



HEATHFIELD SCHOOL

Boarding Principles and Practice

Policy Area:	Boarding
Relevant Statutory Regulations:	NMS Part A Standard 1
Key Contact Personnel in School	
Nominated Member of Leadership Staff Responsible for the policy:	Assistant Head (Pastoral and Boarding)
Version:	2025.01
Date updated:	01 September 2025
Date of next review:	01 September 2026

This policy will be reviewed at least biennially, and/or following any concerns and/or updates to national and local guidance or procedures.

Please note that this document is available in other languages upon request.

Boarding Mission Statement and Aims

Overview for Boarders (to be published in all boarding areas):

Boarding is an important part of Heathfield's history having been founded as a full boarding school. Boarding is part of our identity and plays a leading role in realising the School's Aim: to discover and develop every student's unique talents to enable them to excel. Boarding exemplifies the attitudes that the School takes as a community; it is proactive, warm, collaborative, inclusive and mutually respectful as well as fun. Boarding enables every student to be known and appreciated. It is also a safe forum for young people to engender a sense of belonging, independence, and empowerment (the School's Values) which feed into their academic progress and pastoral growth. Boarding underpins the ethos of the School for all our young people whether they sleep in school or not. All students are welcome into the living areas, share the communal spaces and are welcomed by House staff. Heathfield prides itself on extending the hand of opportunity equally to all.

In practice, students live in year groups, allowing them to develop close bonds within their own age group. The Head House Parent and Deputy House Parents live among those students and they are supported by a team of Boarding Assistants. Students in Forms I and II board in rooms which range in size from singles to dormitories. From Form III upwards, most students have their own room, leading towards a more transitional point in the UVI, where, through structured independence, our students are prepared for the next stage in their lives. Through a well-structured system of busy weekends in school including activities and days out, there is a healthy balance between school and home.

Aims:

- To develop a sense of community and belonging, where everyone shows respect for self, each other and the environment, whilst taking responsibility for their actions

- To create a culture of positivity, kindness and respect, honesty and selflessness, compassion and service
- To use the richness of our boarding environment as a springboard to provide our students with an inspiring and holistic education in which they are enabled to flourish, immersing themselves in our Curricular and Co-Curricular activities in order to get the most out of their time at Heathfield
- To encourage all students and staff to lead a healthy lifestyle and help address any issues in regard to wellbeing, adhering to codes of conduct and policies, displaying mutual respect and empathy to one another
- To employ staff who are totally dedicated to the wellbeing and development, both socially and intellectually, of all boarding students. Staff will be invested in building rapport and connection with their students, evoking a positive working relationship.
- To safeguard and promote student welfare in an environment which allows for risk and challenge but is, as far as possible, safe from physical hazards and dangers
- To produce an open and trusting atmosphere in which all members of the community feel able to approach any other member (staff or student) confident that they will be treated with respect and courtesy
- To value and nurture each individual student within a warm, supportive connection, where students' happiness and well-being are cared for in an inclusive, supporting environment
- To enable students and staff to engage with the wider world and see the value of service through leadership and community programmes and educational, community and charitable projects locally, nationally, and overseas
- To provide an environment which enhances and supports the pursuit of academic excellence for all students at a level appropriate to their abilities and needs, where we foster an ability to learn from failure and celebrate success, in all that the students do
- To help prepare and develop skills which are necessary to organise both their academic and Co-Curricular lives and those which are imperative for future life at university and beyond. Enhancing students' organisation, courtesy, confidence, leadership, self-discipline, independence, determination and motivation, both in and out of the classroom
- To develop and deepen supportive and collaborative relationships between students, parents and staff
- To provide an ethos of support, understanding and kindness where bullying and harassment are not tolerated, ensuring that students are not discriminated against, paying particular regard to cultural background, linguistic background, special educational need, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or academic, creative or sporting ability
- To be attentive and responsive to the wishes of the students, involving them in decisions made about the boarding environment and practices
- To welcome, with warmth, new boarders whenever they may join us, help them to settle into their new lives and understand the routines and customs of the school
- To maintain our reputation for excellent pastoral care by continually investing time and resources in accommodation, facilities, staff training and development
- To provide a range of opportunities through our support of the positive education programme to proactively learn about our mental health and how to evoke wellbeing
- To provide a range of opportunities and activities, appropriate to age and maturity, which will help in the cultural, social and personal development of each student
- To ensure as far as possible that life in School and in Houses is free from hazards and dangers and to ensure that a student's environment is safe and healthy
- To create an atmosphere where students can relax and enjoy community life

Outcomes for Students:

- Independence: From Bronte to Wyatt House, the students become increasingly self-disciplined, resilient, resourceful and self-reliant. Enjoying the experience of living away from home, learning to organise their schedules, their leisure time, their personal routines and navigate friendships.
- Understanding: Students develop an understanding of themselves, gaining a balanced perspective about life and how to approach difficulties and learn from their mistakes. Students foster an understanding of communal living, learning how to be tolerant, kind, culturally aware and are able to show care, compromise and consideration towards others as they all experience challenges and successes. Students recognise the value of working hard and being kind.
- Community: Students grow to appreciate the value of community through living in a boarding house. They develop a strong sense of loyalty, promoting and sharing its ethos and spirit, recognising their role in guiding and supporting others through participation, contribution and leadership.
- Safety: Students feel safe in their boarding environment and therefore able to flourish. They are confident to raise their opinions and to express their voice knowing they will be listened to. They live in an environment that is free from bullying or unkindness and are confident to be upstanders against any negative behaviours. Students are aware of the safeguarding policies, e-safety guidance and codes of conduct in order to keep themselves safe.

Structure of boarding at Heathfield:

