



STATEMENT OF BOARDING PRINCIPLES & PRACTISES

Blundell's School acknowledges the sound sense of the values recorded by Dr Fitzgerald in the Boarding Schools' Association guidelines, set out below. Blundell's believes in preserving a powerful boarding atmosphere. There are seven Boarding Houses. We apply the same admissions criteria to the boarding pupils as for the other pupils in the school (see Admissions Policy). All pupils in Years 7-8 belong to School House. For Years 9-12 there are two girls' Houses and three boys' Houses. For their final year the boys and girls in the Upper Sixth move to Westlake. The Houses retain a separate identity in the way they go about things, yet expectations of pupils and pastoral care are unified and integrated across the school.

The School has large boarding community, with a mix of full, weekly and flexi-boarders. It is our policy to provide breadth of opportunity for all, to extol the virtues of a sound understanding between all pupils so that a culture of tolerant harmony emerges. The strength of the House system is that it promotes pastoral welfare, happiness, and fosters a strong spirit of academic achievement. Each House has a team of Tutors who work closely with the House Parents to support the broad development of their tutees. They will usually perform evening duties which allows them to develop a fuller awareness of the pupils in their care. Each House has at least one Matron who is an integral member of the house pastoral team; she also has a strong responsibility, along with others, for the medical welfare of the pupils and, where appropriate, she will work closely with the School Medical Centre. Each boarder will also benefit from the considerable range of structures in the School for example the Sanatorium and the School Counsellor. This Statement, along with the Principles of Boarding establishes Blundell's commitment to boarding.

House Parents and Tutors have clearly defined roles, which are set down in their job descriptions.

CHF

Second Master

September 2025

DR FITZGERALD'S BOARDING PRINCIPLES AND AIMS

The following are the principles upon which boarding in this school is based:

- The development of the whole person and the communication of values are vital.
- Being an open and trusting school, boarding is based upon mutual respect for all members.
- Each boarder has the right to be able to work, play and relax free from abuse, intimidation, harassment, teasing and bullying.
- There is equality of opportunity and respect for all boarders, regardless of ethnicity, culture, gender or disability.
- Each boarder and each member of staff is to be treated as an individual and with respect by other pupils and by staff.
- Although living corporately, staff and boarders acknowledge the right of each other to privacy.
- Each boarder has the right to extend his/her intellectual growth in an atmosphere of positive encouragement and in conditions that are conducive to work.
- All boarders should be able to develop spiritually, culturally, morally and socially during their time in boarding.
- Despite the often great distance separating boarders from their families, links with parents are seen as an indispensable part of the support and development of boarders in this school.

In boarding, we aim to:

- Develop the whole person, a desire for truth and a respect for others;
- Produce an open and trusting ethos in which each boarder feels able to approach any other member of the community (staff or pupil), confident in the knowledge that he/she will be treated and respected as an individual;
- Create an atmosphere of tolerance, openness and trust in which teasing, harassment and bullying would find great difficulty in developing;
- Provide the conditions for boarders to develop their intellectual talents through well-structured prep conditions, access to staff and other pupils, participation in activities and in an atmosphere which values effort;
- Provide a range of activities, hobbies and opportunities related to age and maturity that will assist in the personal, social and cultural development of each boarder;
- Safeguard and promote the welfare of each boarder, by providing an environment that is, as far as possible, free from physical hazards and dangers of any sort;
- Provide accommodation that is comfortable and suited to the needs of boarders, according to age and maturity, and which provides adequate levels of privacy;
- Develop boarders' responsibility for self, for others and for his/her environment;
- Develop boarders' qualities of leadership and ability to work as part of a team;
- Provide suitable conditions for boarders to feel able to turn to members of staff to share the good things in their lives as well as being able to turn to them for advice, counselling and support during times of difficulty.

BLUNDELL'S BOARDING PRACTISES

Blundell's has 7 Boarding Houses, all situated on the main school site. All Houses have a Housemaster or Housemistress (known collectively as Houseparents), as well as at least one Resident Tutor, with some Houses having two or three Resident Tutors.

All Boarding Houses also have a tutor team, with each tutor responsible – in conjunction with the relevant Houseparent - for the pastoral care of their group of tutees, which will typically be in the region of eight to ten pupils.

There are different types of boarding available at Blundell's. Pupils can be:

- a **full boarder** (where they stay seven nights per week);
- a **weekly boarder** (where they board during the week, going home on Saturday afternoon and returning either on Sunday evening or Monday morning);
- a **flexi boarder**, where they board either one night per week (known as an '11 night' package), or two nights per week (a '22 night' package).

Both day pupils and flexi boarders are also able to stay on 'ad hoc' occasions, as long as there is a bed available. Such stays will incur an additional charge.

The Head of Boarding at Blundell's is the Second Master, with day-to-day responsibility for boarding delegated to the Deputy Head Pastoral. The Deputy Head Pastoral is the immediate point of contact for Houseparents.

Boarding policies and protocols are reviewed regularly against the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools.

There are opportunities for all staff involved with boarding to develop professionally, both through the school's wider support for professional development and training, and also through the school's PDR process which incorporates action research.

There is a regular pattern of meetings at which boarding and pastoral issues are raised and discussed. The whole teaching staff meets twice-weekly in break, while Houseparents meet weekly with the Second Master and Deputy Head Pastoral on Monday morning after Latin Prayer. In addition there are fortnightly meetings of Houseparents; these alternate between (i) formal meetings, also attended by key members of SLT and for which there is a formal agenda and minutes (coordinated by the Second Master), and (ii) forums, events where pastoral matters are discussed in a more informal setting, hosted at Blundell House (the Head's house) and attended by the Head, Second Master, and Houseparents.

Entrants into Year 7 and Year 8 go into School House, the co-educational Boarding House for the two youngest year groups. In year 9 pupils join one of the five main Boarding Houses (two girls' Houses and three boys' Houses), before all then moving to Westlake, a co-educational, Year 13-only Boarding House, for their final year at school. All Houses provide comfortable

personal space, and aim to generate a strong sense of communal living while nurturing self-reliance and resourcefulness.

Houseparents are carefully selected and are responsible for the welfare of each pupil in their care. They live alongside pupils ensuring ready, natural and easy contact for all parties. They are supported by a team of tutors, including at least one resident, as well as a Matron who is present in the House between 8am – 6pm.

There is an extensive pastoral support network for boarders; as well as their Houseparent, tutor and matron additional support is provided by the Second Master, Deputy Head Pastoral, the wider Safeguarding Team, the school Medical Centre, and the school counsellor.

Mutually supportive relationships involving pupils, parents, tutor, Houseparent and the school are central to the success of a Blundell's education.

Other Matters

Medical Arrangements

Medical matters are the responsibility of the Medical Centre. This in turn is the responsibility of the School GP, who delegates the day-to-day running of the Medical Centre to the Senior Nurse. The School GP visits the school regularly during the week to take pupil appointments, and there is also an additional GP (of the opposite gender to the school GP) who visits regularly for pupils who may prefer to see someone of their own/a different gender. A school nurse is available 24 hours a day, either on-call or in the Medical Centre.

Supervision

There is adult supervision in the Houses by an identified member of staff. Each member of the House team has a clearly defined role and job description which sets out their particular responsibilities. Duty rotas are published and pupils are aware who is on duty and how to contact them.

The Houseparent organises the duty rota for the House. Whilst on duty, the member of staff responsible for the House must be on campus and contactable at all times.

Boarding staff are fully aware of House rules, systems and fire procedures, and all staff receive a formal induction from the Houseparent when they join the House. Staff have access to emergency telephone numbers, including the Second Master and Deputy Head Pastoral.

There will be a formal handover of duty when the member of staff on duty changes, at which any relevant information is exchanged. For evening duties, there will be a tutor book/folder which tutors complete over the course of the evening to ensure that all routine matters are carried out, and that any pertinent information is written down. Pupils sign in at the start of the morning and at lunchtime with their thumbprint on special machines located in Boarding Houses and in the Dining Hall. During the day pupils are registered in their classes by teachers using the school's information management system (isams).

A high priority is placed on maintaining pupils' safety around the school site, and within the local area. In addition to clear guidelines for pupils themselves (and appropriate sanctions when rules are breached), Blundell's is covered by CCTV cameras.

Privacy

Living with others in a Boarding House places obvious limitations on personal privacy. It is expected that boarding staff and pupils respect the privacy of others. Staff should 'knock and wait' before entering bedrooms; pupils should be allowed to dress, undress and wash free from unnecessary staff intrusion. Pupils' wash room facilities should be discretely monitored for health and safety purposes, and staff must only enter if there is no response.

Staff resident in a Boarding House should be discreet as their accommodation may be in close proximity to pupil rooms. Staff must behave appropriately within their accommodation and always be mindful that pupils live nearby.

Contraband Items and Searches of Rooms and Pupil Belongings

In order to promote the safety of the whole community, there are certain items which are not permitted to be kept in the Boarding House. There is no definitive list of contraband items, for ultimately the Houseparent has ultimate discretion as to what is and isn't appropriate. However, there are certain items which would clearly be classified as contraband, including drugs, alcohol, weapons (such as knuckle dusters and flick-knives etc.).

Houseparents are able to conduct searches of pupil rooms and/or the personal belongings of a pupil; such searches are to be conducted in line with the guidance document called 'Guidance on conducting a search of a pupil's room, belongings or person'.

Items of contraband, if discovered, depending on their nature may be dealt with through the school's disciplinary procedures, which are outlined in policies including the Behaviour Management Policy.

The existence of tools – such as screwdrivers and hammers – in the Boarding House is governed by the guidance document called 'Guidance on managing tools within a Boarding House'. Any tools held by pupils should be declared to the Houseparent, and their purpose explained, and it is at the Houseparent's discretion whether or not this is appropriate, and whether the tool can be retained.

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