THE
KING'S SCHOOL
CANTERBURY

Boarding Principles & Practice

Responsible Person: Assistant Head, Boarding

Latest Review Completed: March 2026

Next Review Due: March 2028

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The King's School, Canterbury offers a dynamic academic curriculum complemented by an exceptional breadth of extracurricular opportunity. Recognising that some of the most meaningful learning happens beyond the classroom, the school places equal value on the arts, sport, service, leadership, and the many clubs and activities that enrich daily life. Its aim is to help every pupil discover and develop their individual talents, fulfil their potential, and immerse themselves fully in the vibrant life of a boarding community—while ensuring that day pupils participate in every aspect of the programme. Because such a wide-ranging educational experience can be both inspiring and demanding, the school is deeply committed to providing outstanding pastoral care for all.

THE MANAGEMENT OF BOARDING

The Senior Deputy Head, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and the Assistant Head, Boarding are the members of the Senior Management Team (SMT) who have overall responsibility for the welfare of all pupils, and they report directly to the Head. Key issues concerning the welfare of boarders are regularly discussed in the weekly SMT meetings. The Senior Deputy Head line-manages the Housemasters and Housemistresses and has responsibility for pupil discipline. The Deputy Head (Pastoral) has particular responsibility for staff induction and oversees the Health Centre. The Assistant Head, Boarding oversees the team of Matrons and Pastoral Care Assistants (PCAs)) and also ensures that there is parity across all areas of house practice and compliance to all regulations. The Head of Safeguarding ensures that all employees of the school have received the relevant level of training in safeguarding pupils.

BOARDING PRACTICE

There are approximately 915 pupils in the Senior school, of which about 650 are full boarders, and up to 80 additional full boarders at the International College.

Each pupil belongs to a House, which is regarded as their home during their time at school. There are 13 boarding houses, 6 boys' houses with boys from 13 to 18 years, 6 girls' houses with girls from 13 to 18 years and a sixth form girls' house. The Houses are located either within the Cathedral Precincts or on the St Augustine's site, which is about a 5 to 6 minute walk from the main school.

Each House is run as a 'family' unit with the Housemaster or Housemistress (known as a HsM) and their own family, if they have one, living alongside the pupils. The HsM has overall responsibility for a pupil's work, welfare and development and is assisted in this role by a Deputy HsM and by a team of Mentors drawn from the teaching staff of the school.

Each House has its own Matron / Pastoral Care Assistant team who are responsible for the day-to-day health of the pupils, working closely with the Health Centre Team. The Health Centre is staffed by qualified nurses 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. There is also a team of non-House and Night Matrons / Pastoral Care Assistants who provide cover when House Matrons / Pastoral Care Assistants are off-duty.

The school also offers flexible boarding to all day pupils in the Choir House building. 30 beds are available on any night during term time (with the exception of fixed exeats) provided that there is availability in a room assigned for their age and gender, which will vary according to demand. This accommodation is also available to Overseas boarders who wish to remain in the school during the 4 scheduled fixed exeats.

The HsMs are responsible for the day to day running of their House. There is a weekly meeting of all HsMs where matters of common concern can be discussed. Longer meetings are held regularly during the term to allow greater discussion of important issues.

The school provides a wide range of facilities and opportunities for its boarders beyond the classroom. These include academic clubs and talks, debates, a wide range of musical activities, art, drama, IT and sport, all of which are available throughout the week and many at weekends.

The school seeks to assimilate new pupils as smoothly as possible by providing guidance and information in a variety of ways (written, verbal and practical) from HsMs, SMT, Mentors, Matrons / Pastoral Care Assistants and fellow pupils.

Formal and informal monitoring of academic and personal progress and welfare are continuous during a pupil's school career.

Boarders are able to contact parents, relations and friends either in person, by post, by telephone (landline or mobile), by e-mail and through social media apps, and parents are very welcome to visit the pupils in the Houses at weekends or during the week by arrangement with the HsMs.

The school welcomes pupils from a variety of faiths and denominations or none. There are regular whole school assemblies, year group assemblies and house assemblies during the week and most weeks the boarders are expected to attend a service on Sundays in the Cathedral. In addition to these special arrangements can be made for pupils of non-Anglican faith if required.

The school provides for pupils from various countries and cultures, and for pupils with linguistic or specific learning needs.

To the best of its abilities, the school promotes all aspects of equality and diversity, it is known as FREDIE at school: Fairness, Respect, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Engagement.

The school's policy is to promote a healthy lifestyle and to give guidance on all aspects of personal and social development, including alcohol, tobacco, personal relationships and drugs. The school prides itself on the quality of food provided for boarders. There is always plenty of choice, and provision is made for special dietary needs. Pupils have regular input into the development of catering provision through the catering committee meetings.

A high priority is placed on maintaining pupils' safety around the school site and on the route to the Sports Centre and playing fields. In addition to clear guidelines for the pupils themselves, the school has also provided additional protection for school buildings by the use of card readers and digital keypads on the doors of the Houses, CCTV cameras and constant monitoring by security personnel. There are staffed barriers on all entrances into the Cathedral Precincts. Pupils are provided with a lockable drawer or box or digital safe in which to keep valued possessions.

The school is fully committed to promoting the safety, wellbeing, and welfare of all pupils. Safeguarding at the school encompasses far more than protecting children from abuse; it includes ensuring pupils are safe, supported, and able to thrive in all aspects of school life. Concerns relating to a pupil's welfare whether physical, emotional, educational, or environmental are managed in line with statutory guidance, and cases requiring external involvement are referred to the Kent Safeguarding MultiAgency Partnership.

The Head of Safeguarding serves as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and is supported by a team of named Deputy DSLs across the school. The School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is available on our website and within the Staff Handbook on the school intranet. All staff, both teaching and nonteaching, receive regular training to ensure they understand their safeguarding responsibilities and are equipped to identify, respond to, and escalate concerns appropriately.

In addition to House staff and other members of Common Room, pupils can discuss any issue of concern with members of the School Chaplaincy team, or with the School Counsellors who are in school on a regular basis, or with the Health Centre Team. Contact details for the Chaplains, the Counsellors and the School's independent listeners along with other contact numbers such as those for the Duty Officer of Social Services and Childline are published on the Students' Area of the School Intranet.

The school has published and made available the Complaints Procedures for pupils and parents which are in line with official recommendations.

It is essential for a school to run as a well-ordered community where both the rights of individuals and their responsibilities towards others are recognised and maintained. Expectations of behaviour are given in the School Rules which are published on the Students' Area of the School Intranet, along with the sanctions which may be applied if the rules are breached.

The school regards any form of bullying as entirely incompatible with the wellbeing of the community as a whole. Staff are vigilant in looking out for signs of such behaviour and any offences are treated very seriously.

School bounds are defined in the School Rules, but permission to leave the school bounds may be granted by HsMs, generally according to need and seniority, and with due regard to pupils' safety and welfare.

There are now four fixed exeats during the academic year when the whole school is closed, these are in late September, late November, late January and early March. Requests for further weekend exeats can be made directly to HsMs. The school is always closed to pupils during half term breaks and holiday periods.