



Ellesmere

Co-ed 7-18 Day and Boarding



**Welcome to
St Hilda's House**

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Welcome to St. Hilda's House for students in Sixth Form – Years 12 and 13. The House is made up of:

Housemistress and Housemaster:	Mr James and Mrs Charlotte Dilks
Assistant Housemistress and Tutor:	Mrs Julie Kirk
Tutors:	Mrs Rachel Schubert Mrs Amy Darrant Mrs Cerys Empson
Duty Tutor:	Mr Bill Hutchings
Overnight Cover:	Mrs Christina Westwood
Housemothers:	Mrs Sandra Millard (Mon, Wed, Fri, Sat) Mrs Victoria Upton (Tue, Thu)

Saint Hilda's overview

In St. Hilda's the ethos is to grow independence through positive support, building a productive and happy community in preparation for life beyond.

Along with House tutors we look forward to providing advice, support and encouragement to our pupils, enabling them to enjoy the challenges of Sixth Form life and to succeed academically, personally and socially.

St. Hilda's provides pastoral care and accommodation for approximately 28 girls in Years 12 and 13. St. Hilda's is a beautiful wing of a large redbrick Victorian building. The ceilings are high, dayrooms are spacious and bedrooms light and airy, some with glorious views over the North Shropshire countryside.

St. Hilda's has a large dayroom with comfortable seating and a pool table, a lounge with sofas, bookcases and a large television, a good sized kitchen with sociable seating, a small laundry and excellent provision of showers and bathroom facilities. Daygirls enjoy all the social areas as well as comfortable study facilities, specifically for them.

Girls will have access to a member of staff at all times. During the day, our Housemothers (Sandra and Victoria) look after all domestic affairs and the tutors and Mr and Mrs Dilks will visit regularly. In the evenings we or one of the boarding tutors, will be on duty and Mrs Westwood is on call through the night.

The girls have a personal tutor who is first port of call for all academic and pastoral matters; parents and girls should expect to establish a firm relationship with the tutor. Girls will also have a lot of contact with their Housemaster or Housemistress who will oversee everything that goes on in their school life. The House will have a House-Captain and a Vice-Captain assisted by a committee made up of day and boarding, upper and lower sixth girls. They will be very important to the smooth running of St. Hilda's, where we seek to establish routines, events and activities to suit all members of our small community.

Saint Hilda: Who was she?

This is the only House in College named after a female Saint and we can all take some inspiration from the story of our patron. **Saint Hilda of Whitby (born 614AD)** was renowned for her piety and learning.

Hilda was an influential figure in the early English Church and played a significant role in the spread of Christianity in the region. She is described as a wise and virtuous woman who had great knowledge of the Holy Scriptures. Many people, both noble and common, sought her counsel and advice due to her reputation for wisdom and piety.

As the abbess of the double monastery at Whitby, she was known for her strong leadership and for fostering a community of learning and spiritual growth. At a famous synod held at Whitby in 664 AD, Hilda played a pivotal role in resolving a dispute regarding the date of Easter. It was during this synod that the Roman method of calculating the date was adopted over the Celtic method, largely due to Hilda's influence and persuasive abilities.

Saint Hilda is recognised as a significant figure in the early English Church and a woman of great wisdom and influence.

Settling In

Some girls adapt to boarding life straightaway but others take a little longer. The site itself is big and, even though you were taken on a tour on your preliminary visit, you will not remember where things are but don't worry there will be plenty of people to guide you.

Of course, from time to time, you might feel a little homesick. During the day you will probably be too busy for this to disturb you but you can help yourself in the evenings in a few ways:

- Take every opportunity to chat to others, keep busy and try to join in as many activities as you can.
- Too many phone calls home can make the situation worse. A letter or email is often more helpful.
- Chat to whoever is on duty and the girls in the Upper Sixth. You will probably be surprised to find that the person who now seems so confident once felt exactly as you do now.

Day-to-day Information

Most of the information which follows is applicable to both day and boarding girls, not least because day-girls usually find themselves boarding for at least a night or two during their time in the Sixth Form.

However, at the end of this booklet, you will find some information which is specifically aimed at those who travel to College on a daily basis.

Getting Ready to Board

You will find it much easier to settle in if you are properly prepared. Here are a few helpful hints:

School Uniform

You will have been given a copy of the clothing list and, of course, it is best if you arrive with everything required but don't worry if you have to wait for an item from the College shop. There will be time to sort

this out. Remember to bring a black suit, with knee length skirt or smart trousers and matching jacket and make sure you purchase a school tracksuit and full school uniform.

Casual Clothes

After lessons and on weekends, you will want to change out of your uniform so make sure you bring a range (but not too much- storage is not extensive!) of clothing to suit all weathers and the sorts of activities you think you will be doing.

Hair, Make-up, Jewellery and General Appearance

All girls usually look very smart and Saint Hilda's girls will meet the highest standards. Light make-up and two pairs of plain, small ear rings/studs are permitted in the ear lobe; hair should be tied-up during the working day if it is long enough and not dyed or styled in any extreme way. Nail-polish or nose rings/studs are not allowed.

Laundry

All clothes can be sent to the school laundry but must be clearly named. However, the House has a washing machine, drier, iron and washing line for you to wash your own small and delicate items, this is for occasional use only. You will need to bring a pop up laundry bag with your name on it. You do not have to bring your own sheets and duvet covers but some girls like to; if you do, we recommend two sets and they absolutely must be clearly named.

Electrical Appliances

Of course, you will want to bring some electrical items with you such as a hairdryer, laptop, mobile phone charger etc. but for safety reasons please make sure you have the correct UK adapter. Please note that fans, kettles, heaters and rice cookers are not permitted in boarding rooms for fire safety reasons.

Valuables

You will, no doubt, have some things which are valuable, either in terms of their cost or because they are particularly special to you. The college cannot accept responsibility for these things but you can do a few things to prevent them from going missing or to help them to be returned to you if they do:

- Make sure that items are clearly named
- Keep them in the lockable space within your room
- Give them to your House staff for safe-keeping
- Bring a small padlock for your lockable space

Money

Pupils are usually happy managing their own money through a bank account and, if you do not already have one, we will make it easy for you to open one. You should not keep large sums of money in your room – if you need to have cash, we can look after it.

All Sixth Formers may have their own bank accounts for their personal finance. If you prefer, we can bank any pocket money in the St. Hilda's bank account and give it to your daughter upon request.

Contact with the Outside World

Most girls have a mobile phone and overseas students often find it more economical to buy a British sim card. All rooms have wireless network access and cable access so that emailing or using video calls to contact friends and family is easy. There is a phone in the office, which girls may use if necessary.

Fire Drills

One of the most important routines as far as safety is concerned is what happens if the fire alarm sounds. The correct procedures must be taken even if you suspect that the alarm is ringing for a practice evacuation. Rules are displayed on the House notice-board and in several key places around the buildings. They will be explained to you but you must make sure you know exactly what to do.

Academic and Extra-Curricular Activities

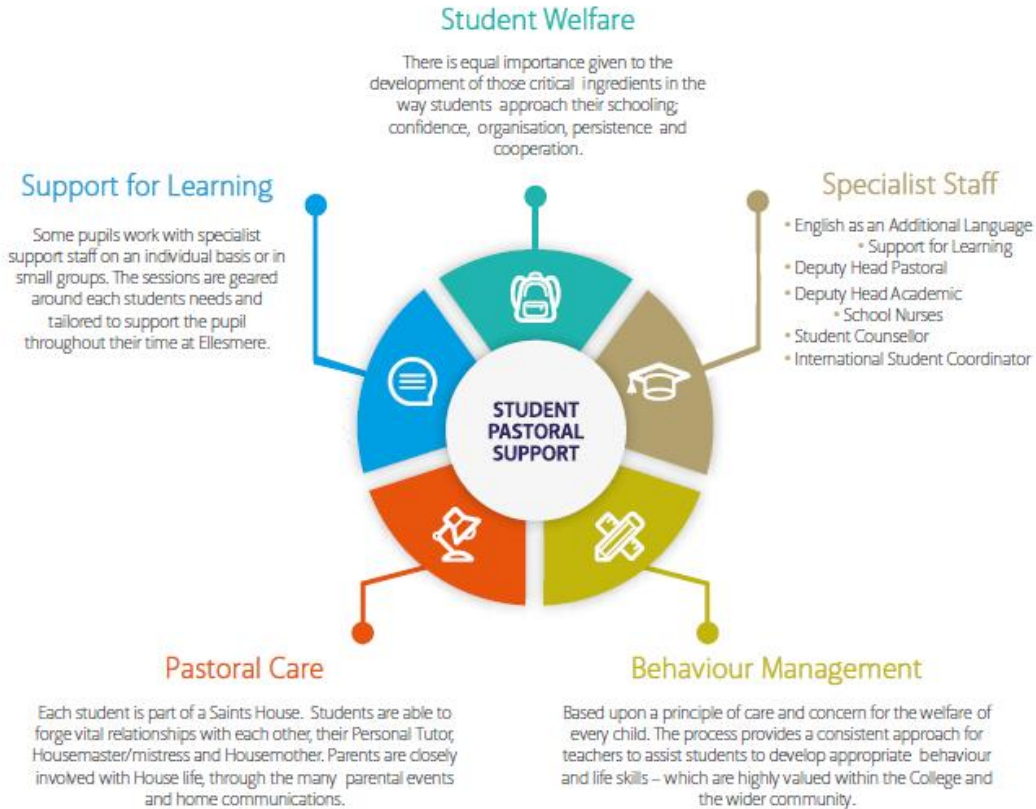
Ellesmere College offers many extra-curricular activities and there is bound to be something which appeals to you. Take the opportunity to try something new or to improve your skills and deepen your interest in something you have done in the past. Your tutor will help to explain the various choices.

All pupils are placed in a Competitive House and in the many competitions- sporting, musical and dramatic- you will be part of a huge team. If you have never been involved in this sort of thing before, you will find it a lot of fun!

Pastoral Systems

Your tutor will be an extremely important person for you during your time here. She will advise you on all academic and personal welfare matters. If you are having problems managing your time or resolving conflicting interests, you should speak to your tutor. This person will get to know you extremely well and, when the time comes to move on to the next stage of life will help you apply to university or with any other plan you might have. Tutors are normally in touch with your parents or guardian at least every half term, so encourage your parent or guardian to reply to their emails - it does help!

Pastoral Care



Additional Support

On occasions, you may feel in need of some additional support either emotionally or spiritually. The school has a Counsellor and a Chaplain to meet those needs. You can approach the Chaplain directly, and visits to the Counsellor can be arranged through sick-bay or by your Tutor.

Complaints Procedure

If you are unhappy about anything, there is a procedure for you to follow and this is clearly displayed on the House notice board.

PSHE

Personal, Health and Social Education plays an important part in your education. PSHE lessons are held every Thursday morning with your tutor and sometimes guests are invited to speak about topics that should be of interest to you.

Child Protection

There are a number of dedicated staff for safeguarding, including the head of Sixth Form, Dr Gareth, along with both Deputy Heads, Dr Chatterjee and Mrs Pritt-Roberts. If you have any concerns about your own or any other pupil's safety, you can contact one of them directly, or through your House.

Discipline

Ellesmere College has very high expectations of behaviour from its pupils. There are clear policies about smoking, alcohol, drugs and sexual behaviour, displayed in the House. In St. Hilda's, as with the other Sixth Form Houses, we work on the principle that the girls deserve our trust and their independence, whilst we expect common sense and responsibility in return.

Weekends

There are no lessons on Saturday mornings but frequently there are sports fixtures, which involve quite large numbers of pupils. If you are not involved in sport, this is a good time to relax, get some work done, read the papers or walk into Ellesmere and do some shopping. Activities are organized which take students off-site to places such as Chester, Manchester and Liverpool. There are also cinema trips and visits to other places of interest. Girls often have a lie-in on a Sunday and there is a more flexible approach to breakfast/brunch/lunch, which aims to please everyone. Again, there are sometimes organised outings and all the sports facilities are open for casual use. If you tell Mr and Mrs Dilks early enough – and they get the necessary parental consent – we can also help you sort your own travel to suitable destinations if you are on top of your work. If you are a weekly boarder and wish to go home for an evening, this is no problem as long as you make us aware in advance and we receive parental consent.

Exeat Weekends

Midway through each half term in the Michaelmas and Lent Terms the College has an Exeat Weekend when boarders often go home. If any girls are unable to go home they may organise a stay with friends and/or a guardian (subject to appropriate guardian responsibility). If they plan to spend the weekend in one of the towns or cities within reach of Ellesmere in order to take advantage of the cultural opportunities offered by these larger centres, then a guardian must take full responsibility for their care. For this, girls will need written permission (email is fine) from a parent or guardian in the week prior to departure. We encourage girls to try and get off site if possible as the Exeat weekends are designed for some rest and relaxation in the middle of a busy term.

Holiday Leave

Girls leaving the UK to return home for holidays on the last day of term and arriving back at the start of a term must provide the following details well in advance of departure: flight number; flight time; airport; terminal and destination. We recommend students or parents email these details to st.hildas@ellesmere.com as soon as they are known. Earlier departures are obviously detrimental to your academic progress and are unlikely to be authorised by the College. **Please be aware that you may not leave the College before 6am to catch a flight except for the last day of term.**

Chapel Services

Ellesmere College is a Christian foundation and all pupils are expected to attend regular services. We believe that, at the very least, it will provide a crucial focus for quiet reflection throughout the working week.

Medical Issues

It is very important that you make us aware of any health conditions on arrival so we can ensure that duty staff and Sisters in College are aware. Surgeries are held each day by the sisters and the visiting doctor. The times for these are posted on the house notice board but there is a member of the medical staff on call at all times.

Ellesmere College also has a sickbay where you might be expected to stay in order to be looked after if you are unwell.

Information for Day-Girls

If you are using school transport, the coaches arrive at about 8.20; if you are being brought in by car you should aim to arrive at the same time. Registration takes place in your tutor room at 8.30am and every morning we have a brief meeting so that information can be shared. This is also a good time to catch up with your personal tutor.

If you have gained, permission to drive into College you must hand in your car keys at reception, who will look after them until the end of the working day or week. Boarders may leave their keys in the Boarding House and should be handed in to the Housemother.

The school day lasts until 5.30pm and coaches leave promptly at this time. However, there will be occasions when you will want, or at times be required, to stay later for cultural events or social occasions. We may be able to offer a bed, but this depends on numbers. Please do ask if you need to stay and we will do our best to find a comfortable arrangement.

We try hard to establish excellent relationships between day and boarding girls and the more opportunities there are to mix the better. It is always good when boarders are invited home for weekends with daygirls and, provided permission is given by both sets of parents, this can always be arranged.

If you are unable to attend College for any reason, it is important that a parent or guardian emails or calls to let us know the reason for your absence, preferably before lessons start so that our register is correct.

* * *

Final Thoughts

Perhaps you have already been a boarder in St. Aidan's or in another school. Perhaps your parents, brothers or sisters were boarders and you have some idea of what it will be like or perhaps you are the first in your family to have the experience. Perhaps you have been educated in another country and perhaps English is not your first language. Perhaps you are excited about the prospect of staying away from home or maybe you are actually a bit apprehensive.

Whatever situation you find yourself in; the chances are that someone else will be feeling very similar to you. There will always be someone to turn to, when you want to discuss what is happening and how you feel. You must always be sure to ask for help whenever you need it and, in this booklet, you should find the answers to many of your questions and the names of those people who are at hand to support you.

St. Hilda's aims to provide a safe, welcoming environment for you to work in, somewhere you can feel at home with friends or on your own. We hope you will be able to flourish here as an individual and also as part of the community and that you will achieve your potential both academically and socially so that when you leave for the world outside school you will be more than ready to face all its challenges.

St. Hilda's House Boarding and Prep time expectations

- Boarders have a responsibility to contribute towards creating a relaxed but purposeful atmosphere within the house.
- Pupils should be aware that all members of staff could require access to any part of the boarding house at any time. Therefore, boarders are expected to always behave and dress appropriately.
- The normal working day begins at 8.30am and ends at 5.30pm.
- Pupils should be aware that members of staff (such as teachers, cleaners, maintenance workers) can be present in the boarding house during the working day.
- Prep Time runs from 7.00pm until 9.00pm and Boarders should seek appropriate permissions to sign out of House to other areas of study including the library.
- Prep Time in House should be quiet, purposeful and allow for all to work effectively.
- Duty Staff will routinely walk the House to allow for the support of Boarders' welfare, help Boarders' study or manage any other issues – and to 'check in' with individuals across the week.
- Walking the House is done on an informal basis from the beginning of the duty but particularly during 'Prep Time.'
- It is routine for there to be a final room check after the 10.00pm roll call.

Contact details:

Housemaster and Housemistress

Mr James Dilks and Mrs Charlotte Dilks

st.hildas@ellesmere.com

01691 626517 / 07888 288698

Assistant Housemistress

Mrs Julie Kirk

julie.kirk@ellesmere.com

01691 622321

Tutor:

Mrs Rachel Schubert

rachel.schubert@ellesmere.com

01691 622321 x 306

Mrs Amy Darrant

amy.darrant@ellesmere.com

01691 622321 x 223

Mrs Cerys Empson

cerys.empson@ellesmere.com

01691 622321 x 217

Housemother:

Mrs Sandra Millard (Mon/Wed/Fri/Sat)

Mrs Victoria Upton (Tue/Thu)

sthildashousemums@ellesmere.com

01691 622321 x 262

House Mobile

07888 288698

Duty Tutor:

Mr Bill Hutchings

bill.hutchings@ellesmere.com

01691 622321

Reception:

reception@ellesmere.com

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Sick Bay:

sisters@ellesmere.com

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