss Kate Oakley	
Mrs Rachel Whatmore	
Miss Ella Munro	
Mrs Mia Suggitt	

Induction for boarding staff

All staff in the boarding houses have job descriptions which they will have discussed with the housemaster and/or Head of Boarding at their appointment to the school. There is an induction checklist that is completed with the Head of Boarding.

Following this they will spend time working alongside existing staff before taking on boarding duties alone. They will also receive the induction training that all teaching staff receive as detailed in the staff handbook, which includes Safeguarding Training. This is carried out by the DSL/Deputy Head.

The induction program continues with regular check-ins and feedback in the early stages. A duties log is kept which enables duty staff to raise issues with the Head of Boarding for later discussion.

All staff are encouraged to partake in appropriate courses (Gap Students and those new to boarding to do the Introduction to Boarding Educare Course). Termly boarding meetings allow any issues to be raised and the Head of Boarding sends reminders or info via email to the boarding staff members. Open communication is actively encouraged.

Training

Online training (Educare), on-the-job training and BSA courses are used to support CPD for boarding staff. The Head of Boarding attends regular BSA training to keep up to date with developments in boarding and receives BSA email updates, with important information being disseminated to boarding staff when needed.

The school nurse instructs the staff on which medical courses need to be completed and books in-person first aid courses for staff at the appropriate times. A brief in-house, in-person training takes place with the school nurse and HoB/DHoB on how to deal with the usual ailments that boarders may present with during an evening duty ie. what is a high temperature? Which non-prescription medicine is best for what ailments?

Structure/organisation and supervision of the boarding house

The boarding house is situated in the main school on the first floor. The dormitories are organised in two separate wings; one for the girls and one for the boys, with dorms/areas for the various year groups. There is a communal, co-ed common room in the centre of the house with snack area, games areas, and a cinema room.

The Head of Boarding and Deputy Head of Boarding are “on call” for emergency in their own houses covering 7 nights a week, with the support of the Gap assistants. The Gap assistants are located in each wing of the house (2 on girls’ side and 2 on boys’ side), based in their rooms on the first floor, 7 nights a week. Their overnight duty is on a rota.

From a disciplinary point of view, the duty member of boarding staff is responsible for the discipline in the dormitories when they are upstairs. When this duty period has finished, the Gap Assistants and Heads of Boarding are in charge of discipline but will normally refer all disciplinary matters to the Head of Boarding when he/she arrives again the next morning. All incidents of behaviour or causes for concern are recorded in a file which is kept in the dispensary room. Any major safeguarding issue are recorded on CPOMS. In the evenings, the staff will normally supervise the children washing and getting ready for bed and be on hand to distribute any medication. The duty member of staff will turn out the lights and carry out a late final check before retiring for the evening. Responsibility is then handed over to the resident staff. In the mornings, the Head of Boarding arrives shortly after 7am to support the other resident staff in getting the children out of bed and down to breakfast. The Head of Boarding then supervises breakfast and gives notices before the start of the school day. Breakfast takes place in the main school dining room.

Male duty staff supervising girls in the boarding house

On certain evenings, male members of staff carry out duties in the boarding house and in order to provide appropriate supervision and care, they need to be able to enter the girls' wing. They should not enter the girls' bathrooms unless in an emergency, and they must knock dormitory doors before entering. Walking through or patrolling corridors is always permitted and encouraged, and girls (and boys) are expected to be fully dressed when walking between bathrooms and dorms. Male staff will be allowed into a dorm at bedtime, to check on the girls, say goodnight and turn out the lights. Members of staff (male or female) should not sit on beds or encroach on the boarders' personal space. Male members of staff should remain aware of girls' feelings about male members of staff in their boarding space and be sensitive to this.

This would be the same for female staff entering boys' bathrooms and dorms.

Types of Boarding Offered at The Oratory Prep School

The Oratory Prep School is a traditional, Catholic boarding and day prep school which offers a range of boarding options to suit prep school families in the 21st Century:

Full Boarding is a boarding arrangement where a child boards at all times during term time. This suits overseas families and those who live further afield within the UK. It is assumed that a full boarder is in school at all times except, half-terms and school holidays. Parents of full boarders must inform the Headmaster or Deputy Head/Head of Boarding if they need/wish to take their child out of school for any reason.

Weekly Boarding is an arrangement where boarders stay in school Monday through to Friday. Parents take their child home for the weekend and either return them to school on Sunday evening by 6pm, or Monday morning by 8.15am. It is assumed that a weekly boarder is in school except at weekends. Parents should ask permission to take their child out of school at other times for any reason. Weekly boarders are welcome to stay in school at weekends but there is an additional charge for this.

Flexi Boarding is offered to day pupils who do not wish to do full or weekly boarding. This suits very local families or those whose children take part in a lot of evening activities during the week, and offers the best of what boarding offers while still giving the child the security of living at home. Parents book their child in for a set number of nights (the same nights) per week. The school will always try to accommodate changes in these nights and make it as flexible for parents as possible. Flexi boarding spaces are limited and flexi boarding beds will often be used by another boarder on other nights if required.

Occasional/On-Off Boarding is an arrangement whereby parents can book their child in for one night as and when required. This is slightly different from flexi boarding. Parents often use this facility after late school events ie. the school Christmas Feast, Form Plays etc.

Occasional boarding is also offered in emergency situations such as parents suddenly unable to collect their child/parent taken ill/adverse weather etc.

The school is not obligated to accommodate flexi or one-off boarding requests where this is not possible or where certain behaviours or additional needs cannot be met ie. medical.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE AND GOING OUT

It is expected that full boarders are in school at all times during term-time, including weekends. However, permission will be given for leave of absence for special occasions and circumstances, or to attend parties or sleepovers (with permission from parents).

Boarders are allowed to go offsite with their parents after matches/games on a Wednesday and Saturday and must be back in school in time for school supper at 5.30pm. They may also go out on Sundays but must be back for tea. Any requests for an extension to the return time must be arranged in advance with the Head of Boarding so that numbers for the catering are adjusted. The latest this will be extended to is the time that the child's year group is expected to be in the boarding house. This is only considered for birthdays or family events. Parents may visit their child on their birthday or other times, but should notify the school office or houseparents first to find out what time is most convenient to arrive.

Weekly boarders can go home on Friday evening after their lesson and prep/activity commitments and may return on Sunday evening by 7pm or by 8am on Monday morning.

Boarders who are invited to birthday parties by other boarders or by day children will be given permission to do so by the Head of Boarding, who will seek permission from parents first. Those who are invited to attend parties at a time when they would not usually be under the school's care must deal with permission and arrangements themselves.

Permissions for overnight stays/sleepover parties will usually only be given at weekends (full boarders) and with permission from parents first, and with enough notice for all arrangements to be made and all staff to be made aware.

House staff are kept informed about any leave of absence that may have been granted through use of the dispensary whiteboard or the calendar on the dispensary wall. Staff in turn, will inform the duty member of staff of absences they have noted, so that numbers can be checked when supervising the dormitories. If any child is reported as absent, no leave of absence has been granted and there does not appear to be any explanation for the child's absence, then the "missing pupil" procedure will immediately be put into action.

Leave of absence for senior boarding staff is normally only granted by the Head.

Missing Pupil Procedure

Any member of staff who discovers, or suspects, a pupil has absconded or is missing, is immediately to inform the Head of Boarding and the DSL or in their absence, another member of the Leadership Team.

The procedures for dealing with missing day or boarding pupils are outlined in the school's Missing Pupil Policy.

Medical Care of Boarders

The medical care of the boarders is the responsibility of the school nurses supported by the boarding team. There is always a suitably qualified member of staff on duty, including overnight and at weekends.

Parents of boarders must complete a 'Pupil medical history form' on admission to the school with details of over-the-counter drugs parents are happy for their child to be given. If a boarder becomes unwell during a school day, they will see the Nursing Sister or a Houseparent and they will be assessed. If necessary, the child will be

offered over-the-counter medication and/or placed in their room to rest. Parents will be informed by the nurse on duty via phone or email, and the symptoms and treatments recorded on Isams. Parents will be given the option to collect their child, or for more distant families, for the child to be looked after in school and taken for treatment/further assessment if required or deemed necessary by the school nurse.

Orthodontic and dental treatment should be arranged during school holidays. Any emergency treatment will be accessed via the NHS dental service, but there is NO orthodontic provision.

Boarders who take regular medication, or are on a temporary course of prescribed medication, must hand this in to the boarding staff or nurse arrival for their first night in their boarding house. Children are not allowed to hold onto their own medications without prior consultation with the Head of Boarding and School nurse.

- All medication must have the original label and packaging, the child's name and the directions. Any prescription medication that is not specifically prescribed for your child with their name on it cannot be administered at school.
- Boarders are not permitted to self-medicate unless there has been consultation with parents and staff and a form completed
- We stock a variety of OCMs that cover all ailments, and administer these as appropriate.
- Some children take a regular supplement or multivitamin provided from home. These should also be handed to staff for safekeeping.

Accommodation of Unwell children at School

There are sickbeds in the San for boarders who need to be isolated overnight from the rest of their dormitory, and a toilet in the corridor is allocated to the sick child and out of limits to others for that period. If a boarder presents with vomiting or diarrhoea, they should remain out of circulation for 48 hours after the last incident, as should any day pupils or Flexi Boarders who should remain at home.

During the time that sick beds are occupied, a member of staff will be on hand in the house to provide care for those children. Meals will be brought to them in the San and the child monitored. If the child is feeling well enough and is in the sick bay during a school day, work from their teachers should be sought so that they do not miss too much of their study time. Pupil visitors to the sick bay are not permitted at this time.

The school may need to consider asking guardians or parents to step in and collect children if:

- The child is seriously unwell
- Their illness or injury means that they cannot take part in normal school life
- There is an illness that is widespread in the school or boarding house and the house is finding it difficult to accommodate or care for a large number of unwell children ie. pandemic, widespread virus.

Accident and Emergency

Boarding staff are trained in First Aid. Boarding staff are expected to make their own judgements about the severity of injuries or illness during boarding time, using assessment criteria provided by the nurses. Nurses can

be contacted by phone for advice. Where possible, the A&E department is not to be used if treatment can be sought elsewhere i.e. minor injury clinic first thing the following morning. For obvious fractures, serious accidents or potentially life-threatening symptoms, the child will be taken to A&E or an ambulance called and parents informed.

The Boarding Environment

It is important that the boarders regard their time in the dormitories as “homely and relaxing”. This should be achieved fairly simply by creating an atmosphere where the children feel they can unwind, but at the same time appreciate where the boundaries are, regarding discipline and good behaviour. To this end, it is expected that boarding staff may adopt a less formal attitude to the children when they are in the house, compared to when they are in the classroom, whilst still fostering the ethos of a school where the children are well behaved and respectful.

Due to the location of the boarding house in the main school, rather than in a separate house on the grounds, it is important that boarders are able to regard their accommodation upstairs as their home. For this reason, it is important that children who are not boarders do not encroach on the boarding facilities, nor should staff who are not directly involved with the boarding side of the school visit the dormitories without reason and without warning, particularly when the children are upstairs. It is not appropriate for teaching or sports staff to “chase” a child for something once they are in the boarding house. Access for parents should also be restricted at boarding times.

Boarding staff should try to show the children how to organise themselves; in this way, they will be better prepared for their senior schools and for life beyond school. There will be significantly less sympathy shown at their senior schools if they leave their books in the house, turn up late for things or forget to make their beds. They must be given genuine free time in which they can learn to prioritise and manage their time.

Boarding staff should be responsible, kind, fun and caring and should ensure a “homelike” atmosphere and approach. They should have time to talk with the children: to talk about their day, their sport, their music, their successes and their failures. They have a tremendously important role in helping the children develop motivation and self-esteem and in shaping their attitudes to learning and to life in general. This can be difficult to do when running an evening’s duty.

The role of the house staff is pivotal, crucial to the well-being of the children and of the school itself. They are entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring that we provide the children with the very best care and guidance that we have at our disposal. For this reason, boarding staff should be professional in all aspects of their role as mentors and carers of the children entrusted to their care.

All boarders must receive a comprehensive induction and support to help them settle into the house. An induction checklist is available and should be used by staff carrying this out.

Catholic Life

Boarding is integral in supporting an upbringing within the Catholic faith. Boarding staff must fully support the Catholic ethos, in order to help children to develop spiritually and within the Catholic social teaching principles. Opportunities to explore the seven principles of the Catholic teachings should be provided as much as possible

within the boarding environment and as a boarding family, using activities and reflection time to explore how boarders can remember these principles in their daily lives.

Rules, regulations, rewards/sanctions tariff

The following is a set of rules that should generally be applied in the boarding houses. It is realised that not all rules are applicable to all boarding houses, but they present a broad outline of rules and regulations:

- Children should not visit other dormitories once lights are turned out.
- Children should not make unnecessary noise that is likely to disturb others.
- No kind of bullying, verbal, physical or any other kind will be tolerated.
- Children should not continue talking after lights are out.
- Children should not read or play games (with the aid of a torch) after lights are out. There is time for this earlier in the evening before the lights go out.
- Pillow fighting, climbing over furniture, bathroom waterfights or other types of “roguish” behaviour is not appropriate. Running around the house or dorms is not allowed.
- Once lights are turned out, children should not get out of bed for any reason except in case of illness, or needing to go to the bathroom.
- Children should respect other children’s privacy.
- No food or drink allowed in the dormitories.

The children should be encouraged, and expected to treat members of staff with respect and deference. They should also be encouraged to treat each other with respect. This applies particularly to each other’s property. It is assumed that they will not go in to other children’s lockers or private possessions. A member of staff should not “search” children’s lockers or private possessions unless he or she has reason to do so. If this is deemed necessary, the child must be present at the time. Staff will, however, often check the tidiness of drawers and cupboards.

Punishments/sanctions generally take the form of temporary loss of privileges. The following punishments may also be given:

- Coming upstairs early for a number of days
- Loss of free time
- Lights out early
- Loss of Tuck privileges
- Loss or reduction of device time
- Detention in extreme cases
- Clearing tables after breakfast
- Moved out of dorm for a night or more if deemed to be causing a disturbance

“School day sanctions” are not usually given for misbehaviour in the boarding houses. These are specifically used for day-time misdemeanours and should not be carried over from the general school to boarding hours. Minor sanctions are to be recorded in the house folder. More serious incidents should be reported to the Head of boarding who will record them on the school’s information management system or Cpoms.

House staff promote values and qualities by using competitive points system in the boarding house. Points are given for displaying desired qualities and going above and beyond, with rewards to help boarders meet goals. Children should not be rewarded for behaviour that is expected as a minimum, and points may be deducted for small misdemeanors such as being untidy or not handing in laundry. This system is introduced to boarders and clearly displayed in the house.

Duties and responsibilities of boarders

Boarders should carry out the following duties/responsibilities:

- They should make their own bed each morning
- They should keep their personal area neat and tidy
- They should get up in the mornings when requested to do so
- They should wash and dress on time in the mornings
- They should obey the rules and regulations applicable to the dormitories
- They should treat others in the boarding house with respect
- They should respect others' possessions
- They should hand in clothing items for laundering on the correct days and when asked to

Academic/prep. arrangements

Prep is undertaken in the main school on certain evenings, and there are study activities twice a week during the school day. Any additional work that needs to be completed is done after supper under the supervision of the duty staff or gap students. On the whole, work should not take place in the boarding house so that the house is seen as a place to relax. For year 8, daily additional supported sessions may be available in the dining room after supper in the week before common entrance.

If any child wishes to study on his/her own in the evening, arrangements are always made to allow this, but they should always be supervised especially if the use of a device is required.

Music practice should take place in the meeting room areas downstairs either before coming upstairs, or before breakfast.

Younger children are supported with spelling and reading and good communication takes place between boarding and teaching staff to ensure that enough support is given if a child is not keeping up with prep.

Complaints Procedure for Children

We hold it essential at The Oratory Prep School that children can have access to a sympathetic ear at all times, so that they can voice **concerns or worries**. To this end, children have access to the Head, House staff and all staff on the school premises, all of whom will listen and act on any worries, concerns or fears. Notices around the school display the telephone numbers of the independent listener who will act as an outside (neutral) listener if necessary. "Who can I talk to?" posters offer a range of options for children to contact with concerns including the Office of the Children's Commissioner. "Childline" numbers are displayed and children may telephone home at any reasonable time.

Pupils are instructed that they should pass on any complaints made by younger children to an appropriate member of staff.

The level of adult supervision and the degree of contact between staff and children ensure that almost every voiced concern (or complaint) is heard. Boarders also have termly briefings and weekly meetings to discuss issues as well as morning catch ups after breakfast.

Children also have access to informal counselling with the Head of Wellbeing (school nurse) who is a trained mental health first-aider, and a school counsellor can be accessed if needed. Children are encouraged to use the suggestion and worry box in the boarding house. Weekly boarding meetings take place too so that boarders can speak openly about their suggestions and experiences. Boarding ambassadors/head boarders are also on hand to listen and bring issues to staff if this is easier for children.

Anti - Bullying and Safeguarding Procedures

The Oratory Prep School is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. This means that children should feel safe from any form of bullying from peers or adults.

House staff use CPOMS as a communication and recording tool as per the safeguarding policy. A safeguarding section in the duty log book ensures any issues are raised promptly. A worry box is maintained too.

Please see the school's anti bullying, behaviour and safeguarding policies for information regarding these procedures.

Contact with home

Mobile telephones are allowed for boarders, who must hand these in on arrival at the beginning of term. These are then kept securely in the charging device lockers. Children hand their telephones in to the Head of Boarding and staff check that they have been handed in. These can be accessed on Wednesday nights for “device time” and on Sunday mornings. WiFi is available in the house for a limited time and is filtered appropriately for pupils. All children have access to a telephone in the day or evening if they need it. There are three mobile telephones for the boarding house which take incoming calls only. Parents are informed of these numbers and are encouraged to phone during certain hours when they know their children will be available to take calls. Children are allowed access to the school telephone if the matter is urgent, and other telephones are all being used. **Urgent** calls to the main school line are picked up by the Head of Boarding and transferred if necessary. Often staff might “triage” a call home if it is felt that calling home is not in the best interest of the child at that moment, ie. a child asks to call because they are homesick or asks to call very late at night.

Letters from home/friends are received by the office staff and given to the Head of Boarding to distribute later that day. Parcels are taken to the boarding house and are opened by the children in the presence of a member of staff. This is done to prevent the reception of medicines without staff’s knowledge and to enable staff to be aware of the arrival of clothing items left at home, (nametapes etc).

It is the policy of the school that the children should be encouraged to communicate with home as often as is necessary; whether this takes the form of a letter, telephone call or e-mail, is not important. It goes without saying that the art of formal letter writing is taught throughout the school as part of the English curriculum. It is also the stated policy of the school that any child should be able to speak to a parent/guardian/outside listener in private, whenever necessary, although it is hoped that the child concerned will already have spoken to a member of staff about his or her worry.

Skype sessions are arranged by the school for boarders upon request for things like private online lessons. Zoom is also used and school devices are available for this.

Contact between school and home

The Head of Boarding typically contacts all families via email in the summer holidays leading up to the first day of the new year, and at most school holidays, to disseminate information about the upcoming term.

Contact throughout the year other than at these times is as needed. The school app is used for quick communication and for sending out reminders. The Head of Boarding will occasionally use Whatsapp to send photos individually to parents and whatsapp is generally a channel that parents enjoy using for this purpose. A boarding phone number is used specifically for this. Parents are reminded that more formal communication should be used to raise concerns.

Guardians

The school follows the National Minimum Standards for Boarding on the matter of guardian arrangements. These currently state that:

- The school regularly monitors the suitability of any arrangements it makes for the appointment of guardians.
- Any guardians appointed by the school are subject to the same safer recruitment procedures as staff, and their care of pupils is monitored.

As such, the school does not approve guardians, and guardians must be arranged independently by parents. Parents are encouraged to use AEGIS approved guardians.

The Head of Boarding checks in with children when they return from a guardian or homestay, and keeps a record of those conversations. Any safeguarding issues are recorded and dealt with.

Staff at The Oratory Prep School are not permitted to provide residential or educational guardianship to pupils at the school.

See more detailed guardianship policy.

Transport for Boarders

If a child is overseen by an educational guardian, the guardian may book taxis and transfers for boarders to and from airports or to and from host families. In these cases, the school must be notified of pick up times and names and contact details of drivers. For those without guardianship support, it is best practice for the school to book transfers for boarders so that we are aware of the arrangements and are satisfied with the suitability of the drivers. The school has a contract with a local taxi service for this.

Security of Boarding Houses

The school is secured with locked external doors with codes that are only shared with staff. The residential caretaker does a thorough lock up and check at the end of every evening and after boarders have gone to bed. Wings of the house are also locked after lights out by the duty staff so that boys and girls cannot reach each other and any intruders who do make it up the main stairs cannot proceed any further. Alarms are fitted to each of the external doors that lead out of the boarding house to keep children safe and secure. This is operated from the mobile devices of the resident house staff.

There is always a number of adults sleeping in the house in easy access of the dormitories, to whom the children can have access in the event of an emergency. There is a fully functional fire alarm system installed in all the main buildings of the school; a log is kept of all fire practices and fire alarm faults.

Intruder/Lockdown Procedures

If it is suspected that there is an intruder on the premises during boarding time, it is extremely important that the welfare of the children is the school's primary consideration. The following procedure should be adopted:

- The children must be brought to the boarding house and made to stay in their dormitories. The main boarding wing doors should be closed and locked, and all fire escapes secured. A roll call should be taken to ensure all pupils are accounted for.
- An immediate search should be initiated to ascertain whether or not there is an intruder on the premises.
- If an intruder is discovered, then the Police should be informed immediately; assistance should be sought from other members of staff, and appropriate action taken, depending on the circumstances. The safety of the children is of paramount importance, as is the personal safety of members of staff.
- If a child is missing, then the missing pupil procedure should be initiated. See the separate missing pupil policy.
- In extreme cases, if there is deemed to be a greater threat within the building, all boarders should be brought to the girls' wing of the house and the doors locked. The coded doors on the two fire escapes must be secured and children brought to the common area until it is safe. Children should remain seated, and quiet and must keep away from windows. This area of the house has been deemed safest because:
 1. It has telephone access
 2. Medicines and first aid are more readily available
 3. There are more lockable areas for safety
 4. There is access to food and water in the dispensary
 5. The housemaster's accommodation allows for additional escape routes

Night-time Fire Procedure

Night time = when boarders are in the house and in bed.

Children's Procedure on hearing the Fire Alarm.

The children will get out of bed and switch on the lights if they can. They will then wake-up everyone in the dormitory, put on their dressing-gowns and slippers and again check that everyone is awake. They then leave the dormitory in silence, via the nearest Fire Exit. (If this leads towards the fire then they return and exit via an alternative route). Children should ideally be led by a member of staff but should not wait indefinitely at fire exits for staff to escort them. They should exit immediately via their designated route, which they will have practised, quickly and quietly and assemble at the assembly point. All boarders have a designated exit that should be used and will know the alternative route should this be blocked.

Evacuation routes and staff responsibility:

Boys' dorms - Main stairs and out of building via "Blue chairs" fire exit. Gap student on boys' side to lead evacuation. Second Gap to "sweep".

Girls' dorms - Fire escape in girls' corridor and down the kitchen staircase opposite gap student room. Out the kitchen corridor fire exit.

The Assembly point is the gazebo in the main school gardens by the lawn.

The children assemble in silence and await the reading of the roll call.

A walk-through of these routes at the start of each new term is essential. Walk-throughs must also be conducted for any new boarder or visitor/flexi.

The Head and Deputy Head of Boarding's Procedure on hearing the Fire Alarm

The Deputy Head of Boarding will make sure that the girls' dorms are evacuated via the exit on that side of the house and/or the main staircase.. He/she will make sure that silence is observed and will then help to take a roll call of the dormitories at the assembly point to check that all are present.

The Head of Boarding will do a quick sweep of the corridors and head to the alarm panel to see the cause of the fire alarm and call/notify the maintenance staff accordingly. The fire brigade will be "stood down" if necessary, or summoned. Maintenance staff will come and investigate (if there is no fire). Only when it is safe to do so, when given the go-ahead, will the boarders be allowed back to their dormitories. Other members of staff who are resident "on site" will be called upon for assistance, should the need arise. Residents should always evacuate in the event of an alarm if they hear it, unless told otherwise. If a resident is missing and known to be on site, this will be reported and investigated if safe to do so.

Procedure at Assembly Point

(a) Boarders must assemble by dormitories **in silence** for checking of absentees.

(b) Children should answer their names **clearly** and **promptly** when they are called out.

If it is not safe to return inside, the children will be walked over to the swimming pool building to keep warm.

If boarders are not yet in bed, they should be led by staff down the main stairwell and out via the "blue chairs" fire exit.

The procedure should be carried out as above. Staff will retrieve night registers on their way out in all evacuations procedures.