



# King's College

TAUNTON

## Boarding Policy, Principles and Practice

**Policy Date:** September 2023

### Responsibility

**Individual:** Head of Boarding

**Review Cycle:** (Annual)

**Next scheduled review:** September 2024

**Last interim review:** January 2024

## **INTRODUCTION**

King's College aims to provide a caring and stimulating boarding environment, where boarding contributes to pupils' overall development. Learning to live and grow up in a boarding community offers opportunities for pupils to develop as individuals in a number of important ways:

- Developing values – from experience and sharing come respect, tolerance, courtesy and a growing responsibility for others (practised particularly as mentors and prefects).
- Developing self-awareness and resilience – becoming aware of one's strengths and weaknesses and those of others.
- Developing increasing physical and emotional independence and independence of thought, particularly valuable in preparing for life post-King's.

There are seven houses at King's College, all containing a mix of boarding and day pupils. Evenings and weekends see a range of activities both in school and off-site for pupils to involve themselves in and to develop their talents and interests. Opportunities for leadership, present in many Co-curricular activities, they are also promoted through the prefect system, which is an important part of the pastoral structure in our boarding houses.

### **Our boarding practice aims to:**

- Promote the welfare, safety and health of every individual.
- Foster a sense of community and belonging among our pupils, encouraging positive relationships, mutual respect, and a supportive atmosphere.
- Provide the academic resources, study spaces, and support to help our pupils excel in their studies
- Facilitate opportunities for personal development, encouraging pupils to explore their interests and talents.
- Prioritise the mental and physical well-being of our pupils through wellness programs, counselling services, and initiatives that promote a healthy lifestyle.
- Encourage independence among our pupils, helping them develop essential life skills that prepare them for future challenges.
- Offer a variety of recreational and social activities to create a balanced and enjoyable boarding experience, fostering a sense of camaraderie and fun among our pupils.
- Establish transparent and open communication channels with parents or guardians, keeping them informed about their child's progress and well-being.
- Encourage teamwork fostering an environment where pupils can work with each other to achieve common goals.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to develop leadership skills within the boarding community.
- To continue to raise awareness and embed equality, diversity and inclusion amongst our community.

Our driving aim is for our pupils to be fulfilled and a general state of happiness and this has at its heart the need for them to feel secure and cared for by well-qualified and experienced staff who are well disposed to children and who are supported in their caring tasks by regular and appropriate INSET.

A boarding education provides opportunities to encourage the development of both the individual and the community and is also a means to instil and develop personal values.

### **Our aims are realised by:**

- Clear communication of the principles to and by those with boarding responsibilities.
- Full acceptance and adoption of these principles by all those with boarding responsibilities.
- Implementation of appropriate policies and processes in the areas of pupil welfare.
- Monitoring and reviewing policies and practice and evaluating standards of boarding.
- Dissemination of good practice through effective teamwork and transparent communication.
- Development of a good model of pastoral care which must be appropriately staffed.
- Physical conditions of which satisfy (preferably exceed) national minimum care standards.
- Appropriate training and induction of those responsible for boarding, updated regularly as appropriate.
- Providing an organised and varied programme of activities outside the curriculum.

### **Our boarding structure:**

- Seven single sex boarding houses.
- Boarding houses are vertical with pupils in each of the years 9-13 (3<sup>rd</sup> Form – Upper Sixth)
- The composition of the boarding houses gives pupils the opportunity to mix with a wide range of people of different backgrounds, cultures and talents.
- Boarding houses are led by qualified staff who have been identified for their appropriateness for this pivotal role.
- Boarding staff receive appropriate induction and training, both through external BSA courses and through internal training and mentoring.
- Boarding houses are staffed by a resident Houseparent and a resident Deputy Houseparent or Matron and a wider team of non-resident tutors and assistants.
- Each house has a team of tutors with academic and pastoral responsibility for pupils in one-year group (years 9-13).
- An ongoing and regularly reviewed programme of refurbishment and redecoration is critical to our commitment to high quality boarding accommodation.

### Key features of our pastoral care and boarding provision:

- Expectations are agreed and understood and reflected both in policy and practice.
- The Deputy Head Pastoral, supported by the Head of Boarding coordinates boarding life and practice through regular communication with boarding house staff and pupils.
- The Deputy Head Pastoral is the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Deputy Head Academic and the Head of Boarding are the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads.
- The Houseparents meet formally every two-three weeks, with meetings attended by key members of the Senior Management Team (SMT). These meetings are minuted, with minutes available for all staff to read. These meetings promote consistency of practice and discuss a wide range of pastoral issues. The Houseparents meet with the Head of Boarding on a two-three week basis, the theme is more shared practice. House staff also meet informally to discuss issues and to share good practice.
- All staff are regularly informed about key pastoral issues and Houseparents meet their own teams regularly to discuss issues.
- Policies are reviewed regularly.
- All houses have prefects; whose key role is that of pastoral responsibility/care for younger pupils.
- Boarding staff and key members of the SMT are easily accessible to pupils and the Headmaster operates an Open-Door session every week which is specifically for pupils to come and talk about any issue. In his absence this is fulfilled by the Deputy Head Pastoral.
- Our Health Centre provides 24/7 care and is staffed by a team of nurses, Health Centre Assistants and Doctors from a local surgery.
- The Chapel and the School Chaplain are critical to the community and to our pastoral support for pupils, staff and parents alike.
- We employ a school counsellor who comes to the school health centre two days each week. The counsellor is available to pupils, staff and parents and also discusses key issues with the School's pastoral team.
- An independent listener is available for boarders to talk to and external advice lines/websites are publicised in the school and in boarding houses.
- Year group forums exist for pupils to air their views. These meetings are minuted, with minutes sent to SMT for discussion, response and action as appropriate. Houses meet regularly through organised forums and are also a means for pupils to air their views. Senior prefects meet key SMT members regularly to discuss issues and feedback views from the wider pupil body.
- Tutors meet with their tutees regularly.
- Parents are involved in the life of the school through house and school events and also through whole school communications and PA events.