



OLD BUCKENHAM HALL

Boarding Policy

OBHP52

Statement of Boarding

Old Buckenham Hall recognizes and values the importance of children's emotional wellbeing as the foundation to everything else that happens in school; all principles and practice stem from this core ethos.

At Old Buckenham Hall we aim to provide an environment that is safe and promotes mutual respect for all members of the school community. Every boarder has the right to equality of opportunity, the right to privacy and the right to work, play and relax free from abuse, bullying, and harassment.

High quality pastoral and medical care enables pupils to flourish in a happy, caring and supportive environment; thereby ensuring children grow as individuals and fulfill their potential.

A fun and structured weekend and evening activity programme offers children the opportunity to experience a broad spectrum of activities and adventures which encourage friendship, self-confidence, respect, leadership skills, community spirit, compassion and a sense of humour.

The three Boarding Houses offer pupils comfortable and cosy accommodation in which to "unwind" at the end of a busy day and share any triumphs or concerns. A dedicated team of Houseparents and matrons are responsible for the overall welfare and day-to-day wellbeing of the boarders.

Aims and Principles

- To make sure each individual boarder feels genuinely cared for.
- To provide the highest pastoral support for all pupils.
- To ensure that each individual boarder is safe and secure.
- To provide a relaxed family environment.
- To provide good quality activities for boarders during weekends and evenings.

- To provide all boarders with appropriate constructive free time.
- To provide appropriate medical care for any child who should need it.
- To provide access to contacting parents, relations and friends, via email, phone and letter
- To provide a varied nutritional diet of high quality.

Boarding Practice and Organisation

Boarding is comfortable, caring and above all fun!

We strongly believe in the value of boarding; by living together in a close community the children can build up their self-confidence, independence and community spirit. The Old Buckenham Hall boarding experience offers the perfect preparation for boarding at Senior School, as well as the chance to take full advantage of all that our facilities and staff can offer, long after the teaching day is over.

Our boarding is based under one roof in the Mansion; but split into three distinct areas. Lodge (Senior Girls') and Mertons (Senior Boys') and Spero, a Monday – Friday junior boarding house for Year 3, 4 and 5 boarders. The Headmaster, Senior Deputy Head, Head of Boarding, Senior Matron, weekend house-parent and gap students all live onsite.

Enthusiastic staff run a range of activities during the evenings as well as a fun and structured weekend programme, making full use of our beautiful 76-acre grounds. Boarders' parents are encouraged to visit their children regularly, to watch concerts, plays, matches, to attend church and stay for coffee on Sundays.

We make it easy for children and parents to grow into boarding. It is available to all pupils in the prep school. Many choose to start as day pupils and transfer to boarding once they have settled in. A range of boarding options are available; from two or three nights in school as a transitional boarder, to weekly boarding – enabling fuller involvement in evening activities and full boarding which allows pupils to stay in for 11 nights and enjoy the extensive range of exciting activities offered throughout the weekend. Transitional boarders select their transitional boarding nights prior to the start of term. It is then expected that they will board on these same nights for the rest of the term.

- Formal and informal monitoring of personal progress and welfare are continuous during a boarder's time at OBH. (examples include boarding reports, welfare plans, healthcare plans). Key issues concerning the welfare of boarders are regularly discussed in the weekly Boarding Meetings; and boarding issues may also be

discussed in the daily staff briefings which are attended by all teaching staff and led by the Headmaster

- The School Nurse is responsible for the day-to-day health and well-being of the children, working closely with the School Doctor. See OBHP22 Medical Care Policy for procedures and protocols pertaining to all health care and medication.
- The school seeks to integrate new boarders as smoothly as possible by providing support, guidance and information. A full induction procedure is in place to ensure a smooth introduction to life as a boarder. Parents are kept informed of their child's progress regularly, either by phone, email, or in person.
- All pupils have access to a telephone in several locations around school: Spero, Lodge and Mertons all have phones. The ICT room and library are accessible for sending emails. Skype and Facetime can be arranged for international boarders.
- When a pupil first arrives at the school and starts boarding, it is recommended that they do not contact home for the first week. This is to help prevent them becoming overly homesick and reliant on home, and to encourage full immersion and integration in their new surroundings. Experience tells us that often a child will feel homesick or upset, call home on the first day or so with little good news, having made few friends, and feeling thoroughly miserable. This can cause anxiety to worried parents. After a week, the pupil is much more settled, feeling comfortable with routines and life generally at school, and importantly lots of news of new friends, activities, games. The Head of Boarding will, of course, keep in close contact with the parents throughout this time.
- Parents can phone whenever they like, but they may be asked to call back, at a specific time, when the pupil can easily come to the phone. A good time for parents to call is between 7.30pm and 8:45pm. Letters, parcels and emails are always welcomed. Letters are placed in the letter rack under the main stairs.
- Pupils are not allowed mobile phones in school. Overseas boarders may have a mobile; this is kept locked away by the matrons and only used to phone their parents or when they travel to and from school. There are occasions where pupils stay at friends for exeats and they may take their mobiles, so parents and guardians may call them.
- All parents who live overseas are expected to have a guardian in the UK who will look after their children at home weekends and in the event of illness. We are unable to arrange this but are happy to offer advice. (See OBHP37 Guardianship Policy and Procedure)
- The School promotes all aspects of equal opportunity and diversity and welcomes pupils from a variety of faiths and denominations, making provision for religious, dietary and cultural needs. (See OBHP50 Provision for Pupils with Religious, Dietary or Cultural Needs Policy)

- It is the School's policy is to promote a healthy lifestyle and guidance on all aspects of personal and social development. The School prides itself on the quality of food provided for the boarders. There is a wide choice and provision is made for special dietary needs.
- A high priority is placed on maintaining children's safety around the school site. In addition to clear guidelines for the children themselves, the School has digital keypads on external and some internal doors. All visitors must report to the school office, or out of school office hours, the duty member of staff. The dorms are not accessible to parents, unless accompanied by a member of staff or at the beginning and end of term. (See OBHP35 Visitors to the Boarding House Policy).
- The School is committed to Safeguarding Children, the School Nurse is the Designated Safeguarding Lead. A copy of the School's Safeguarding Policy may be found on the School's website and in the Staff Handbook. All members of the School's staff, both teaching and non-teaching, receive training in Child Protection. (See OBHP23 Safeguarding Policy)
- The telephone numbers of the School's Independent Listener, The Children's Commissioner and ChildLine are clearly visible by the school phones, on posters throughout the Boarding Houses and in the Pupil's planners.
- Boarders will need the number of articles specified on the uniform lists. The list has been carefully planned so that the boarders have suitable clothes for the school day, sport and the boarding programme. All clothing brought into school, including home clothes, must be clearly named with a sewn in name tape. The matrons will name unmarked items, but a charge of £1.50 per item will be added to your school bill.
- The school positively encourages the "pupils voice" in several ways. A pupil may complain directly, via their form tutor or to member of boarding staff. Boarders are given the opportunity to express their views about boarding, anonymously, via questionnaires (presently annual). The Head of Boarding coordinates these questionnaires, records them and acts accordingly. Each Boarding House has regular meetings where pupils are encouraged to speak up. The pupil school council meets twice a term with the Headmaster. Minutes are taken and circulated.
- Handling complaints by parents - In the first instance, and in line with school policy, the Head of Boarding or Headmaster will reply to the parent's contact within 24 hours, acknowledging their concern either by phone, email or in person. If necessary, the Head of Boarding or Headmaster will investigate the concern and reply fully in due course. In all instances, discussions regarding the complaints will be fully discussed and reviewed, and possible changes to procedure and practice considered. Parents may lodge an official complaint as per the School Complaints Policy. (See OBHP05 Complaints Policy)

- It is essential for a school to run as a well-ordered community where both the rights of the individual and their responsibilities towards others are recognised and maintained. (See OBHP04 Behaviour Policy).
- We take great care to ensure that disciplinary measures which occur during the school day are not carried over into the boarding and evening environment; we aim to provide a distinct change from the day/night routine.
- The School operates a zero-tolerance policy towards bullying. Staff are vigilant in looking out for signs of such behaviour and any offences are treated very seriously. (See OBHP03 Anti Bullying Policy)
- Physical Restraint – the school takes extremely seriously the importance of appropriate physical interaction between staff and children. (See OBHP48 Restraint Policy).

Please see School COVID – 19 Risk Assessment (August 2020) for boarding practice during the pandemic.

Boarding House Staff, Structure and organisation

Emma Easdale – Head of Boarding, School Nurse

Tracey Thornton –Senior Matron

Mark Warrington – Weekend Houseparent

Debbie Gooderham – Non Residential Matron

The School Governor directly responsible for Boarding is Mr James Quick

All staff involved directly in Boarding will hold the health, safety and emotional welfare of the children to be of prime importance. They will be adhering to the school policies and provide a good role model to the children. They are required to have First Aid qualifications and will be aware of the school's fire policy and procedure regarding night time evacuation.

The Boarding Day/Night Routine

Weekdays

OBHP52

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7.10am	Lights are switched on.
7.20 am	Boarders wake up, wash, dress and tidy dormitories, clean teeth, etc
7.40 am	Downstairs for breakfast
8.15 am	Form tutorial/registration
5.40 pm	Day pupils go home; boarders change into mufti
6.00 pm	Supper
6.30 pm - 7.30pm	Activities and music practice – yrs 3,4,5,6,7
7.30 pm	Year 3,4,5 bed bell. Lights out 8.15pm
8.00pm	Year 6 bed bell. Lights out 8.30pm
8:15pm	Year 7 bed bell. Lights out 8.45pm
8.30pm	Year 8 bed bell
9.15pm	Year 8 lights out

Saturday evening – timings flexible	
4.00 pm	Free time/ Duty Staff Activity
6.00 pm	Supper in Dining room.
6.45 pm	Evening in-house activity/movie.
Bed bells and lights out as above.	
Sunday – timings flexible	
8.00am	Wake up.
8.30am	Breakfast.
10.00am	Church
11.00am	Free time
1.00 pm	Lunch
2.00 pm	Activities/excursion with weekend duty staff
6.00 pm	Supper
7.45pm	Year 6 bed bell. Lights out 8.15pm
8.00pm	Year 7 bed bell. Lights out 8.30pm
8.15pm	Year 8 bed bell. Lights out 9.00pm
Some Sundays will be all-day excursions, so times can vary	

Page Break

Matronal Duties

Wake up

- Arrive in the dorms at 7.10am. Switch dorm lights on, wake pupils.
- Children should be out of bed from 7.20am.

- Check on any ill/upset pupils from the previous evening (consult boarding diary if necessary).
- All pupils to dress tidily for school, make beds, take any unnecessary things to the changing rooms.
- Ensure pupils brush teeth, brush hair, and leave for school tidy and organised.
- All downstairs for breakfast by 7.40am, having been “passed” by a houseparent or matron.

Breakfast

- Always encourage good behaviour and manners.
- Pupils serve themselves cereal, juice and toast. Hot meals are served by kitchen staff or boarding staff.
- Ensure all pupils eat and drink enough, and that specific dietary requirements are met (liaise with the school nurse and/or Chef if concerned).
- Give any notices for the day ahead.

Laundry duties / Cover changing rooms as and when required to do so.

Change down 5.40-6pm

- Arrive on the dorm landing by 5.40pm to welcome the pupils as they finish prep.
- Ensure pupils change into mufti in a calm manner.
- Ensure that all pupils are in the dining room by 6.00pm.

Supper

- All staff on evening duty attend supper from 5.50pm to help supervise the meal.
- Ensure all pupils eat and drink enough, and that specific dietary requirements are met (liaise with school nurse and/or Chef if concerned).
- Give out any notices as required, including that evening’s activity programme.

Evening activities

- After supper academic day staff run clubs and activities between 6.30pm – 7.30pm. Years 3 - 7 must join an activity. Year 8s have a 2nd prep and can join in the activities from 7.00pm

Dorms 7.30pm - 9.15pm (children come up at different times according to age)

- Welcome the pupils upstairs
- Supervise changing and showering, ensure all pupils have brushed their teeth, and are ready for bed.
- A snacks of milk, toast, fruit or cereal are available to all boarders in their common rooms before they go to bed.
- All pupils are registered in their dorms before bed - the register (fire list) is put by the fire escape door in the Dining Room.
- Spend time hearing younger pupils read.
- Pupils may want to phone home - ensure this is possible
- Ensure dorm areas are tidy.
- Put dirty clothes into the laundry.
- Encourage boarders to play, read, chat together – free time.

Overnight duty

The residential member of staff on overnight duty will not leave the building and remain responsible for the boarders until wake-up the next day.

They are the first port of call for a pupil in distress during the night – There are night bells in each house to call for help.

In the event of a fire alarm, the staff members will follow the procedure as detailed in Fire Procedure.

If a pupil is ill during the night, there is always someone who can dispense medication on duty.

Any issues or concerns arising during the day or night should be reported to the Head of Boarding. These notes may then be cross-referenced/copied onto the confidential boarder's file.

Weekend duty

Our weekend Houseparent runs the weekends with a gap student. A member of the SMT is always on call. The boarders will enjoy planned outings, games and activities; meals times may vary depending on activities and excursions. On Sundays the boarders attend a local church service.

Boarders go to bed 30 minutes earlier on a Sunday night.

Activities are planned to ensure breadth and variety of excursions, as well as suitability for the time of term and individual pupils concerned.

Lock-up

The school caretaker locks up at 8.45pm.

Office phone

Monday to Friday the school office closes at 6.00pm; the school phone is handed to the matrons until 8.00am the following morning. On Saturday the school office closes at 4.00pm and the Weekend houseparent holds the duty phone until 8.00am Monday.

Boarding Induction Protocols

The proper induction of pupils is key to future success and happiness when joining the school, and every effort is made to ensure that the transition from day to boarding runs smoothly.

The process by which new children are inducted into boarding life at OBH begins some way in advance of their start.

Stages in induction process are as follows:

Prospective parents bring their child to visit, look around the boarding house and meet the Head of Boarding. If the child is already a day pupil, they might enjoy a current boarder showing them around.

The Head of Boarding, in consultation with the registrar, will organise trail nights.

The Head of Boarding will allocate a boarding guide who will help the child during his/her visit.

When the decision is finalised, a boarding handbook and uniform list will be sent out by the registrar.

Just prior to the child's arrival they will receive a post card from the Head of Boarding welcoming them and informing them of their guide.

New children arriving in their house at the beginning term will be met by boarding staff and introduced to their guide. Every effort is made to ensure a relaxed atmosphere. Parents can help their child unpack and settle in.

On the first night Matrons will ensure all new boarders are aware of the location of fire escapes, loos and how to locate the night bell. They should record this.

House staff will keep a close eye on all new boarders, monitor their progress and report any concerns to the Head of Boarding.

The Head of Boarding will make direct contact with the parents (both new pupils and ex day) about their children's first few nights of boarding.

Communication with home during the first few days is closely monitored.

New boarders will be helped to settle in quickly by the boarding team. All school and boarding procedures will be carefully explained, and any questions answered.