



Mayfield

LEEDS HOUSE

HANDBOOK 2023-24



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Welcome

Welcome to Leeds House, the Lower School Boarding House at Mayfield where girls in Years 7 and 8 learn about what it is to be a Boarder and where their life-long friendships begin.

Leeds House is a small and very friendly House that caters for the needs of our youngest boarders. It has a happy, comfortable and caring atmosphere. It is a place where everyone knows each other well, where we are kind and considerate to one another and look out for each other.

It is a busy House - full of laughter, activity and purpose where we can play, work, eat and socialise as a family community together. But most importantly, it is a home away from home where we feel safe, supported and encouraged in all our endeavours.

You will find many friends among the other girls, and the House staff are always there to look after you and help you whenever you need it.

When you first arrive at Leeds House, you will be introduced to your 'guardian angel'; a girl whom we have chosen to look after you, show you around and help you to settle in.

Our House ethos helps us to live in harmony with each other. We think of others, are respectful, honest and kind, and we take responsibility for our own actions.

We are so happy that you are joining us and look forward to getting to know you.

The Leeds House team



MISS EL ADEL AND MR SMITH: HOUSEPARENTS

We live together in Leeds House so it's quite literally our home! Our favourite time of the year is September because that's when we get to meet new boarders and welcome back old ones. The buzz of the Boarding House swiftly returns as the girls regale one another with summer holiday stories. One of us is almost always on duty so we get to know our boarders very well. We share in their laughter, support them when needed and generally do everything we can to make their time in Leeds House memorable!

Miss El Adel has lived in England for several years. She loves Mayfield and the nature that surrounds us. An amateur photographer, she enjoys travelling the world. She helps in School by teaching Spanish and is very active in the daily life of the girls in Leeds House. She loves creating new cookie recipes with the girls, playing games and spending time with them. Her favourite day of the week is Saturday because the girls are relaxed and can enjoy a later bedtime!

Mr Smith likes to stay fit and active. He can often be found playing football on the AstroTurf pitch or walking around the school grounds. He teaches Drama and Media, subjects that combine to form his passion for films and television. Movie nights (with popcorn, of course!) are a weekly staple in Leeds House.



MISS KOTESOVSKA: HOUSEMISTRESS

Miss Kotesovska (affectionately known as Miss K) was born in Slovakia, a tiny country in the middle of Europe. She likes travelling and languages. You might be able to spot her on her bicycle because cycling is something she enjoys in her spare time, along with long walks and reading. Her favourite time in the Boarding House is the evenings when the girls get chatty and can engage in interesting and often funny conversations.

HOUSE STAFF

In addition to Miss El Adel, Mr Smith and Miss K, we have a Graduate Assistant. There is also a Resident Tutor, Mrs McGovern, who is in the House a couple of nights each week as well as Ronan Lavery, our Lay Chaplain, who spends one evening a week with us.

KEY CONTACT DETAILS

Main School Office

Open Monday - Thursday 08:00 - 18:00,
Friday 08:00 - 17:15
Tel: + 44 (0) 1435 874600

Leeds House

Tel: + 44 (0) 1435 874605
You can contact any of the Leeds House staff on this number

Leeds House mobile

Tel: +44 (0) 7545 609780

Leeds House email address

leedshouse@mayfieldgirls.org

Houseparents

Miss Manal El Adel

Email: meladel@mayfieldgirls.org

Mr Dan Smith

Email: dsmith@mayfieldgirls.org

Housemistress

Miss Petra Kotesovska

Mobile: + 44 (0) 7545 609780
Email: pkotesovska@mayfieldgirls.org

First floor

Tel: + 44 (0) 1435 874648
Tel: + 44 (0) 1435 874627

Second floor

Tel: + 44 (0) 1435 874649
Tel: + 44 (0) 1435 874628

We recommend that all girls have a mobile phone (with sufficient credit on it) to use when they are on School trips and outings. Girls are not allowed to use their phone during the School day, but they can use it in the evenings and at the weekends. Before School it can be used to speak to family and friends and to check emails. The House has Wi-Fi and you will be given a temporary log-in when you arrive in September. In your first week you will be given your permanent log in and a School email address, which will be the one for you to use when you are with us. You will also be able to access this account during the School holidays.

We have an electronic blackout at bedtime and ask everyone to hand in their mobile phone and any other internet-enabled devices before going to bed, so that everyone gets a good night's sleep. We have a Computer Room in Leeds House which you may use before and after School. Study, of course, always has priority on these computers. Personal laptops are kept safely in the Computer Room when not in use. Everyone is expected to look after their own and each other's equipment carefully and to use it responsibly in accordance with the School's Acceptable Use of ICT Policy for electronic devices: all pupils are asked to read this carefully and sign a form to say that they understand and will comply with it.

ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

Leeds House is a three storey building situated next to Lower School. The Common Room and Computer Room are on the ground floor as well as the Leeds House Office and Staff Study, which are the first places to look if you need to find a member of the House Staff.

The Common Room is full of comfortable sofas and has a television, DVD player, Nintendo Wii and piano. It also has a cupboard full of games and puzzles, and a library. We have lots of art and craft materials to use in free time or to help with projects. The Computer Room has a networked computer and space to store your own electronic equipment at night and when it is not in use during the day. These rooms are for use in 'Leeds time': before and after School and at the weekend. There is a printer in Lower School that you may use.

We have two floors of bedrooms. There are dorms of two, three or four beds and you will move bedrooms each term. You will have your own area of the bedroom, containing a bed with storage drawers underneath; a bedside table; a wardrobe and a pin board which you can decorate with your own pictures and photographs. Each room also has a sink and a table and chairs. There are shower cubicles and toilets on both floors and a bath on the top floor. We have a kitchen on the first floor where we have snacks before bedtime and breakfast on Sundays.

We also have a Quiet Room: a place you can use for reading, study or (quiet) prayer.



PERSONAL BELONGINGS

As you can imagine, with so many girls living together it can be difficult to keep track of where everyone's possessions are.

It is extremely important that EVERYTHING you bring to School is clearly named: uniform, underwear, sports kit and equipment, electronics, towels, bed linen and home clothes.

You should arrive at the beginning of School with all your belongings clearly and permanently labelled with your name. Please do not use stick-on labels as these eventually come off in the wash. The House Staff will check that you have all you need and that it is properly named. If you do not have an item they will order it from the School Shop for you and it will be labelled with your name. The School Shop is open to girls during the week between 08:00–15:30 every day.

Boarders are required to have the following items as well as their uniform:

- Three sets of suitable nightwear (warm for the Autumn and Spring terms; cool for the Summer);
- One dressing gown;
- One pair of slippers/sliders/flip flops;
- One duvet;
- Two duvet covers;
- Two pillow cases (more if you wish to have more than the one pillow which is provided: please bring your own pillow if you would like more);
- Two fitted sheets;
- Two bath towels (plus one towel for swimming);
- Two hand towels;
- A shower cap and other toiletries in a wash bag;
- Lightweight bags for storage during School holidays (NOT trunks);
- A small selection of home clothes for the evening and weekends including some clothes suitable for messy or outdoor activities;
- One smart outfit for Chapel and formal occasions; Alternatively, School uniform can be worn on these occasions;
- Swimsuit and swimming towel (in addition to the two House towels listed above);
- Wellington boots and an outdoor coat for walks in the countryside plus gloves, a hat and a scarf for cold weather;
- A suitably sized bag to take on weekends away;
- UK Adapter.

Girls from overseas may store their school bag, PE kit bag and one suitcase and one storage bag during the holidays. Girls from the UK are expected to take everything home at the end of the year.

LAUNDRY

Your School uniform, sports kit, underwear, dressing gowns, nightclothes and towels are washed in the House and we can usually return them to you within 48 hours.

All these clothes must be able to be dried in the tumble dryer. Other washing (home clothes, bed linen, jackets etc) are sent to an outside laundry once a week. You have an allowance for this within the term's fees and will be given a bag to put these items in and a book to list what has been sent. They come back three or four days later. If you have any 'emergency' washing, please speak to a member of staff about it and they will try to organise this for you.

ROUTINE

07:00	Wakeup
07:20	Breakfast in the Main Dining Room followed by preparation for School
08:10	Leave for School
08:20	Registration followed by lessons
13:10	Lunch
16:30	Tea in Lower School
16:45 - 18:00	Activities and Study
18:00	Supper
18:30	House Meeting and Evening Prayer
18:45	Laundry and time to contact friends and family by phone
	Showers, tidy up and free time
20:00	Snack in the kitchen before bedtime routine

20:30 - 21:00	Reading in the Common Room
21:00	Year 7 lights out
21:15	Year 8 lights out
21:30	Whole House should be quiet.

Bedtimes are a little later on Fridays and Saturdays and a little earlier on Sundays.

Discovering new activities to enjoy and having the opportunity to spend time pursuing your interests and skills are an important part of School life. Having a good balance of extra-curricular activities, clubs and Study will make sure that you keep busy, have fun and make lots of friends; it will make the transition to boarding easier and more enjoyable for you.

Study is what we call homework or prep at Mayfield. Study sessions take place in Lower School and are supervised by a member of staff. This is a silent time for private work and if you are not taking part in an activity or club you must be in Study. If you have unfinished work to do there is time to complete it after supper or at the weekend during the House Study period on Saturday mornings. House staff and Prefects are always happy to offer help and support if you are finding something tricky.

If you have music lessons you will be expected to practise regularly. You will be given a weekly practice time.

After supper there is time for you to relax with your friends, chat to your parents on the phone, play games etc. All girls are expected to shower in the evening, but if you wish, you may have a shower in the morning as well. If you are feeling a little hungry before



bedtime, there are snacks and fruit available in the kitchen.

Between 20:00 and lights out we ask everyone to behave in a calm manner, so that everyone can relax and prepare for bed. You are expected to be ready to settle at lights out and be silent when you are told that “there should be no more talking”. There are always two members of staff on duty who sleep in the House and if you need someone during the night you can contact them by ringing the number displayed next to the phone on each landing.

MEALTIMES

On a School day breakfast is at 07:20 in the Main Dining Room: there is always cereal and toast and a choice of something hot. You must be fully dressed in your School uniform. On Sundays we have breakfast in the House kitchen and you can stay in your pyjamas. We sometimes have exciting options like pancakes and pastries!

Lunch and supper are eaten in the School Dining Rooms and all girls are required to go to every meal throughout the week and weekend unless they are away from School. School provides varied and nutritious food and snacks. The amount of treats the girls are allowed to keep is limited. Special dietary requirements should be discussed with Miss K or the School Nurse and can usually be catered for in consultation with the Catering Department.

WEEKENDS AND WEEKEND LEAVE

There is a lot going on during the weekends in Leeds House. Friday evening is usually a relaxed time. On Saturdays you will have a mix of sports, activities and study. After that there is time to relax with friends, perhaps pop out to the village shops and enjoy some free time. There are more activities after lunch and an outing or activity on Sunday as well. These have included chocolate making, competitions, craft challenges, a visit to an animal sanctuary, bowling, shopping in Tunbridge Wells and further afield, local outdoor activity centre, walks, baking, picnics, tennis, treasure hunts and lots more. Each term there are also bigger all-day trips involving the boarders from all four Boarding Houses: for example a theatre trip to London, shopping in Brighton or Eastbourne or a visit to a Theme Park. Everyone is encouraged to participate in all these events: they give you a break from study, offer the opportunity to see beyond Mayfield and the chance to bond with your friends over shared, enjoyable activities.

Saturday evening is a good time to catch up with family and friends at home and then snuggle down with your friends in Leeds House to Saturday Movie Night.

Sunday starts with a late breakfast in the House and a leisurely getting ready for Mass at 11:30. This is compulsory for all pupils (which is why you need to make sure you have a suitable outfit to wear) and Leeds

House can participate in reading, welcoming and doing the offertory procession. Sunday evening is 'phones free' to give you time to prepare for the week, relax with your friends and spend some quiet time together.

On Tuesday or Wednesday of each week you will be asked to let Miss K know about your plans for the coming weekend. Sometimes boarders are invited to visit a friend for the weekend: your parents' permission will be sought, and this is something we encourage.

If you need to travel to London on the minibus arranged by the School, or go elsewhere, we can pass your requirements to the School Travel Co-ordinator, Mrs Attoe. All weekend travel arrangements must be made through Miss K by the evening of the Wednesday before so that we know what everyone is doing.

If you do not have an after School commitment on a Friday you may leave at 16:30. You should be back in the House by 19:30 on Sunday evening or by 08:00 on Monday morning to give yourself time to get organised for School.



TRAVEL AT THE START AND END OF TERM AND AT HALF TERM BREAKS

Travel arrangements are made through the School's Travel Co-ordinator, Mrs Attoe, who your parents can contact directly by email on jattoe@mayfieldgirls.org or via Miss K.

AIRPORT TRANSFERS

We are able to organise transport for boarders to and from UK airports (e.g. London Gatwick or London Heathrow). Whenever possible the transport costs are shared between those travelling. We can, if necessary, also provide transport to other airports. However, please bear in mind that travelling to or from other UK airports (e.g. Luton/Stansted) may incur an expensive taxi fare. Transport charges will be included on the School bill issued to your parents at the end of each term. We ask parents to let us know in good time and in writing of flight details/e-tickets and any other requests for transport. Please note that we need flight details four weeks prior to departure date.

Parents are expected to make all flight bookings to coincide with the School's academic term dates, details of which can be found on the School website www.mayfieldgirls.org. In exceptional circumstances only, requests for authorised absence should be made in advance and in writing to the Head of Lower School using the 'Request for term time absence from School' form which can be downloaded from the Parent Portal of the School website. Girls in Leeds House should travel as 'Unaccompanied Minors'. Older girls are not allowed to take responsibility for them.

LUGGAGE - A SMALL SUITCASE

Please ensure that your luggage is kept within the airline allowance (usually 20kg for economy class). It is essential that this is checked carefully with the relevant airline.

WEEKEND LONDON BUS SERVICE

Mrs Attoe arranges transport by School minibus or an escorted executive coach to and from Central London. A coach is provided at the beginning and end of term. During term time, a School minibus and driver is used. Girls may book places on these coaches through the Housemistress, with a deadline of three days prior to travel. Costs for the academic year 2023-24 will be £30.00 for a single journey and are charged to your account.

Pupils in Years 7 and 8 must be met or dropped off by a parent/guardian. Please be aware that the coach cannot wait beyond the given departure time due to parking restrictions.

HOUSE MEETINGS AND SHARING INFORMATION

We hope that everyone in the House will feel that they can talk freely to each other, staff and girls alike, at any time. We also have a regular House meetings to share information and to discuss any issues arising in the House. This makes sure that everyone is informed about all the things they need to know about. The Boarding Prefects and Leeds House Prefect will run a House Council meeting once a term which is an opportunity for the girls in the House to discuss matters without staff present. The House Prefect then feeds back to Miss K so that any necessary action can be taken. There is also a suggestion box where girls can post anonymously.

HOUSE RULES AND BEHAVIOUR

In Leeds House we are caring and considerate towards each other, so we don't need many strict rules.

Consideration of each other should mean that we show concern, kindness and respect for those we live with and for everyone's belongings, including our own. Living together is not always easy, so it is important that we all respect each other's privacy and space. We all have a voice in Leeds House and we expect everyone to listen when someone else is speaking, especially during meetings. It is very important that if a

member of staff asks you to do something you comply promptly and cheerfully: rudeness is not acceptable.

The staff on duty need to know where you are at all times, so we ask you to come and speak to us whenever you leave or return to the House. If there is a fire drill we need to be certain that we have accounted for each individual, so we have a signing out book next to the front door where you can record where you are going, the time you leave and the time you return. Please be conscientious about filling this in whenever you leave and return to the House.

We have a timetable so that our lives run smoothly, and everyone is asked to follow it.

We ask all girls to keep their bedrooms and personal possessions tidy. Please do not bring more belongings than is necessary, as it will make it harder to keep your things in order. Everyone is expected to help tidy up after House activities and to do their bit to make the House a pleasant environment in which to live.

Mobile phones, iPads, laptops and other electronic devices are collected in before bedtime, so that all girls can get a good night's sleep. Failure to hand in a device on time will result in confiscation of up to a week. If you like to listen to music or audio books as you drop off to sleep, you must have a non-internet-enabled device on which to do so.

REWARDS AND SANCTIONS

HOUSE STAR CHART

We like to reward behaviour which stands out as being beyond what is normally expected. For example, maybe someone has been particularly kind, unselfish or thoughtful. Members of staff award 'stars' for this sort of positive and helpful behaviour and record it on the House Star Chart. The girl (or girls) with the most stars each term will receive a special prize.

We also award Boarding House Colours to the girls who have made a substantial contribution to the happiness and wellbeing of the House, and at the end of the academic year the Leeds Cup is presented to the boarder who has contributed most to the House by her attitude to - and enjoyment of - boarding.

SANCTIONS

Sanctions are given for unsocial behaviour, for example:

- Causing a disturbance after lights out;
- Rudeness to a member of staff;
- Persistent lateness;
- Refusal to comply with House rules.

Generally, a timely reminder of the behaviour and attitude expected is enough to ensure everyone conducts themselves appropriately, and we do not have to administer many sanctions. However, persistent poor behaviour will result in a Boarding Referral and accumulating three of these leads to a Boarding Detention. For serious and persistent misdemeanours the Deputy Head may have to place a girl on 'House Report'

and, as a last resort, the girl's parents will be contacted to discuss the situation and the Interim Headmaster will be informed.

WHOLE SCHOOL RULES AND POLICIES

Information on Whole School Rules is given to the girls and School policies are available on the School website.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

WELLBEING

The Health Centre is staffed by our Nursing Team and a timetable of who is on duty, and when, is displayed on the notice boards.

The Health Centre is open Monday to Friday between the hours of 07:30 and 18:30 and there is a Nurse on call at evenings and weekends.

You are not allowed to keep any medication in your bedroom. All medication, including non-prescription preparations, must be handed to House staff for registration by the Health Centre and will be kept safely in the Leeds House Office or the Health Centre.

If girls are struggling emotionally they are able to talk to their Houseparents, Housemistress, Tutor, School Chaplain or any other member of staff they feel comfortable with. We also offer an in-house counselling service.

SAFETY

Every room in Leeds House has fire regulations displayed next to the door. You should make sure that you know what to do in the event of a fire or a fire practice, and the alternative routes out of the building. We have at least one fire practice a term and will show you what you need to do at the beginning of the School year.

POCKET MONEY

There is a limit that the Housemistress will keep for the girls in the Boarding House. Please note that this money should be brought in cash in £5.00 notes.

- The limit for Years 7-8 is £150 per term.

Please note that these amounts also include any money brought into School in any other currency.

At the beginning of each term, parents may top up their daughter's pocket money but it must remain within the above-mentioned sum.

We encourage the girls to open bank accounts in the United Kingdom and to have a bankcard.

There is a Post Office in Mayfield village which accepts clients from many banks including those listed below:

- Allied Irish;
- Barclays Bank;
- Bank of Scotland;

- Co-op;
- Danske Bank;
- First Direct;
- Handlesbanken;
- HSBC;
- Lloyds;
- Metro;
- Nationwide;
- Nat West;
- Royal Bank of Scotland;
- Santander;
- TSB;
- Virgin Money.

However it may be best to check with us before opening an account so that we can confirm whether or not the Post Office accepts the bank you are thinking of using. The list is always changing so do ask us for the latest list.

We would expect a UK boarder to open their account whilst at home.

If an overseas boarder arrives in the UK before school starts, please take this time to open an account in person, but check with us that the Post Office accepts the bank you are choosing.

If not, Boarding House staff may be able to take overseas boarders to Tunbridge Wells, where they will be able to book an appointment with a bank. However, these need to be booked in advance and will not always be available in the first few weekends.

ACCESS TO THE VILLAGE

You may visit the village at the weekend if your parents are happy for you to do so. Year 7s must go with at least two other girls, and Year 8s need to be in a pair because staff do not accompany you. You must ask a member of staff for permission before signing yourself out. You are not allowed to go to the village at any other time without written permission from a member of staff.

Some areas of the School grounds and the village are out of bounds to pupils. There is a map on the Leeds House noticeboard with information about this.

CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

Everyone has concerns and worries at some point, and at Mayfield there are several things you can do if you are feeling troubled. You can:

- Speak to the Housemistress or one of the Houseparents;
- Speak to any other member of Leeds House staff;
- Go to our School Chaplain, Ronan Lavery, or speak to him when he visits Leeds House;
- Discuss your problem with one of the Nurses in the Health Centre;
- Talk to a friend, and ask her to come with you to a member of staff;
- Chat with a Prefect;
- Speak to your Form Tutor, one of the Heads of School or another of your teachers;
- Place a note in our 'Suggestions & Things You Want Us To Know About' box, which is just outside the Leeds House Office;
- Contact the School's 'Independent Person' (details on the Leeds House noticeboard);
- Talk to Mrs Deborah Bligh, the Senior Deputy Head or Mr Jonathan Forster, Interim Head.

There are many people at Mayfield who will be very happy to help you, and usually you will find that the issue can be quickly sorted out. Never keep a worry to yourself. We want you to be happy.



ENGLISH SPEAKING POLICY

We are fortunate to have girls of different nationalities living in Leeds House and we encourage everyone to speak English at all times. Of course, we understand that there are occasions when only your mother tongue can express what you really mean, and we understand an occasional lapse, but the more you use English the easier it will be for you and the more fluent you will become.

FLEXI AND OCCASIONAL BOARDING

We are very happy to welcome flexi-boarders and occasional boarders in Leeds House. If you choose to flexi-board, you can stay with us for one, two or three nights per week. These are agreed in advance with Miss K and it is expected that you will keep to them for the whole term as your parents will be charged for the nights you have committed to stay. However, it is sometimes possible to swap a night for a different one the same or following week. We will try to give you the same bed each night, but cannot guarantee this. As a flexi-boarder you will follow the same routine as the rest of the House and are welcome to join all House activities, including weekend trips and outings. Please fill in the 'Flexi-boarding request form' to request a flexi-boarding place. This is available to download from the Parent Portal of the School website. Once booked in, you will be charged for the number of nights you sign up for. Half a term's notice is required.

As a flexi-boarder, you may bring your own bedding from home if you wish and we can store it for you, ready for the next night you are with us. Alternatively we can supply bedding for you.

If you want to, you can also leave your night clothes and a wash bag containing your toiletries in the House to save you having to bring all your belongings each week. Like the rest of the girls, you will clear your bedroom at the end of each term and take your possessions home so that the House can be thoroughly cleaned.

Occasional boarders are also welcome if, for example, parents are going to be away for a period of time. Please fill in the 'Occasional Boarding request form' to request an occasional boarding place. This is also available to download from the Parent Portal of the School website.

Please telephone or email the Housemistress or one of the Houseparents if any further information is required.



Educating girls to respond to the needs of the age

Cornelia Connelly, Founder



Mayfield

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mayfieldgirls.org