



## PARENTS' HANDBOOK

**Creating a community in which children feel happy,  
secure and valued.**

## WELCOME TO THE BOARDING FAMILY

Dear Parents,

We are delighted that you are considering or have chosen boarding for your child. This handbook has been designed to provide you with an overview of boarding life at the St Hugh's. It outlines our aims and ethos within the Boarding House, including the policies that we adhere to and the expectations we put in place.

Our core aim is for the boarding community to be an extension of own family and in which every child feels safe, included, valued and happy. We strive to create an environment with structures that will enhance each child's educational experience and in which they will continue to develop strong values and skills which will serve them well during their time at the school and at every stage which comes next.

If you have any unanswered questions or wish to discuss anything further, please do get in touch with us directly on 01367 870712 or via email at [boarding@st-hughs.co.uk](mailto:boarding@st-hughs.co.uk).

We look forward to welcoming you and your child to the Boarding House.

Best wishes,

Kevin and Harriet Perry-Evans

*Houseparents*

## **BOARDING INFORMATION**

**Houseparents:** Mr Kevin Perry-Evans & Mrs Harriet Perry-Evans

**Assistant Houseparent:** Miss Emma Kruger

**Matrons:** Mrs Denise Pargeter & Mrs Kim Titcombe

### **Boarding Tutors**

- Mr Jim Towers
- Miss Sally Ewins
- Mr Jonathan Harris-Bass
- Mr Joel Rundle
- Mr Ben Rogers
- Mrs Jill Du Plessis
- Miss Taysie Gujral
- Mr Tom Judge
- Mrs Nicola Bunter

**Boarding Governor:** Alex Wildman

**Independent Listener:** Hilary Lloyd

**Headmaster:** Mr Bertrand Leullier

**School Address:** Carswell Manor, Faringdon, Oxfordshire, SN7 8PT

### **Telephone:**

|                              |              |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| Main School number (daytime) | 01367 870700 |
| Houseparents                 | 01367 870712 |
| Day Room                     | 01367 870715 |
| Boarding Mobile              | 07519 316095 |

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| Houseparents' email | <a href="mailto:boarding@st-hughs.co.uk">boarding@st-hughs.co.uk</a> |
| School email        | <a href="mailto:office@st-hughs.co.uk">office@st-hughs.co.uk</a>     |

## OUR BOARDING AIMS & ETHOS

There is much to be gained from the opportunity to board and our aim is to provide each child with a positive experience which will help them develop as an individual and feel prepared for the world beyond St Hugh's. Our close Boarding House community is an environment in which every child should feel safe and in which boarders are able to build relationships, develop lifelong skills and become independent. We enjoy getting to know every boarder well - finding out what they enjoy and learning about their personalities. It is also important that we are able to recognise when a child might need support and that every member of the boarding community feels comfortable about asking for help at any time.

### Our Aims

- to promote an environment where children feel able to express their opinions, ideas and concerns.
- to create an environment that is structured and has clear boundaries.
- to encourage individuality and independence.
- to ensure each child's wellbeing.
- to develop a culture of honesty and mutual respect
- to encourage social interaction across year groups and genders.

The school ensures its boarding practice complies with the National Minimum Standards.

## APPLICATIONS TO BOARD

Parents and children who are considering becoming boarders are encouraged to arrange a time to visit the boarding house for a tour and the opportunity to ask questions.

### Weekly Boarding

Parents wishing to reserve a weekly boarding place should respond to the boarding request link sent during the second half of each term. However, if your child requires a weekly boarding place partway through a term, please contact Mr and Mrs Perry-Evans by email [boarding@st-hughs.co.uk](mailto:boarding@st-hughs.co.uk) or by phone on 01367 870712. If there is a space available, they will be delighted to welcome your child and will confirm this directly with you.

Mr and Mrs Perry-Evans will provide you with all the necessary information about weekly boarding and are always willing to meet in person if this is helpful.

### Flexi Boarding

Parents wishing to book regular flexi boarding should respond to the boarding request link sent during the second half of each term. If places are needed partway through the term, parents should email Mr and Mrs Perry-Evans [boarding@st-hughs.co.uk](mailto:boarding@st-hughs.co.uk)

As is the case with weekly boarders, once places are confirmed Mr and Mrs Perry-Evans will send out a list of what your child will need to bring with them. This information can also be found on the school website.

## **All Boarders**

The allocation of places is based on the number of nights requested on the booking form: weekly boarders will always be allocated first, and then priority given to those requesting the greater number of nights (decided on a first come first served basis when necessary). We fully appreciate on occasion people may be left disappointed however, due to limited availability this seems the fairest way to organise the dorms. We will always do our best to accommodate as many children as is possible up the maximum number of beds in the House.

## **OUTLINE OF THE BOARDING ROUTINE**

### **Monday, Tuesday and Thursday Boarding**

|                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 7.00 am                              | Residential Staff to wake boarders                    |
| 7.30 am                              | Roll Call and notices                                 |
| 7:40 am                              | Breakfast   |
| 8.10 am                              | Finish Breakfast                                      |
| 8.20 am                              | Registration in form rooms                            |
| 8.20am - 4.40 pm                     | School Day  |
| 4.40 pm                              | Boarders to sign in if not in clubs                   |
| 4.40 - 5.30 pm                       | Supervised clubs/ free time/ music practice           |
| 5.30 pm                              | Supervised club students to sign in (Supper)          |
| 5.30 - 6.15 pm                       | Supper (All Years)                                    |
| 6.15 - 7:15 pm                       | Prep (Years 3, 4, 5. 30mins) (Years 6, 7, 8. 60mins)  |
| Junior Evening Times (Years 3, 4, 5) |   |
| 6.45 – 7.15 pm                       | Activity & free time                                  |
| 7.15 pm                              | Evening snack   |
| 7.45 - 8.30 pm                       | Lights out (times vary depending on age, see bedtime) |
| Senior Evening Times (Years 6, 7, 8) |   |
| 7.30 - 8.30 pm                       | Activities and free time                              |
| 8.00 pm onwards                      | Evening snack   |
| 9.00 pm.                             | Lights out (times vary depending on age, see bedtime) |

In the light spring/summer evenings pupils are actively encouraged to enjoy their free time outside in the school grounds with a member of staff supervising. When the days are shorter in the winter months, pupils enjoy their free time in the Manor House or in an indoor location or facility. All pupils will be in the Boarding House by 8.30pm.

### **Wednesday night routine**

There is a different routine on Wednesday evenings as these follow regular afternoon sports fixtures, and there is no formal prep time.

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 5.30 - 6.15 pm  | Sign in & supervised tea (Whole House)    |
| 6.15 - 6.45 pm  | Quiet time/music practice/prep/boardgames |
| 6.45 - 7.10 pm  | Shower and pyjamas                        |
| 7.10 pm onwards   | Movie night / free time                   |
| Bedtime Routines (times vary depending on age, see bedtime) |   |

### **Friday Routine**

Friday night boarding is an opportunity for the boarders to celebrate the end of the week and various special events and activities are planned. This will include activities such as laser tag, outdoor cinema, treasure hunts to name just a few.

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| 5.30 - 6.15 pm   | Register & supervised tea (Whole House) |
| 6.15 - 6.45 pm   | Free time                               |
| 6.45pm - 8.30 pm | Activities                              |
| 8.30/9.00 pm     | Bedtime Routines                        |

### **Saturday morning routine**

|                 |                                     |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| 8.00 am         | Residential Staff to wake boarders  |
| 8.15 - 9.00 am  | Breakfast & Sign in                 |
| 9.00 - 10.00 am | Study session/relax in Common area  |
| 9.45 - 10.00 am | Children to be collected by parents |

## **BREAKFAST**

Mr and Mrs Perry-Evans and Miss Kruger wake the boarders at 7.00am and supervise pupils getting ready before breakfast, ensuring they have brushed their teeth and left their dorms tidy.

By 7.30am all boarders are expected to be together on the boarders landing where Mr or Mrs Perry-Evans will take rollcall, as well as check uniform and make sure any notices are passed on. At 7.40am all pupils make their way to the dining room. Children may help themselves to cereal, toast, fruit etc and then line up to be served a cooked breakfast (option changes daily). The 'dorm of the day' will go first (one for the boys and one for the girls) which gives an incentive to be quick and efficient in the morning and to work as a team. At the end of breakfast, pupils are expected to clear and wipe down their tables.

## **END OF THE SCHOOL DAY**

The school's clubs programme runs between 4.40pm and 5.30pm every day of the week, except Wednesdays when pupils are involved in sports fixtures. All weekly boarders are encouraged to take part in at least two clubs a week. Boarders may choose to do more and are encouraged to follow a variety of pursuits.

If a boarder is not attending a club during this time, they must sign into the Boarding House with a member of staff at 4.40pm and change into home clothes.

## **SUPPER**

All boarders assemble in the dining room at 5.30pm and an additional register is taken to ensure all pupils boarding that night are accounted for. The House staff sit amongst the boarders to encourage good table manners and keep an eye on individuals' appetites and healthy eating. All pupils are expected to help with the clearing and cleaning of their tables at the end of supper.

## **PREP**

All boarders attend prep, which takes place after supper. Prep is well supervised to provide as much support as is possible for the children. Year groups are separated and use different classroom spaces and prep times vary for different ages. The table below shows the current timetable for all age groups:

|               | Years 3, 4 & 5 | Years 6, 7 & 8 |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| Monday        | 6.20pm-6.50pm  | 6.20pm-7.20pm  |
| Tuesday       | 6.20pm-6.50pm  | 6.20pm-7.20pm  |
| Wednesday     | Quiet time     | Quiet time     |
| Thursday      | 6.20pm-6.50pm  | 6.20pm-7.20pm  |
| Saturday a.m. | 9.00am-10.00am | 9.00am-10.00am |

## **BOARDERS' KITCHEN AND SNACKS**

All main meals are produced by the school kitchen, however, boarders also have the exclusive use of a kitchenette within the Boarding House. Drinking water and fresh fruit is always available and as part of the boarders' snack, cereal, toast and fruit is also available through the week 15 minutes before their bedtimes. As a Year 8 boarders' privilege they are also allowed to make a hot drink. The children are expected to keep the kitchen tidy at the end of every evening, and we have a rota of responsibilities in place for all our Year 8 Monitors.

## **BOARDERS' TUCK**

We have in-house tuck that is offered to boarders on a Wednesday and Friday evening. Boarders are strictly not allowed to bring sweets and food into the Boarding House and if found they may be asked to take a break away from boarding. We would really appreciate your support in this as tuck is offered as part of our boarders' reward system and if children have access to their own supplies, it risks devaluing this.

## **EVENING ACTIVITIES / FREE TIME**

Following prep, boarders have free time which is supervised by the boarding team. There are a variety of options available to boarders, these may include:

Sports Hall activities

Table tennis

Tennis

Astro Games

ICT and Art

Music practice

Board games

Fields and woods

Swimming if pool available (one member of staff must be lifesaver qualified)

Spotlight

TV

PlayStation/ Wii Relaxing

## **BOARDERS' COMMON AREAS**

Boarders have exclusive use of communal areas which include a Common Room where there is a TV as well as a PS4 and Wii. Additionally, they have the Boarders Landing where the pool table and piano can be found, as well as being welcomed into Mr and Mrs Perry-Evans sitting room at certain times providing very much a home from home environment. All common rooms (and dorms) are only accessible to boarders', and this is only during boarding hours. It is important that the boarders take responsibility for these areas and treat them with respect otherwise they will be made 'out of bounds' for a period of time.



## **BED TIMES**

The system of bedtimes differs depending on age. The simple principle being that the older the pupil, the later the bedtime. Consideration must be given, however, to dormitories where there might be more than one age group. In this situation, a single bedtime may be applied to minimise disturbance caused by other pupils entering the dorm as one group is settling down. All the dorms have a time when their main light is turned out and children have 15 minutes reading time using their individual nightlights. After that time staff will insist on silence. Bedtime routines and lights out times have been carefully planned to allow children as much free time as possible, balanced with appropriate rest. Staff remain in the main corridors of the Boarding House for a period of time after the last dorms have been asked to be silent.

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| Year 3: | Upstairs at 7.30pm lights out at 8.00pm |
| Year 4: | Upstairs at 7.30pm lights out at 8.00pm |
| Year 5: | Upstairs at 7.45pm lights out at 8.15pm |
| Year 6: | Upstairs at 8.00pm lights out at 8.30pm |
| Year 7: | Upstairs at 8.15pm lights out at 8.45pm |
| Year 8: | Upstairs at 8.30pm lights out at 9.00pm |

It would be extremely helpful if at home you could try to follow a similar routine the week before your child starts boarding as this will help your child settle in more quickly.

## **OVERNIGHT PROBLEMS**

We want to ensure your child always feel safe and supported and understands that staff are always available if they need us. Therefore, if your child is feeling unsettled or unwell during the night, they are able to call Miss Kruger and/or Mr and Mrs Perry-Evans via a bell or phone/intercom system. If there is a need for your child to be cared for outside their dorm, there is an allocated 'sickbay' room on both the boys' and girls' landings.

## **MEDICATION/MEDICAL SUPPORT**

Should your child require medication whilst boarding, please make sure that it is handed in to the Nurses along with a signed consent form. This medication must be delivered in its original packaging, written in English and in date. In line with the school policy, medication will not be accepted if it does not meet these requirements. If medication is required on a regular basis, then we request at least six weeks supply. Your child should never have any medication in their possession. During boarding hours, medication will be dispensed by Mrs Pargeter, Miss Kruger or Mr and Mrs Perry-Evans. All medication is recorded on the school database (iSAMS).

## **ORGANISATION OF DORMITORIES**

All the boarding accommodation is contained within the Manor House. Boys and girls have dormitories on separate floors - the girls on the first floor and the boys on the second floor. Dormitories are arranged by age as far as is possible and practical.

Weekly boarders will be allocated a bed and keep the same bed for a full term whereas flexi boarders' bed space may vary according to availability. We encourage weekly boarders to personalize their space - they are permitted to decorate their room with posters, photos and other items in order to make a cosy and homely atmosphere.. All decoration must be taken down at the end of each term to allow for redecoration.

## **ACCESS TO THE DORMS BY ADULTS**

Access to the dormitories is prohibited to all adults apart from the boarding staff. The only exception to this is when weekly boarders are being returned on the morning before term begins and on boarding open house events.

## **BEDDING/WASHING**

Both weekly and flexi boarders are required to bring their own duvet covers and pillowcases. Pillows and a duvet will be provided but they are also welcome to bring these if they would prefer. We expect all the children to learn how to change their own bed sheets. Flexi boarders are expected to change their sheet in the morning after their last night of boarding so that the bed is ready for the next boarder whereas weekly boarders change their beds once every two weeks. We believe this is an important life skill that will stand the children in good stead for the future as well as helping to develop a sense of community within the Boarding House.

All weekly boarders have their washing done in-house whereas flexis will be expected to take belongings home with them every week other than their bedsheets which will be taken home at the end of every half term.

## **BOARDERS SIGNING IN/OUT PROCEDURE**

If a weekly boarder is leaving the school premises for any reason (other than a school trip or match) parents must email or call Mr and Mrs Perry-Evans to inform them of their child's absence. This system also applies to any flexi boarder who is due to be boarding that evening.

All parents are asked to sign their child in on the morning of boarding at reception where Mr and Mrs Perry-Evans will be present.

It is essential that all parents cooperate with these systems so that the boarding team know exactly which boarders are on the premises and that they are accounted for.

## **PASTORAL SUPPORT**

Pastoral support is at the centre of everything we do in the Boarding House: with our focus on providing an environment where the children feel completely safe and supported. Through building strong relationships with the children, we aim to meet all their individual needs. We openly encourage the boarders to share the good things in their lives, as well as to seek advice or support when they are finding things challenging. Regular meetings with the Houseparents and other members of the boarding team help staff to develop a rounded understanding of each child, both socially and academically. Problems can be shared, targets can be set/reviewed, and guidance given. Additionally, regular communication with parents and the wider school strengthens the pastoral care we deliver.

## **PRIVILEGES AND CONSEQUENCES**

We set out very clear expectations for the children to follow and we aim to develop the sense of community through emphasising a requirement for mutual respect. We recognise that children will sometimes push boundaries and that challenging the status quo is part of their development as individuals – what is important to all is the learning that comes after a mistake.

In the Boarding House, there are different rewards and privileges. These includes ‘dorm of the day’ which rewards children for working well together by allowing them to be first up for cooked breakfast. There is also the opportunity to be ‘boarder of the week’ - awarded to an individual who has made a significant contribution to the boarding community in following our core school values of kindness, respect, independence, curiosity, collaboration, and courage.

The Boarding House also has clear sanctions which differ from ‘school time’ sanctions, and are more ‘home-style’. A boarder may be ‘house gated’ - losing their free time and giving back to the boarding community by doing some house chores. Continuing or serious issues will, of course, be discussed with parents. Any poor behavior is monitored closely by all members of the boarding team and if there are any recurring concerns over a boarder's behavior, the Houseparents will take appropriate action. If necessary, a boarder may be asked to take ‘time out’ from boarding. This will be recorded on Isams.

## **BOARDERS' INDUCTION**

All new boarders will be helped to settle quickly into the Boarding House by means of an induction organised by Mr and Mrs Perry-Evans. If children – and parents – would like to visit the Boarding House prior to starting this can always be arranged – and provides a good opportunity to ask questions and address concerns. Additionally, on their first night of boarding children will be given a detailed tour of the House as well as being advised on the structures, procedures and support systems in place. To further support new starters, we have a vertical buddy system in which new boarders are looked after by an experienced boarder – as well as providing an instant means of support, this encourages friendships to form across year groups.

## **BOARDING DUTIES**

Within the Boarding House, children are expected to maintain high standards of dress, appearance, academic endeavor, and behavior as well as developing independence, individuality, and an ability to live alongside others. There are several ways children can gain Roles of Responsibility. Year 8 weekly boarders who consistently show excellence in these areas, as well as supporting all members of the House (staff and pupils), can expect to be appointed as a Boarding Monitor. Monitors have specific duties which aid in the running and development of the community. Additionally, there is the opportunity for Year 8 weekly boarders to apply to be 'Head of House' – one boy and one girl are appointed each term and the application process involves writing a letter outlining why they feel they are a suitable candidate. The Heads of House and Boarding Monitors have regular meetings with the Houseparents to discuss the term and to give feedback and make recommendations. Finally, as all boarders are responsible for ensuring communal areas and dorms are kept tidy, they have the opportunity to take ownership of their space and to demonstrate leadership qualities – those that stand out may become a 'dorm captain'.

## **FIRE DRILLS**

It is a requirement for a fire drill to be carried out at least once every term. Pupils are briefed on the course of action that they should take in case of an evacuation and have a practice walk through at the start of each year. The walk through is followed up with an unannounced drill during the term. The drill times are varied and can occur anytime from when the boarders return at 4.40pm through until 8.00am before school begins. With the daily change in population during the boarding week, the drills are also arranged for different days through the year to ensure that as many pupils as possible can experience them. The fire meeting point during boarding times is the front car park.

## HOUSE STAFF MEETINGS AND COMMUNICATION

Mr and Mrs-Perry-Evans and Miss Kruger have regular meetings to discuss any concerns or problems as well as meeting daily to discuss the running of the House and individual pupils. There is also a House diary where notes are made eg, appointments, absences, trips, which helps ensure the smooth running of the House and allows all boarding staff to be kept informed. We welcome communications from parents with reminders for their child ie, clubs, music lessons etc.

## COMMUNICATION

**Communication with staff:** Our aim is to ensure that every boarder feels safe, happy, and valued within the Boarding House. Our home-from-home environment is based upon establishing and nurturing the closest partnerships between children, parents, and the boarding team. Contact from parents allows us to understand and meet each child's needs effectively and empathically, so please do not hesitate to call, email, or come and see us in person. We believe in honest and open communication and will always let you know if we have any concerns about your child as well as share news of their successes whilst in our care. In the same vein, if you have any concerns about your child whilst they are at home or think they have experienced something that is affecting them, please do let us know so we can work together to support them.

**Home communication:** Though we are a strictly 'no mobile phone' (for pupils) House we fully appreciate children like to contact home. We have three available phones within the Boarding House: one in the Houseparents' sitting room; the boarders phone box on the landing; and the boarding mobile. The boarders are welcome to call parents at certain times during the evening (4.40pm, following prep and before snack). However, we do not encourage children to call just before bedtime as we find this is when they can become most unsettled. Additionally, if you would like to speak to your child, you can contact them via calling the Boarding House directly or send an email to us and we will then ask them to call.

## ELECTRONIC DEVICES

No electronic devices including mobile phones are allowed in the Boarding House.

## HOMESICKNESS

Boarding is fun, challenging and fulfilling, although staying at school will always differ from living at home. Everyone feels a little homesick at some stage, no matter how old or brave a child is or how many nights they are boarding for. It is totally natural to miss home; some boarders settle quickly, others take longer.

The House staff are very experienced in dealing with homesickness and will help and support children through it. We do recommend, after years of experience, that during a child's first night/nights/week of boarding, communication with home is kept to a minimum. This can be hard but, in our experience, it allows each child to establish valuable relationships with their friends rather than being on the phone. It also means that when they next see you, they will have lots more to talk about!

Please see below some recommendations:

- Please do not arrange a 'pick up deal' ('I'll come and get you if you start missing home'). In our experience this is counterproductive to your child's boarding experience.
- Talk to your child before their boarding night about things they can do to counter the feeling of homesickness: keep busy, take part in the activity, rather than feeling sad, feel excited about the next time they will be home, talk to one of the boarding team.

If you would like more information on dealing with homesickness please contact or see Mr & Mrs Perry-Evans.

## **COMPLAINTS**

If at any time you have a complaint about boarding at St Hugh's, procedures are in place which are detailed in a specific complaints policy, which can be found on the school website.

Complaints can also be lodged with Independent Schools Inspectorate, Ground Floor, CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London EC1A 9HA. Telephone 020 7600 0100.

*Reviewed by K and H Perry-Evans, June 2022*

*Next review: June 2023*