



A STATEMENT OF BOARDING PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE

FROM THE HEADMASTER

At Bryanston, the development of the individual and community are complementary. Life in the boarding community encourages pupils to become mature, caring and responsible adults who develop the key skills of tolerance, compassion, understanding and respect for others. Kindness is at the heart of everything we do and is a core aim of the School. Boarders face challenges confidently and work together well, acknowledging differences and respecting each other's contributions to life in the House. Their academic needs are met and they are provided with facilities for private study. Boarding helps pupils develop friendships that will be sustained and be sustaining in life beyond school.

Although there are some day pupils at Bryanston, the School is essentially and primarily a boarding school. There are 12 boarding houses in the senior school; all day pupils are members of boarding houses. They are fully integrated and involved in those houses and allocated a bed within their house. The length of the school day also ensures that day pupils are able to enjoy the same levels of support, development opportunities and facilities as boarders. Bryanston offers full boarding with some flexibility built in, with a mixture of whole-school weekends and open weekends. Whole-school weekends will have a focus for all pupils, for example charity events or inter-house competitions, and are an opportunity for pupils to interact and to work together, developing a sense of community in the school. The opportunity to live and work alongside pupils from varied backgrounds and countries is a genuine privilege. On open weekends pupils are able to go home once they have fulfilled their commitments, although many pupils remain in school and take advantage of the School's facilities. On open weekends, activities are still put on for pupils to take part in, including cinema trips and cookery evenings.

At Bryanston, we provide a warm, secure and beautiful environment in which to live and to learn, for all our pupils. We aim to ensure our pastoral system delivers real care and that pupils know to whom they can turn for support of a varied type. Each house is headed by a housemaster or housemistress (but known at Bryanston as a 'hsm') who takes a close interest in every pupil's general progress and welfare. Together with the tutor (with whom pupils will have a one-to-one tutorial at least once a week), the Hsm is at the heart of the pastoral care and they nurture the interests of each pupil. All hsms are supported in the House by a deputy hsm, a matron, and a house team (made up of teaching staff) who help to supervise prep and bedtimes, as well as pupil heads of house and other house prefects. The pupils also have access to the school chaplain, who is resident on the site, the staff in the medical centre and school counsellors.

There are separate boarding houses for boys and girls. All first year boys go into one of two junior houses where they find their feet among their peer group and settle into the School before moving to one of the five senior boys' houses for their remaining four years. Girls are in the same house throughout their time in the School, the two systems being designed in the light of experience.

While each house has a social area and small kitchens for making hot drinks and snacks, there are central areas for pupils to socialise and main meals are taken in the central dining



hall, enabling pupils to develop relationships outside their house. Boarding houses at Bryanston do not encourage the cliquiness and intense tribal loyalties that sometimes exist in schools whose social arrangements are based on a strong, inward-looking house tradition. Bryanston is essentially a living community working together rather than a federation of separate houses. The allocation of pupils to houses is done by the Headmaster, who seeks, amongst other things, to ensure an appropriate distribution of talents, attributes and interests.

Parental involvement and contact with the School is encouraged and the School strongly believes in a sense of partnership with parents. Hsms and tutors are available to deal with issues as they arise and to provide support as appropriate. In addition, parents have access to the eChart, which provides an individual record of a pupil's academic progress, including any comments from teachers, tutor, hsm and the pupil.

Bryanston School values individuals and recognises the importance of having a broad range of pupils and rejoices in this diversity. The breadth of interests, talents and backgrounds of our pupils is a part of what makes Bryanston what it is. The School is committed to ensuring that all of its activities are governed by principles of equality of opportunity and that all the pupils are encouraged to achieve their full potential and that no pupil faces discrimination.

A good boarding school offers a support structure which gives great strength to the individuals who live in its community, in good times and bad. We strive to develop a sense of the duty of service to others and to encourage the individual to play his or her part in the community, while remaining very much an individual. Our aim is that Bryanstonians will leave us as well-rounded individuals, ready to go out into the wider world, to lead happy and fulfilling lives and to contribute, creatively, positively and generously. Much of this is done through being a loving community. The school has always described the pupils, past and present, staff, past and present, governors, past and present, and parents, past and present, as the Bryanston family. The School is home to its family; the model is intended to be a real one.

Bryanston Knighton House

The founding Heads of Knighton House School wished to provide a boarding school experience which was a home from home and placed love at its centre. Today, whilst adapting to the needs of 21st century life, we continue that ethos and strive to make Knighton House School a place where all pupils feel happy, safe and loved.

The school community is considered a family, composed of pupils, their siblings, their parents, staff and Old Knightonians. Whilst demand for full boarding has fallen, the core of termly and weekly boarders remains at the heart of the school. Girls may flexi-board as they move up the school; from one night per week in B3 (Year 3) to several nights in the As. Day girls may stay as occasional boarders and all may stay at weekends. Taster weekends are offered on a regular basis. Flexibility is fundamental to our aim to give all pupils who wish it a taste of boarding life.

Boarding is fun and a great experience. Girls learn to be independent in looking after their belongings and keeping their dormitories tidy; they take on responsibility for keeping



themselves clean, making their beds and changing linen, handing in laundry on time, etc; they help with chores such as laying and clearing tables; they learn to be resilient, to live together in harmony and how to resolve conflict. All of this takes place under the watchful eyes of the boarding team of matrons. Gap and graduate assistants take on a 'big sister' role. The Head is resident full time and takes part in the boarding life of the school.

Boarding accommodation is situated in the Main House, dormitories sleep between 4 and 8 girls. Girls in Years 3 to 7 are accommodated in cosy dorms with single or bunk beds. They are grouped in their academic years (with variations according to boarding numbers) taking friendships into account and moving each term so that they learn to live amicably with a variety of girls. Girls are encouraged to personalise their own area by bringing photos, posters, linens and cuddly toys. They also have a 'tuck box' in which to keep their more precious items.

Boarders in Alpha (Year 8) are accommodated in The Flat, a separate area in the main house. Here most rooms sleep 4 to 6, and there is a kitchen area within the common room. Alphas are allowed to bring their own snacks and drinks for the evening. There is also an external payphone for them to use. It is usual, although not compulsory, for all girls to board at least some of the week in Alpha. This helps them to gain independence and responsibility, preparing them well for the move to their senior school. It also creates a close group bond which will extend far beyond the end of their time at Knighton House.

Matrons' Sitting Room is the central hub of the boarding house, where all girls know they can come for medical attention, sympathy or a chat. It is a homely place with a tank of fish and a cosy sofa. Hot chocolate, milk or squash and biscuits are consumed here before bed. Close by are the Medi Room and San, for those who need them.

The school doctor holds a surgery once a week in school, but if necessary boarders are taken to appointments.

There is also a light and airy 'Boarders' Fun Room' where the girls gather to play and watch DVDs in the evenings and at weekends.

It is important to draw a distinction between school and the boarding 'home', so day girls are not allowed in the dormitories or Boarders' Fun Room unless they are staying the night.

Allocations to dormitories are made by the matrons. When applicable, Alpha are given the opportunity each term to make dorm requests.

Activities are organised in the evenings, after supper for juniors and after prep for seniors. These may include art and craft, computers, singing, dance, team games, board games, or outdoor play in the summer. Weekends are organised around a theme, such as 'Photoshoot', 'Into the Woods' or 'Summer Camp'; invitation weekends are arranged for each year group each term, when everyone is invited to stay in for a fun weekend with their friends. However, everyone needs some down-time and time is set aside just for relaxing, listening to music, reading or playing. Boarders have access to the school library, computers, sport facilities, music block, art room, etc. Each half term has an exeat



weekend where all pupils go out of school. Overseas pupils are often invited home to spend these weekends with their English friends.

Other members of the Knighton family are the animals kept on site – ponies. Boarders are encouraged to help look after them, with a regular posse going out when the pony bell rings at 7.30am to bring in the ponies from the field. Girls may also bring their own small pets – guinea pigs, rabbits, hamsters, etc – to live in the pet shed during term time. Looking after the animals is a great way for the girls to learn about taking responsibility and for those feeling a little homesick, a friendly cuddle from your favourite pet can help a lot.

Communication between parents, pupils, matrons and teachers is vital to ensure the excellent pastoral care on which we pride ourselves. Parents have access to the matrons through email and a direct phone line. Parents may call in the evenings on the matrons' line and there is a payphone for the children's use. Full boarders may have a mobile phone which is kept by matron and given out on a Wednesday evening and at allocated times during the weekend. For boarders whose parents live overseas, arrangements for Facetime are made as appropriate. Matrons communicate important information to teaching staff through the information board in the staff room and via the pastoral care book, also kept in the staff room. Anything urgent or sensitive may be passed verbally to the form tutor. Likewise, teachers will pass information about pupils to the boarding staff. Pupils know that there is a long list of adults to whom they can speak if they have any problems or worries.

Any safeguarding concerns can be made on MyConcern or referred to any of the DSLs as appropriate.

Boarding at Knighton House School aims to help girls to develop into confident, independent, responsible and caring young people. As a school we encourage individuality and rejoice in diversity; pupils are taught to recognise that we are all different and to respect others' right to be individual and to be happy. We actively provide for our pupils' religious, cultural and language needs. Girls will make friendships which will sustain them through the ups and downs of growing up and which we hope will be lifelong. The Knighton family keeps at its heart the values of respect, integrity, service and compassion as laid down by our founders.

Within this nurturing environment of acceptance, love and security children will flourish and move on to their senior school and beyond with confidence and excited anticipation of all the future has to offer.

Mark Mortimer
Headmaster
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