

Stonar School Boarding Principles

Our Mission

At Stonar School, our mission is to equip each pupil with the skills and attitudes necessary to thrive academically and personally in a globalised world. Our boarding provision is designed to create a secure, nurturing, and stimulating environment where every boarder can reach their full potential, both academically and personally.

Boarding Structure

Boarding is available for pupils from Year 5 to Year 13, with pupils residing in one of three dedicated boarding houses on Stonar's picturesque rural campus. These houses foster a family-like atmosphere, enabling pupils to feel part of a close-knit community while also belonging to the wider school. Boarders benefit from excellent facilities, the dedication of staff, and a warm, inclusive environment that values respect, camaraderie, and mutual support.

Each boarding house offers a "home away from home," encouraging a sense of responsibility and consideration for others. Boarders gain a strong sense of belonging, loyalty, and companionship. The allocation of new boarders to houses is managed by the Director of Admissions and Marketing in collaboration with the Head of Boarding to ensure an equitable distribution of talents, interests, and nationalities. This process aligns with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools, ensuring fairness and inclusivity.

Our boarding houses are equipped with modern facilities, including communal kitchens, ICT resources, and inviting common areas with comfortable seating, entertainment systems, and Wi-Fi. Pupils are encouraged to personalise their spaces, fostering a sense of ownership and comfort. While each house retains unique characteristics based on its layout and leadership, all operate under a consistent framework of care and organisation, ensuring equity and shared standards across the community. Accessibility considerations for pupils with disabilities or specific needs are incorporated to ensure inclusivity.

Flexible Boarding

Stonar's flexible boarding approach allows day pupils to stay overnight, fostering integration and strengthening the vibrant boarding atmosphere. Bookings can be made by emailing the Head of Boarding (a.izzard@stonarschool.com), with priority given to pupils participating in school activities or events. This initiative enriches the family-like environment and strengthens connections across the community. A clear and transparent process ensures fairness and prioritises pupils with the greatest need.

Pastoral Care and House Management

Houseparents, supported by Assistant Houseparents and house tutors, provide a welcoming and supportive environment. They uphold the principle that each pupil is an individual and tailor their approach accordingly. House staff lead by example, fostering mutual respect and maintaining a good-humoured, fair, and consistent atmosphere. Clear boundaries ensure smooth operations, with pupils receiving encouragement, rewards, and constructive guidance.

The safety and well-being of all boarders are paramount. Stonar School operates under a robust safeguarding framework, with all staff trained to identify and address any concerns promptly. Clear procedures are in place, ensuring boarders feel safe, supported, and valued. Regular training updates ensure staff are equipped to manage safeguarding concerns effectively, including online safety.

Boarders are actively encouraged to voice their ideas and concerns through nightly house meetings and boarding committee representation. This participatory approach fosters a culture of respect and inclusivity, where pupils feel heard and valued.

New boarders benefit from a structured induction programme, including buddy systems, welcome events, and orientation activities. This ensures a smooth transition into boarding life, fostering a sense of belonging from the outset. Key induction milestones and activities are clearly outlined to ensure consistency and effectiveness.

Opportunities for Leadership and Growth

As pupils progress, they are entrusted with greater responsibilities and encouraged to take on age-appropriate leadership roles within the house and the wider school community. These include positions such as House Captains, Mentors for younger students, and members of the Boarding Committee. Such roles promote personal growth, self-reliance, and confidence, while enabling boarders to contribute positively to the school community.

Activities and Enrichment

An extensive range of sports fixtures, coaching sessions, and evening and weekend activities ensures that boarders can pursue diverse interests. Activities are carefully planned and published in the school's online calendar, allowing pupils and parents to plan ahead. The Equestrian Centre is open on weekends, offering riders opportunities for training and competition at local and regional levels.

Boarders also participate in a variety of activities after school and at weekends designed to promote personal development and well-being. These include mindfulness workshops, yoga sessions, team-building type activities, and life skills activities such as cooking afternoons and financial literacy workshops. Metrics to measure the effectiveness of these activities, such as pupil feedback and participation rates, are reviewed termly.

Pastoral Support Services

Pastoral care at Stonar emphasises a balance between personal responsibility and guided support. The Deputy Head (Pastoral) oversees the Pastoral Care Team (PCT), which meets weekly to review pupil progress and coordinate targeted interventions. Additional pastoral support is provided by the HUB, a professional school counsellor, and a trained Pastoral Intervention Practitioner.

New boarders and their families are introduced to the available pastoral resources, ensuring they feel supported from the outset. Pupils are encouraged to access these services as needed, with the assurance of confidentiality and respect. A regular review of pastoral care provisions ensures they remain effective and meet pupil needs.

Parental Engagement and Communication

Stonar recognises the importance of a strong partnership between school and home. Parents are encouraged to maintain regular communication with their child's Tutor or Houseparent, with direct access to senior school leaders available for any significant concerns. Parents receive regular newsletters ('Stonar Matters'), boarding reports, and updates on their child's progress. This open and transparent approach ensures a collaborative effort to support each pupil's well-being and development. Opportunities for parental involvement, such as events or committees, are actively encouraged to strengthen this partnership.

Supporting Documentation

This statement should be read alongside related policies and information available on the Stonar website or upon request, including:

- Mission Statement
- Boarding Handbook
- Code of Conduct and Pupil Expectations
- Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Conflict Resolution Policy (including Anti-Bullying Strategy)

Monitoring and Evaluation

The boarding provision is subject to regular review through pupil surveys, staff feedback, and compliance checks against the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. Feedback from these reviews informs ongoing improvements to ensure the highest standards are maintained.

For further information, visit the 'Boarding' section of our website or contact the school office directly.