



bsa | BOARDING
SCHOOLS'
ASSOCIATION

How to Thrive at Boarding School

Edited by Alex Thomson
Director of Training
The Boarding Schools' Association

The Boarding Experience	4
What can I expect as a boarder?	5
What difference is there to being a day student?	6
What are the main benefits?	8
Being a Young Boarder	9
How to fit right in!	10
Where can I get advice and support?	12
Coping with Homesickness	13
Maintaining contact with your family, guardian, carer, friends	14
How to manage the challenges of boarding life	16
How can I find some personal space/time?	17
How do I manage the stress?	18
General advice	20

“Most teenagers yearn for a degree of independence as they seek to develop their own identity. Boarding provides this opportunity and much more; there are significant advantages for pupils at a boarding school.”

The Boarding Experience

Greater scope and scale of opportunity

Boarders do things that simply aren't possible at home. They can sample more and, as a result, often have the chance to achieve more. With the availability of excellent facilities and almost constant access to staff, but without a daily commute, boarders can get more done; their days are longer and their weeks are broader.

Wider focus and greater independence

Boarding allows pupils to develop more of their potential and strengthens their sense of independence within a supportive community. The structure of their daily and weekly routine serves to remind them of their academic priorities but still leaves them with plenty of choices, prioritising, planning their use of time and organising themselves independently.

More responsibility, respect and resilience

Boarding allows pupils to grow in confidence as they take responsibility for the decisions they make independent of their parents. Boarders live in a close community and it helps them understand that their actions affect others. They learn to be considerate of and respect different opinions as well as looking out for those who live around them.

Greater range of relationships, shared experiences and friendships

Boarding brings social interaction and the chance to share conversations, thoughts and hopes with a wide range of teachers as well as peers. Friendships formed at boarding school are often life-long. Shared experiences and time to be together allows for relationships to grow and develop. What is more, relationships at home can benefit because the time together during the holidays is not taken for granted by parents or children. Furthermore, parents do not have the pressure of organising their children's lives and homework after school during term, which is particularly helpful in the teenage years.

What can I expect as a boarder?

So aside from the sports clubs, arts groups and societies; ignoring the fact that you will get well fed by top catering teams three times a day; forgetting the exciting trips at weekends whether excursions, CCF or Duke of Edinburgh, and the fact that all your washing will be done for you; what else can you expect as a boarder?

Much depends on which school you go to and at what age you become a member of the boarding community. Lots of schools talk about a “home from home” but again this too depends on what your home is like. Seemingly there are lots of rules and regulations; these simply ensure the sort of behaviour your parents would expect and are there, believe it or not, to help you get the best out of your time in a boarding house.

Responsibility for your House and how it operates rests with a Housemaster/ Housemistress or House-parents. They will be assisted by one or two resident tutors and a Matron who may or may not live in too. Some schools assign tutors to specific year groups within the House; others have tutor groups outside of the House system. Either way, there will be lots of academic and social support from well-trained staff that will give you the tools to succeed in your school work, as well as provide a listening ear and good advice when you need it.

It is often said that friends you make in your House will be friends for life and essentially this is true. Whether at prep school or senior school you will share experiences with others in your year group which are part of the glue that binds you to the House and school community.

Increasingly, as the world becomes a smaller place, it is likely you will be living with students from a variety of other countries. By the time you leave school, you really will have friends around the globe. If you are boarding for the first time you may feel homesick at some point, but you will not be alone in this and there will always be a member of the House team ready to support you. The early inter-house competitions, whether sporting or musical, bring the whole House together and will really give you a sense of House identity.

As you progress you will of course learn some valuable life-skills. Boarding **will** make you more independent and is excellent preparation for university. However, you will also realise how interdependent you are: teamwork and cooperation is what makes a successful House. At various points, you will face academic and social challenges some you will need support with but others will present opportunities for you to develop your negotiating skills (where that prep deadline is concerned); your diplomacy skills when sorting out a dispute between friends and your resilience, for when things don't go your way but you have to accept it and move on. Of course, there are lots of leadership opportunities, from organising the House drama to becoming Head of House or perhaps doing both!

Andy Thomas, King's Ely

What difference is there to being a day student?

Obviously, the main one is that instead of going home to your family at the end of the day, you go 'home' with your friends to a boarding house, where House parents and matrons look after you.

On a practical level, the biggest advantage is that you don't have travel time at the start and end of the school day - you can walk across to school after breakfast at a reasonable hour, and return immediately lessons after lessons or activities are over....no traffic jams, no other moaning pupils, no dark mornings and evenings!

Another advantage is that you get to spend social time with friends who may otherwise be too far away to see regularly. You can chill out together at various points in the evening....and you also get to make new friends not only of different nationalities, but also from different year groups. Finding out about other cultures is really interesting, and you get to join in lots of extra celebrations - Chinese New Year, St Nicholas Day etc. You can also share recipes and meals together, discovering the real cuisine not just the restaurant or takeaway version of a country's diet! It's really helpful to talk to older pupils about their experiences, and share their stories to help develop your own pathways through life....then you can do the same for younger pupils.

A further big advantage is that the evening routine includes time for prep, so there's no chance to procrastinate or find better things to do! Working at set time allows you to really focus, and you can draw on the support of your peers, or of boarding tutors who may teach the subject. Sometimes, there will be additional evening tutorials, or workshops will be open to carry on with Art or Cooking projects - a definite bonus of staying in school.

If you are involved in practical activities, such as Music or Drama rehearsals, sports team training or committees, boarding will allow you to access those without disrupting so much of your own time. It's much easier to rehearse from 7pm - 9pm if you've already relaxed in your own room with friends, rather than driven home and back. In the same way, early morning gym sessions are more accessible if you can roll out of bed at 6.30am rather than 5.30am! You build a sense of team and togetherness through these activities.

One of the greatest differences about staying in school is that your social life is on your doorstep. Depending on your particular school, there will be any, or all, of the following:

- your House common room - pizza and trash TV/origami workshop/ Monopoly challenge/x-box gaming...staff will support you if you want to start up something new
- a shared boarders' tuck shop/coffee bar/ common room, maybe with pool and table tennis, where you can meet with friends from other boarding houses
- access to the gym/music practice rooms/school pool etc. to meet up with mates
- local facilities access e.g. cinema/theatre/bowling for accompanied visits

Certainly as you get older, the chance to prepare for an independent life is brilliant.... many freshers struggle at Uni because they've never been away from home and have not the opportunity to live communally. Boarding in your senior years at school not only helps you study and revise better, but also helps you to get used to living away from your parents and siblings. You may think you'll miss them, but actually, it probably won't be as much as you thought because you'll be surrounded by supportive staff, great friends, and a stimulating set of things to do.

So, the difference to being a day student is....

IT'S BETTER TO BE A BOARDER!

Fiona Earle, Rydal Penrhos School



“I get to see my best friends every day
and do fun activities after my studies.”

Harry, aged 15

What are the main benefits?

This seems such a big question and so the answer is likely as big. In short, the benefits are what you put in. If you take part in trips, clubs, experiences with friends, the House, and the wider school community you will have a group of people you can always rely on, relationships made for a lifetime. Connections across the world in many cases, new and different experiences that you look back on, new passions you discover and an independence and resilience for life after boarding school, that your friends outside boarding school didn't even realise they needed. You will have that leg up knowing how to live away from home, how to find help and support, how to meet new people and make new friends and how to jump in to wider life at work, university or travelling the world experiencing more with the same excitement you had at school forever.

You can have a built-in structure for everyday life to know exactly what is expected of you and develop your independence to support the younger students in the House. You can have brothers and sisters from all different backgrounds, ages and experiences and learn from each other. In boarding you can find different ways to see the world, a home away from home that is entirely different from what home may be like. Not everyone has a House of 10-100 students living in it. From sports, arts, drama, crafts, cooking, baking, travelling and more the experiences and skills you take away from boarding will certainly stay with you for life and make moving on a breeze.

Anila Mehmood, Brilliantmont International School

“The best of both worlds: friends all around and a great experience full of opportunities when you are boarding, and family close and supportive when needed.”

Sophie Thomson

Being a young boarder

Boarding for younger children is very different experience to that of a 6th former. It is likely that you will share a dorm with 2, 3, or even more 'brothers' or sisters' – fellow boarders of the same age. Your boarding House will be smaller and cosier – much more like a large family home with your House Parents, often their own children and pets, living alongside you. There is likely to be a Matron as part of the House team, on hand to help with everything associated with living from laundry, medication, school uniform and sports kit and a whole host of other everyday tasks.

Life in the Junior House is also very different with the staff always ready to sort out any problems or organise activities and trips or indeed just to be there for a chat. Prep boarding is always busy and you will find that time flies by with your days filled by lessons, activities, music, sports, games, food, prep time, social events and even a bit of quiet time either in one of the common rooms or in your dorm.

Most schools will discourage excessive use or access to mobile phones and tablets and encourage you to get fully involved in boarding life. You may at times feel a little homesick but your fellow boarders and the boarding staff will be there to ensure that life is busy and fun.

To help you and your parents make the most of this new and unique experience here are some top tips to help you prepare:

Preparation for the boarder

1. To get used to being away from your family, do enjoy some sleepovers with friends and relatives in the holidays.
2. Try to visit the school before term starts so that you know where your bed is.
3. If the school offers a 'taster' night or weekend jump at the chance; you will meet other new boarders and get a feel for how it all fits together.
4. Take some items of comfort with you to school especially a favourite soft toy.

Preparation for the parents

1. Discuss the benefits of boarding school as a family and ensure that excitement for the adventure is emphasised alongside your love. Any anxiety is acutely felt by the young boarder.
2. Help your child understand the new environment especially the challenges of sharing personal space with others in a dorm. Encourage them to be open and smiley to build new friendships.
3. Ensure that the boarder has every item on the kit list and it is marked!
4. Aim to get your child to the school on time and try to make your departure short and sweet: the boarding staff will be trying to get all the new boarders together and fully involved and busy. Schools have a well worked 'induction' system for new boarders.
5. Try to minimise how often you make use of your phone or social media to find out how your child is getting on; they will be busy and the boarding staff will encourage them to get in touch with you at the best times. If you need to get in touch, contact the House Parents directly and they will help you manage what is bound to be strange in the early days. This helps with any homesickness and ensure that the boarders are fully focused on settling in to boarding life. They will then have so much more to tell you when you pick them up at the weekend!

When you start

1. Learn to talk to your House Parents as quickly as possible. They are the best people to help you and happy to answer even what you might think is a silly question.
2. Involve yourself in as many activities as possible at school, during the day, in the evening and at weekends!
3. Be prepared not to phone home in the first few days. This helps you cope with homesickness (see section XXX)
4. Ask as many questions as you can, this will help you understand the school and boarding routines quickly.
5. **SMILE!** Everyone is there to help you settle and enjoy school.

How to fit right in!

No matter how much information you read, your journey of integration into boarding life will be your own. Your individual character will be important in determining how well you settle in but it is also the key role of the boarding staff to make this new experience as enjoyable as possible and to minimize any negative aspects. So, let's start at the start!

The main challenge for a boarder is how to fit in! For some, this will be a minor thing but for others this may be your first time away from home and it's all you can think about. The good news is everyone's feeling the same way; they will just adapt differently and at a different pace; so here is some advice to help you fit in as quickly as possible.

The best way of settling in to what can be a very strange environment is to try hard to make friends as quickly as possible and to connect with your House's staff team. Don't sit alone and don't be afraid to express how you're feeling; everyone is there to help you. Although it might seem strange, the other thing that invariably helps is to limit contact home during the first few days after you arrive, this way you have more to talk about! Being busy helps too: get involved in all the new and exciting things on offer, fill your time with activities or sports, go on the trips at the weekend. Indeed, they say laughter is the best medicine, so go have some fun!

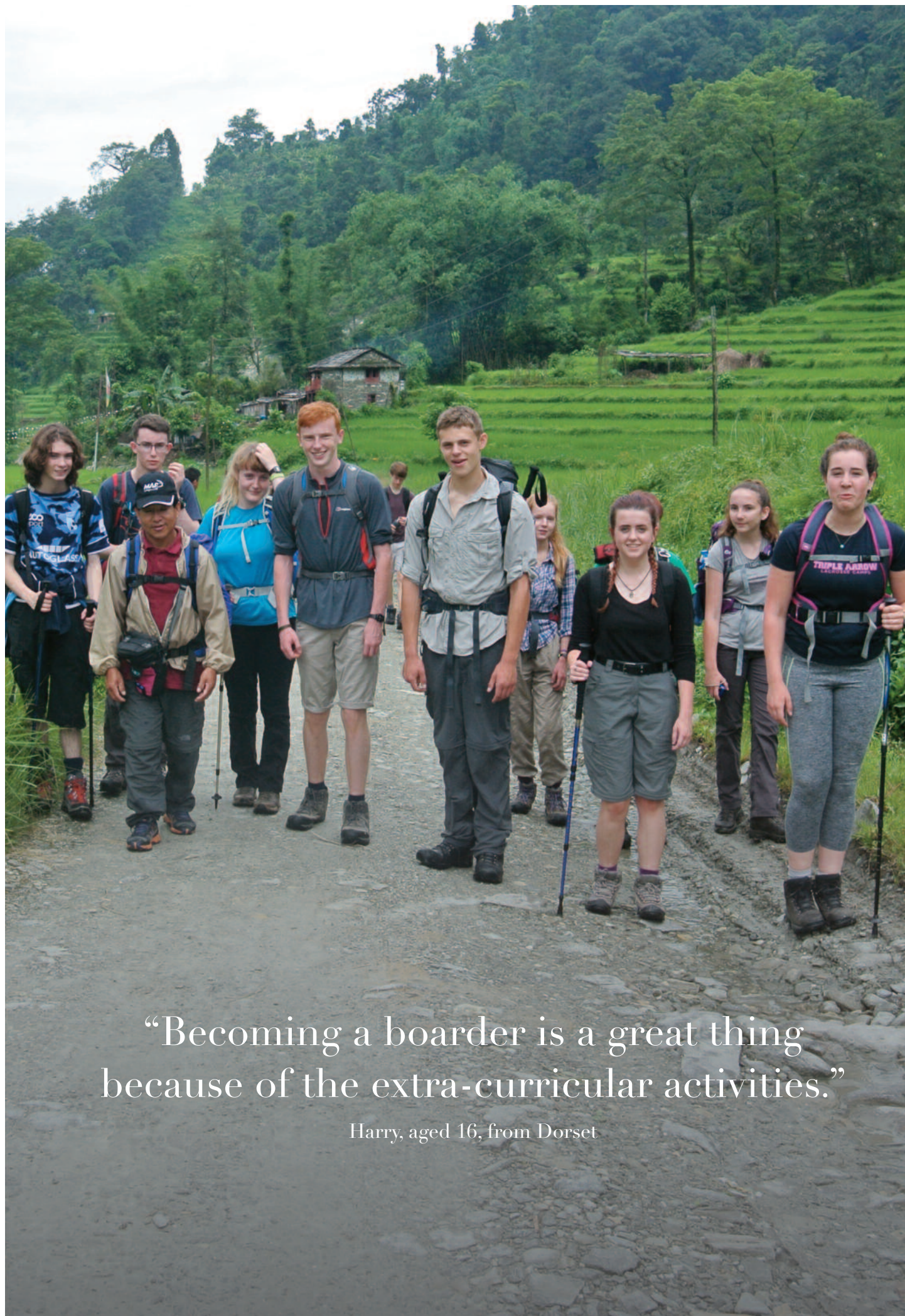
The next big challenge is friends and how to make them. Relationships in boarding school are the foundation of what makes it so amazing to live with your friends away from home! The best advice would be just smile and say hi. On the first day, there will be other students in the same boat as you as well as some 'old hands' who will know exactly how you feel and they may well be the best people to help you make sense of everything.

Do make sure to take this opportunity to make friends from different cultures, countries and backgrounds. It may be the easiest option to seek out people from your own country, especially if English isn't your first language, but in reality, you will learn more and get more out of boarding life if you have a wide variety of friends. Many students also report that the friends they make in boarding school and become their boarding family, end up as friends for life! How amazing is that?

Lastly don't be afraid to go ask questions, if you don't understand something, just ask! Everything is going to be a new experience for you, and the boarding staff are not going to mind you asking how things work or why we do some things. Above everything else learn to enjoy the unimportant things; a shared hot chocolate in the common room, the funny dancing at the disco. The memories you make in boarding school will be with you for life, make them special and something to be proud of.

Students who fully embrace this new life of a residential school, the wide range of activities and the many new experiences will undoubtedly have better outcomes both academically and social - so seize these opportunities with both hands.

Helen Deane, Lancing Prep Hove



“Becoming a boarder is a great thing
because of the extra-curricular activities.”

Harry, aged 16, from Dorset

Where can I get advice and support?

Just as with your life at home, sometimes at school there will be things that you find difficult to handle, and which lead to you feeling the need to turn to someone for help. Maybe this will be while you are settling in, or it could be when you are already established and thought you were doing well, or it could be at a time of stress in your life, such as exam worries, family problems, personal fears and concerns or when someone close to you is ill or has died.

It is important to remember that everyone is different, and what works for one person does not always work for another. Some of us show very clearly when we are upset, others bottle things up and try to cope without worrying other people.

Whatever your difficulty, and whichever type of person you are, there is someone you can turn to. Think first of those closest to you each day, which might include your friends or an older pupil you trust. Think also, though, of the staff you are closest to: your Houseparent, the boarding staff, a matron, medical centre staff or school doctor, or possibly your form teacher or tutor. Each of these people is trained to help you but, more importantly, will want to because they care about you.

If you can't turn to any of those people, your boarding house will certainly have a poster or some sort of information about other people who can help. Is there a school counsellor? Do you have an independent listener? There will certainly also be information about ChildLine or the Children's Commissioner. If you really feel there is no one else you can trust, these people are there to help you.

And please don't forget your family! Sometimes boarders feel that they don't want to worry their parents, carers or family with their problems at school, because they will worry about you. Yes, they will.....but that is what those that love you will always do, and you will almost always feel better once you know that they understand and are trying to help.

Dale Wilkins, Old Swinford Hospital School

Coping with homesickness

As with anything 'new', it is only natural to feel nervous and a little apprehensive in the run up to starting at a new school or moving into a new boarding house. You may have questions in your mind like; will I make new friends; will I get on with the other boarders, will I miss my family? The answer to all of them is yes, of course you will!

Homesickness can be very upsetting and make you feel like you have made the wrong choice in coming to boarding school. Firstly, don't worry, as every new boarder will have felt this when they first arrived and as everyone was new once, everyone in your boarding community knows how you will be feeling in your first few days (even teachers were new in the boarding house once and will have felt nervous and worried); as everyone misses their family and changes in your daily life take you out of your comfort zone.

The best things for you to do are:

- get involved in the activities and the induction programme that your School or House will have put in place, these will help you to make friends more quickly and also feel more comfortable about your surroundings;
- talk to the other boarders in your room and in your year group, it is likely that they will become some of your best friends and will be happy to help you with any questions you have (remember, they know what it feels like to be new);
- speak with a Prefect or member of staff if you are feeling upset, they will be able to help you and expect you to need a little extra support in your first few days;
- and finally, arrange a set time each day to speak with your family on the phone (try to avoid this being just before bedtime). It may feel like you want to speak to them more regularly than this if you are missing them, but this will only keep refreshing your feelings of being away from them and also take you away from all the fun that is happening in the boarding house and community!

Your parents will worry about you and miss you too, but they want you to experience as many things as possible whilst at boarding school. If you become a little upset when speaking to them, this is natural and don't worry. Try to talk to them about the fun and enjoyable things that you have done that day.

These feelings can last up to a few weeks (I still miss my Mum sometimes and I moved away from my parents nearly 20 years ago), but once you have settled in and are loving being a boarder, don't forget to ring home at least once every few days, as your family will be missing you too!!

Andy Towse, St John's College Southsea

Maintaining contact with your family, guardian, carer and friends

It really is easy to keep in contact with home. Technology is brilliant.

Different schools have different procedures, so you will need to find out what your school's arrangements are. You may be allowed your mobile phone/iPad all the time, or for a few hours a day and/or have to hand them in at bedtime. You will certainly have access to school computers and the internet.

It can be very tempting to break the rules e.g. by keeping your phone/iPad when you should not be using it. That isn't a good idea. The rules are there for lots of good reasons, all of which are designed to help you and others make the most of boarding school life e.g. getting enough sleep, not being distracted during lessons, having plenty of time for making new friends.

Most students have no problem finding the time to stay in touch with anyone important to them. If you do find it difficult, for example if there is a time difference, talk to a member of the House staff. They really understand and will definitely help you to manage times which work for you and those you want to contact.

Some simple advice: don't spend hours alone with your phone/iPad. You now have the opportunity to make great friends in your new school; some will become friends for life. As well as staying in good contact with those who are back home, make sure you also give yourself plenty of time to get to know those new friends.

Liz Best, previously Wycombe Abbey

A young woman with brown hair, wearing a dark blue school uniform with yellow piping and a crest, is smiling at the camera. In the background, a male student in a similar uniform is partially visible. The text "Boarding has helped me become more confident." is overlaid on the image.

“Boarding has helped me
become more confident.”

Lucie, aged 15, from Lancashire

How to manage the challenges of boarding life

Life in boarding is certainly different to life outside boarding. This is a fact. While it's usually a wonderful and positive experience it comes with its own challenges. Finding ways to manage these challenges to ensure life in boarding is still as positive an experience as you can make it is a skill many students take years to learn. Here we hope to give you some tips on how to build your own personal resilience, your own armour to some of these struggles.

Rumours are rife in schools and in boarding they are born every day. Every minute of every day if there's nothing else particularly interesting going on. The best way to handle such a situation is not get involved however tempting and scandalous the new titbit might be. If you appear uninterested and refuse to help rumours spread others will follow. Then when they inevitably become about you, everyone will know they are untrue.

Bullying younger students in dorms when staff are out of sight can still be practiced. Some students who have been in boarding for a few years may have had such an experience as a younger boarder, they think this is a tradition. It's not. It's a horrible practice that destroys the sense of family the House could be. It doesn't mean there's shouldn't be respect and support for everyone in the House or that the older students can't offer anything to the youngers but when it feels like it's going too far, it probably is. Tell a member of staff that you know is fair. They will sort it out and you will feel better knowing the House is a safe and happy place for everyone.

When it all feels like it's not your day, it's just one day. Even if it's been all week. Ask one of the staff or one of the older students if they have some time for a chat. They will have been in that situation themselves and they'll know what to do. They'll also know where the best tea is hidden in the House and who has a secret stash of biscuits. Why not take advantage of the boarding house when you need it, that's what it's there for!

If you feel like you have no one to talk to, remember in your House everyone feels like that at some point. Just because you haven't had a chat with someone for a while doesn't mean they won't listen. Try someone from another year group or someone you don't know so well. They might have the best idea for a House event or a weekend trip that you can plan together to get your mind off things.

Finally know that every day in boarding you are learning so many skills and living a new experience that some people never get. When it's time for you to move on you will see the effects of this time, so for now, try to enjoy it as much as you can.

Anila Mehmood, Brillantmont International School

How can I find some personal space/time?

Whilst being a part of a boarding community is one of the best experiences you will ever have, there will also be times when you actually just want some 'me time'. So how do you find that in a noisy, busy House full of other people?

You might want to think about this before you even arrive in the House. How do you relax and switch off? Perhaps you like to read or listen to music? It's completely possible to do this even in a shared dorm. Plug your headphones in, open your book up so you can't see anyone else and enjoy the story. But you might not find it that easy.

So, check the House rules and find out when you can leave the House and where you can go. Your school is sure to have some quiet places, there will be a library, there will be places to sit in the grounds on a nice day, there will probably be a chapel, there may even be a quiet room allocated within your own House. Maybe you just want to sit and think, that's ok too. You might even know some mindfulness techniques which will help you.

Don't take your phone with you though. It is essential that you put that down, take some time out from social media and genuinely think things through.

Remember, everyone needs their own space from time to time, so no-one is going to think that it is anything other than normal when you decide it is time for your time.

Tanya Lee, The King's School

How do I manage the stress?

A reasonable level of stress, one that is manageable, is not only unavoidable but also good for you. However, boarding school life can be quite hectic because there are so many things to get involved in and so many demands upon your time and your emotional energy. Sometimes you might find yourself overloaded. This is not unusual, and it is, therefore, important to know how to prevent things from getting on top of you and to have tactics for managing your 'stress bucket' so that it does not reach the top and overflow. Being busy, having lots of commitments and cramming in as many things as you can, is fine as long as you have a 'tap' to release the stress.

Here are some proven tactics for 'de-stressing':

- Make sure you are doing the simple things right
- Sleeping properly; eating well; doing regular physical exercise; spending time relaxing with family and friends; and spending some time outdoors might seem basic and obvious but are all key factors in making us feel good about ourselves and helping us to keep a balanced outlook.
- Be organised
- Being a boarder often means that you have little time and space to yourself. Being organised with your time and your belongings means that you don't add unnecessary extra pressure on to your day. Keep up-to-date with your homework, try to keep your room and your desk tidy, plan ahead, stick to the House rules and think things through in advance to avoid having any last-minute panics.
- Get some help
- Help someone else
- When we are concerned about something we often spend too long thinking about it and this may make matters worse. Helping someone else will take your mind off your own problems, give you a fresh perspective and put you in better spirits. In your boarding house and school there are bound to be voluntary projects to get involved in. If you don't know what they are, then ask. Being part of the House Council, Charity fund raising, doing House duties or simply giving a hand anyone you come across who needs it are the kind of activities which will give you a sense of belonging and instant achievement – try it!
- Practise stress-lowering activities
- And get it early on, before little issues become bigger concerns. Typical everyday problems are things such as: struggling with some prep; losing one of your belongings; forgetting to do something you were expected to do; thinking you might do badly in exams; falling out with friends / upsetting someone; feeling homesick; worrying about something personal. One of the big benefits of being in a boarding house is that there are always lots of experienced people around to give you help – both pupils and adults, such as roommates and friends, prefects, matron, tutor, House master/mistress, nurse, Chaplain, counsellor. All these people are excellent at finding solutions. The older boarders in your House will have felt the same as you at some time so they will understand how you feel. The adults are used to supporting pupils. Choose someone that you find it easy to talk to and try to chat with them about what is bothering you.
- These are different for different people and you probably know what works for you. Common ones include yoga, meditation, mindfulness, listening to / playing music, going for a walk / run, sketching and writing. There are some excellent apps that you can use to get you started and guide you, such as Smiling Mind for mindfulness.
- Do whatever makes you feel good
- Remind yourself of the healthy pastimes that you really enjoy doing and make sure you are doing them regularly. It may be something as simple as reading a book or going for a walk, but we often forget to do the obvious.
- Always have something to look forward
- When you are stressed it is often hard to think beyond the issue that is getting you down and see the light at the end of the tunnel. Make sure that you have something planned in the near future which you know you will enjoy – it doesn't need to be a big thing, it just needs to be fun!

Lou Belrihti, Bedes School



“I have been able to dedicate more time
to focusing on my passion ”

Nigel, aged 14, Ashby

General advice - and finally

Immerse yourself fully in studying and living in a BSA Boarding House. It's not just about studying the curriculum and sitting academic examinations. Getting involved in Inter-House events and competitions will help nurture your sense of identity and belonging.

Take advantage of all opportunities. Fill your days and keep busy with extra-curricular activities in both the Boarding House and the Day School. Go on trips and explore different activities. Fully immerse yourself in the outstanding opportunities on offer: The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, Arts Award or EPQ programme. Try everything, at least once!

You can be anything you want to be! Ask yourself 'what do I want to get out of this experience?' It's a great opportunity to become more independent, build life-skills, develop leadership opportunities and networking skills. Evolve, create, develop, and grow.

Embrace new things. Boarding House food can be tasty, but the meals might not be what you are traditionally used to. Get involved with the food committee, or establish one if there isn't one. Help design the menus so there is a rich menu to suite all tastes and preferences.

Kindness, compassion, tolerance and empathy. Strong and successful Boarding House communities are safe, happy, kind environments, a home from home. How can you enrich your community? Could you be a role model? Could you offer academic or pastoral support, teach a new skill, be a listening ear, a mentor, a buddy - how could you help others?

Friends for life. Make friends from different cultures, countries and backgrounds. Connect and talk. You have an amazing opportunity to learn new languages – try to learn a new word a week! You will learn more about the world around you. Boarding life is a wonderful chance for cultural integration and learning,

with global citizens working together through good times and bad. You will develop negotiating skills and diplomacy skills; these are skills for life.

Relaxation and resilience. You will face academic and social challenges. Most Boarding Houses are well equipped with a variety of stress-releasing activities: yoga, meditation, mindfulness, walking, a sleep clinic, or a Saturday snooze - all giving you time to 'be!' Talk to people - friends, House parents, academic tutors, the independent listener, the school counsellor. Everyone is there to help.

Don't worry, be happy! Do what makes you happy. Be yourself, and express your own individual character. Have a memory draw: write down all the little things you do, and then share them with your friends at the end of the week, term, or year. No matter how little, write them down, draw a quick doodle, just a little something to reawaken the memory.

Keep it real. Don't change your routine. Sleep well, eat well, partake in regular physical exercise and spend time relaxing with friends. Take a walk in the fresh air. Remember nothing lasts forever; yesterday is gone, tomorrow is not promised, so live for today and embrace all you do!

Becky Hayes, St. Francis' College, Letchworth



A group of boarding school students and a teacher are gathered in a lush, green forest setting. They are positioned around a small, shallow pond or stream, which reflects the scene above. The students, dressed in school uniforms, are engaged in an outdoor activity, possibly a lesson or a game, on the grassy bank. A teacher, wearing a red and black striped cardigan, is leaning over, observing or assisting them. The background is filled with dense foliage and trees, creating a serene and natural environment. The overall atmosphere is one of outdoor education and connection with nature.

#iloveboarding

Boarding Schools' Association
4th Floor
134 Buckingham Palace Road
London SW1W 9SA
bsa@boarding.org.uk
www.boarding.org.uk