

## STATEMENT OF BOARDING PRINCIPLES

The Pastoral System at Tonbridge is based around a well-established House system. Clear expectations help to nurture strong relationships amongst boys, staff and parents. Fostering an atmosphere in which all members of the community look out for each other is at the heart of Tonbridge life. The Pastoral ethos and structures of the School are designed to enable boys to acquire the tolerance, self-reliance, values and sense of duty necessary for them to play a constructive role in the changing world to which they belong. Tonbridge believes that the House system provides equality of opportunity within a caring environment where each individual is known and valued. Boys are allowed to develop their own personality, interests and talents, whilst learning to live as part of a community, with the support, mutual respect and encouragement from members of staff and of their housemates. We aim to ensure that this community is one in which there is no place for harassment, discrimination or bullying.

Houses are relatively small, with 60-70 boys in each House, fostering the small group identity that strengthens a sense of security, belonging and well-being, and allows boys to contribute meaningfully to House as well as School activities. Houses are organised “vertically” with each House including boys from every age group, enabling older boys to mentor and support younger boys. All Boarding Houses have their own kitchens, dining rooms and social and communal facilities, as well as a combination of shared accommodation, single accommodation and study facilities. All Houses undergo regular, periodic upgrades to ensure facilities meet the ever-evolving needs of the boys and support excellent Pastoral care.

At the centre of our system are the twelve Housemasters. The Housemaster remains integral to a boy’s life at Tonbridge, being responsible for the boy’s academic progress and Pastoral well-being. In this role, the Housemaster is supported by the tutor team attached to each House and a Matron in each Boarding House. The operation of the House system at Tonbridge enables us to focus on the needs of each individual boy and to monitor their progress and development closely; a Housemaster is able to get to know the boys and their families well and is able to respond quickly to issues should they arise. In all Houses, both Boarding and Day, the accommodation for the Housemaster and their family are an integral part of the House. The House system is supplemented by an on-site Medical Centre, Chaplaincy, dedicated School Counsellor, Independent Person, DSL team, ABC coordinators, the Welfare Group and members of the Senior Team.

All boys have the opportunity to contribute their views on aspects of the Pastoral system through a School Council, House Councils, and House Food Committees. There is also a clearly stated complaints procedure for boys and others wishing to make formal complaints about any aspects of School life. Boys from each Year Group and House are represented on the School’s Anti-Bullying Council which ensures that relevant issues remain a focus and point of awareness. The Overseas Student Committee allows international students’ a specific forum to raise their concerns and ideas. These are supplemented by other societies like the African Caribbean Society, PRISM, the South Asian Society, Bridge the Gap, the Southeast Asian Society. These all have staff involvement and are overseen by the Lower Master and Deputy Head Pastoral. These councils, societies and committees provide support to boys and aids communication between boys and Pastoral staff.

The whole Pastoral System is formally monitored and supervised by the Deputy Head Pastoral (who is also the Designated Safeguarding Lead), and by the Governors’ Pastoral Committee. They report respectively to the Headmaster, and to the Governors of the School.