

# BRYANSTON

## BOARDING POLICY

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Bryanston is a busy and thriving boarding school that prides itself in providing a stable, secure and caring boarding environment while offering a full range of educational opportunities. Boarders lead active, structured and rich lives where every pupil is encouraged to contribute and to believe that if they persevere with something they will improve. This creates a happy, upbeat and flourishing community with a vibrant mix of young people.

### **Aim**

The school's Guiding Principles underpin all policies, practices and procedures. These are: Creativity; Breadth of ambition; Individuality; Humanity and family; and Resilience and are outlined in more detail on the school website. These principles are at the core of what we strive to offer at Bryanston and reinforce the ethos outlined in our Statement of Boarding Principles and Practice.

The aim of this policy is to provide an overview of the arrangements for boarding at the school. More detailed information can be found in the New Parents' Handbook and in the school Policy Documents on the website.

### **The Management of Boarding**

The Second Master's Office forms the key pastoral team and consists of the Second Master, the Head of Pastoral and the Head of Boarding. The Second Master's Office coordinates all elements of boarding life and practice through regular communication with the Housemasters and Housemistresses, known as Hsms. The Second Master reports to the Headmaster.

The Headmaster, Second Master, Head of Pastoral, Head of Boarding, Deputy Head Academic, Chaplain, Bursar and Housemasters/Housemistresses meet weekly to discuss a wide range of issues and to promote consistency of practice across all houses. Information is passed on to Common Room staff through regular House Team meetings and weekly Common Room meetings.

The resident Chaplain is fully involved with the pastoral care of the community. When not in the classroom, she spends much of her day and evening meeting with staff and pupils, often on a one-to-one basis. She is a listening ear and supportive presence for the whole school.

The Medical Centre is staffed twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week by fully qualified resident nurses. The team includes, a child psychiatrist, a specialist adolescent mental health nurse and two physiotherapists. Doctors provide daily weekday surgeries. In addition, the school has two counsellors and an Independent Listener. There is also access to a CBT specialist.

The Bursar and Chief Operating Officer oversees the catering, finance, health and safety, compliance and HR, operations and facilities management. The school prides itself on the quality of food provided for its pupils. There is always plenty of choice, and provision is made for special dietary requirements, both in the Dining Hall and the Café. Pupils have regular input into the development of catering provision through the Food Committee meetings, which take place twice a term. An ongoing programme of refurbishment and redecoration underlines our commitment to high-quality boarding. A team of qualified security guards monitor and patrol the site twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

The Governors monitor the effectiveness of the leadership, management and development of boarding provision in the school. There are two Governors specifically assigned to boarding matters who spend time in a boarding house each year.

The school promotes a healthy lifestyle and offers guidance on all aspects of personal and social development. The Second Master and Head of Pastoral meet with the Personal, Social and Religious Education (PSRE)



coordinator every week to review the important messages being delivered through the PSRE curriculum. Pupils are educated on, among other things, personal identity, forging healthy relationships, online safety, alcohol, smoking and drugs; the main points of which are reinforced in school and house assemblies. There is also an extensive and interesting programme of visiting speakers.

The school has a wide range of first-class facilities and provides abundant opportunity for its pupils beyond the classroom, all of which are available throughout the week and at the weekend, during the working day and free time.

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and visitors to share this commitment. The school's Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Procedures are available on the website.

### **The Model**

The school has twelve single sex boarding houses; five girls' houses, two junior boys' houses and five senior boys' houses. The composition of each House is directed by the Headmaster's Office, so pupils can enjoy a mix of different talents, cultures and background. We have 690 pupils in the school, of which 596 are full boarders and the remainder day pupils (pupil numbers may fluctuate slightly through the year). These are the only two options available. Full boarders are expected to be at school at all times apart from school exets and holidays and, with their Housemaster's/Housemistress's permission, on Open Weekends. Day pupils have their own bed and area in the boarding house. They are expected to be in school from 8.15am to 9.00pm Monday to Friday and until after their school commitments on a Saturday. In the sixth form, day pupils stay in school for a worknight on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, which ends at 10.00pm. Day pupils are welcome to stay overnight for an additional charge and are encouraged to join in the weekend activity programme on Whole School Weekends.

There is a slight difference to the structure of girls' and boys' boarding, designed in the light of experience. The girls are in the same boarding house throughout their time here. Boys, in their first year, join one of the two junior boys' houses where they find their feet among their peer group and settle into the school. At the end of the year, boys will express a preference for the friends they would like to have with them in a senior house, which along with many other factors is taken into account when assigning boys to their senior house, where they stay for their remaining four years. The Second Master, Head of Boarding and the junior boys' Housemasters work hard to ensure that, as with all houses, the senior boys' houses have a good mix of interests, talents, cultures and backgrounds. The transition phase from a junior to senior house is skilfully and expertly managed by the Housemasters.

Each house is led by a qualified and experienced Housemaster/Housemistress who is a member of the teaching staff and who lives alongside the pupils with their own family. The Housemaster/Housemistress has overall responsibility for the pupils' welfare, development and academic work. They manage a team of staff that act *in loco parentis* to ensure every pupil feels safe, happy and properly cared for. The House Team consists of two resident teachers, a Matron and up to seven Common Room staff who each supervise a prep one evening every week. In addition, house prefects have some pastoral responsibility for younger pupils through supervision and offering advice and support.

### **Equal Opportunities**

Bryanston is an Equal Opportunities school and, to the best of its abilities, is committed to providing equality of educational opportunities that are free from unlawful or unfair discrimination, victimisation or harassment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The school's Equal Opportunities Policy can be found on our website.

### **British Values**

British values are to be celebrated; evidence of this can be seen through assemblies, in houses and through the PSRE programme.

### **Boarding Values**

A boarding house should be regarded as a home from home, a place of safety and security, a place where everybody can feel comfortable and confident. To help with this here are some guidelines that we consider important when living in a boarding community:



- think of others at least as often as you do of yourself;
- be tolerant of those who have different views and habits;
- respect everybody as an individual; care about them and be prepared to help when needed;
- be kind, be honest, be trustworthy; unkind or immoral behaviour strikes at the soul of a boarding house and erodes the positive relationships we work so hard to foster;
- be mindful of the school rules; they are there to keep you and your friends safe and happy;
- aim to do everything to the best of your ability, whether this is your academic work, your sport, music, drama or other activity or simply being a good friend.

## **Weekends**

As a seven-day-a-week boarding school, it is school policy to make weekends full and interesting. The school has three types of weekend, which are clearly identified in the school calendar:

- Whole School Weekends when pupils are expected to be in school.
- Exeat Weekends when all pupils must be away from the end of school on Friday at 4.20pm and return by 9.00pm on Sunday.
- Open Weekends when pupils can choose to remain at school or choose to go home.

The school is aware of the various needs of its boarders and their families at weekends, so is committed to ensuring a formula is achieved that can suit everybody and that exceeds the expectations of families who choose a full boarding education for their child(ren). The weekend activity programme is carefully managed by the Weekend Coordinator, who organises a range of activities that take place both in school and out of school, and that are often driven by the pupils themselves, for example, the House Drama Festival, Balloon Debate, A3 Festival and A2 Charities Day. As a result, the school enjoys having boarders present every weekend throughout the school year. For those families wanting their child(ren) home regularly, the pattern of weekends is such that a weekend leave is possible every two weeks. While a weekend leave request for a Whole School Weekend will be considered sympathetically, they are not encouraged and may be declined. Permission will be at the discretion of the Housemaster/Housemistress, who will use their experience to consider carefully the needs of the individual, as well as those around them. It is unsettling for all concerned if a boarder is away from school on a too frequent basis without good pastoral reason. We ask parents to trust and respect the professionalism, expertise and wisdom of the Housemaster/Housemistress in decisions linked to additional absences on Whole School Weekends.

## **Weekend Leave Arrangements**

The school asks parents to use Boardingware to request a weekend leave for their child(ren). If the Housemaster/Housemistress grants permission for a weekend leave request from Boardingware, this means the pupil is free to go home after meeting all their school commitments on Saturday afternoon and must return by 9.00pm on Sunday evening. If the pupil does have a school commitment at a weekend (for example, playing in a sports fixture or sports training on Saturday afternoon or Sunday, or performing with the choir in Church on Sunday morning), we expect them to honour it, and offer extremely limited flexibility with this. It is only in exceptional circumstances that a pupil will be granted permission to miss any commitment organised by the School, especially where their absence affects others in the team, in the choir or equivalent. Such permission will have been sought a minimum of two weeks in advance of the weekend in question. We ask that parents endeavour to support the school as far as possible in this respect. Occasionally, by special arrangement with the Housemaster/Housemistress, a pupil can return by 8.15am on Monday morning, but this is the exception rather than the rule.

The school expects pupils to be with their parent(s) or guardian(s) when they are away from school overnight, on weekend leave or exeats and during the school holidays. The school requests parents to give permission to their child's Housemaster/Housemistress before they leave school to stay with another family.

If a boarder is taken ill during a weekend leave or exeat and will not be returning on time, the parent or guardian should contact the Housemaster/Housemistress to inform them of the reason why the pupil will not be returning on time. The House will telephone the parent or guardian if a pupil is more than an hour late when returning from an exeat.



### **Other Requests for Absence**

Boarders are expected to be at school throughout the working week. Requests for absence during the week (i.e. for medical or dental appointments, university visits etc) must be made to the Housemaster/Housemistress and reach them at least three days in advance, except in an emergency, when parents or guardians are asked to telephone the House before 8.15am. Requests for leave of absence on compassionate grounds or in exceptional circumstances should be made in writing to the Head well in advance of the proposed absence.

Term dates are published over a year in advance. They can be found on the school website or at the front of the school calendar. This allows family holidays to be arranged without disruption to a pupil's education.

### **Additional Information for Day Pupils**

Day pupils are expected to be in school by 8.15am Monday to Saturday. On Monday to Friday, the school day ends for day pupils at 9.00pm, after prep. From time to time, and with good reason, it may be possible for a day pupil to leave school before 9.00pm after careful communication and negotiation with the Housemaster/Housemistress. The school day on Saturday ends after school commitments. Day pupils are welcome to stay in school overnight after communication with their Housemaster/Housemistress.

If a day pupil is ill, the parent or guardian should email or telephone their House before 8.15am on the first day of absence. If nothing is heard from a parent or guardian, the House will telephone on the morning of the first day of an unexplained absence to ascertain the reason for the absence.

### **and finally:**

Bryanston is proud of the boarding environment and the sense of community it nurtures. We are constantly working to improve the level of care and the opportunities we offer our pupils. If you have any comments, queries or concerns, please contact your child(ren)'s Housemaster/Housemistress in the first instance.

Reviewed: September 2019  
Reviewer: Second Master, Head of Boarding and Housemasters/Housemistresses  
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Author: Head of Boarding

