

## Statement of Boarding Principles and Practice

### Executive summary

This policy summarises our boarding practice and how it operates for the educational benefit of pupils.

### Aims and Organisation

Eastbourne College exists to provide the best possible education to boys and girls. The whole ethos of the school is based on the idea of a full boarding day and six-seven\* day week. For day pupils, they benefit from an extended day which for many does not finish until 2000hrs and with full Saturday school.. Much of the pupil development and enrichment stems from this and from the fact that a significant proportion of the staff and their families live on campus or in its immediate environs.

### Weekends

\*September 2019 saw further development of our family friendly boarding model to an even more flexible approach whereby boarders could, if they wish, go home on Friday evening and return on Monday morning, subject to them fulfilling school and house commitments over the weekend. Decisions whether to be in or out of house should generally made by Wednesday night / Thursday morning and confirmed with parents for the weekend. Saturday sports fixtures, enrichment, support, specialist and scholar commitments, house / yeargroup dinners and house revues are examples of school commitments which need to be factored in.

There is a structured weekend programme and social events for all ages including dinners and concerts on Saturday nights (for all Houses on a rota) and expeditions and day trips away on Sundays (for boarders). The town also offers cinema, theatres and other recreational opportunities close at hand. Full boarding brings a raft of benefits, not least that the College is always alive with young people. Despite this flexibility, the programme of events and the many benefits of staying in school at the weekend where one has the benefit of being able to spend free time with friends, are compelling. Attendance at occasional Chapel services which run on Sundays is optional; a change made in 2018 prior to which compulsory evensong took place weekly for all boarders.

### Staff

Almost all teaching staff are involved in the life of a House. New pupils in Year 9 find themselves in a safe and stimulating environment, with a highly experienced, enthusiastic pastoral team on hand to encourage, supervise and protect. The Housemaster / mistress (Hsm) lives in the House (in all cases apart from the day House of Craig where the hsm lives in the next door building) and in the case of all boarding Houses, is supported by a Resident House Tutor (RHT). Arnold Lodge is staffed in the building by two resident staff. The lodge is a flexi-boarding facility which boards pupils on an ad-hoc / pre-booked basis. Each House has an additional team of approximately seven tutors who live in the College and visit the House to take duties and see the pupils. Boarders are also cared for by a resident matron. All pupils benefit from the health-based expertise from the Medical Centre and its team of qualified

nurses. This can provide 24hr care as the need arises, with nurses always on-station until 2200hrs. There is a resident school Chaplain, and a Counsellor to whom pupils can also refer. Pastoral care is overseen by the Deputy Head (Pastoral) who works closely with the team of 10 Hsms and the Arnold Lodge staff five of whom are boarding Hsms. Hsms and tutors have considerable experience and are able to deal sympathetically and confidently with any temporary difficulties a pupil may meet. Alternatively pupils may choose to turn for support from other pupils or staff and this is one advantage and strength of the Eastbourne College community.

The boarding team really understand the values of boarding and sharing time outside the classroom in a more informal environment. Spending time watching a Year 9 pupil grow into an Upper Sixth form pupil and sharing their achievements, success stories and family life along the way is quite a privilege. Tutors and Hsms share the fun times in House, watch the drama performance, see the music concert, enjoy the art exhibition, shout from the side-lines, talk to parents and really know the boys and girls in their care.

### House Spirit and Values

Pupils value the community spirit in their House. The time they can spend with their friends and belonging to a happy House makes free time fun. Living in school means that support is always available from teaching staff and extra support in prep time. In House the Hsm, Matron and tutors will always find time to chat and catch up; give friendly advice and make each pupil feel at ease whatever is on their mind. House trips, dinners and the annual revue are real highlights for everyone in the House and a great opportunity for all year groups to come together. Boarding is about learning to live alongside others through compromise and empathy, to respect each person for who they are, as well as about providing the very best opportunities for making the most of who we are. Pupils enjoy the sense of freedom and independence living away from home, but know they have the safety and structure of their House, to which they become very loyal. They learn the value of interdependence and the personal skills they need to develop to make the most of this interdependence for themselves and all those around them.

### Responsibility

As they progress through their House pupils are challenged (and taught) to take on increasing responsibility for the care and leadership of others. Leadership is exercised as part of a team which includes House staff and centres on care for others, leadership and heading off problems before they occur. In all Houses there are excellent arrangements for study with designated 'quiet times' and supervised prep on five of the seven nights in the week. For those resident on weekends, Sunday provides a time to rest, shop, take part in an organised activity, meet up with friends across the houses or simply relax and catch up on prep.

### Parents

Parental involvement is welcomed and encouraged and the majority of parents live within 90 minutes travel time (many, much closer). This makes it an ideal environment for children from overseas and is

particularly heartening for and inclusive of children from ex-pat families. Many Houses hold parent forums at which current issues are discussed. E-mail, text and telephone mean that parents are in frequent contact with their children and those who look after them.

### Facilities

Each boarding House has the capacity to accommodate between 60 and 70 pupils. Pupils are largely accommodated in study bedrooms and the majority are in single or double rooms. Each House has its own range of social and recreational facilities which include opportunities to cook, exercise, contact home, use computers, practise music, play, watch television and hold informal House events.

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### References

#### Internal

- Staff Code of Conduct / Behaviour Policy
- Tutoring Policy
- Supervision of pupils policy
- Boarding staff guidance policy

#### External

- ISI Regulatory compliance inspection framework commentary handbook 2020