



# Boarding at Polwhele House



## A Handbook for Parents 2018-2019

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## **Our Boarding Philosophy**

“Boarders should live in an environment that is happy with a good family/community spirit in which they can have fun. It should be caring, safe, disciplined and positive. The children should have sufficient privacy for themselves. It should be home-from-home – a place where each child is known and cared for as an individual.”

## **Introduction**

Our aim as a boarding community is to meet the individual needs, foster the aptitudes and nurture the growth of each child in order to create an environment whereby they have the opportunity to become their best self. We believe that emotional and social well-being and growth, self-esteem and confidence are of prime importance.

We believe that respect for children, faith in children and an ability to see the world through their eyes should inform our care. The staff involved in boarding at Polwhele House wish to notice and respond to a child’s need, identify their talent and discover and resolve their unhappiness. If we evidence this care then children will feel secure and valued and, as a result, will value themselves and others.

A sense of community is of immense value to children and to their families and it stems from our desire to understand and care for the whole child. Boarding at Polwhele House aims to be seen as an extension to family life. For some families, their child boarding with us may be their first experience of boarding. For others, they will have children boarding at other schools or have had older children board at Polwhele House. Whatever your experience of boarding, you will need to feel confident that your child is being cared for in the best possible way.

## **Statement of Boarding Principles**

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

- All boarders should be able to develop physically, spiritually, intellectually, morally and socially.
- The development of the whole child, as an individual, within a caring and supportive environment.
- Each boarder has the right to be able to work, play and relax free from abuse, intimidation, harassment and bullying.
- There is equality of opportunity and respect for all boarders and staff.
- Although living together, staff and boarders acknowledge the right of each other to privacy.
- Each boarder has the right to extend his or her intellectual growth in an atmosphere of positive encouragement.

## Boarding Staff

Mr Curl and Mrs Spencer assist in the running of the boarding house.

Time	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
7.00 to 8.00 am		TH	TH	TH	TH
3.40 to 4.00 pm	TH	TH	TH	TH/LS	TH
5.15 to 6.00 pm	TH	TH	TH/CC	TH/LS	
6.00 to 8.30 pm	TH	TH	TH/CC	TH/LS	
8.30pm to 7.00am	TH	TH	TH	TH	

### Getting started

When a new boarder arrives, everyone within the house will be helping her or him to settle. A more established boarder of a similar age may be asked to guide the new boarder through the routines. In addition to this, the Boarding Staff and Housemother are there to answer any questions which may come up and to find out how he or she has settled in.

The Housemother will go through the boarding induction:

- a) with all boarders on their first night in the new academic year
- b) with all boarders on every taster night
- c) with any new regular boarders if they join during the academic year

Areas to cover:

- Show the children around the boarding house
- Show the children where the shower rooms and toilets are
- Allow the children to take their bags to their room
- Tell them what to do if a fire alarm goes off
- Explain about phoning home
- Outline that boarding is not a sleep-over; it is important that they have a good night's sleep. The next day is a normal school day and they should not be tired.
- What to do if they have a problem in the night
- Timing and routines, prep time, tea time, activities, beach trip, fireworks etc.
- Which other member of boarding staff is on duty that day
- The morning routines - instrument practice, breakfast, going over to school, where to leave home clothes etc.
- Telling children who are the regular boarders and that they can chat to them if they are unsure about anything during boarding
- Show the children the map of the grounds stressing where they are and are not allowed to go.

## **Supplementary Uniform List and General Notes for Weekly Boarders**

### **Pupils require:**

soap and shampoo  
toothbrush and toothpaste  
hair brush and comb  
shower cap  
dressing gown  
Slippers  
1 pair pyjamas  
  
3 pairs socks/tights (minimum)  
3 pairs pants  
3 vests (optional)  
Shoe cleaning kit  
Home clothes  
linen bag for dirty laundry  
swimming costume/trunks,  
swimming towel (kept at School) and  
swimming bag

### **We supply:**

towels  
box of tissues  
Clothes brushes  
nail scissors  
nail brushes  
duvets and duvet covers  
sheets and pillowcases  
(you may supply your own)

No pocket money or tuck will usually be necessary for weekly boarders. All possessions must be clearly marked with your child's name.

No technological equipment including Mobile Telephones, I-pad or Android equivalent will be permitted in the Boarding house.

Weekly boarders should arrive at School on Mondays in time to take their belongings to their rooms and be in their classrooms by 8.40 am. Choristers should be in singing practice by 8.00 a.m.

All boarders should be collected after school on Fridays at 3.45 pm or 5.00 pm and Choristers after Evensong from the Cathedral.

School games clothes should be taken home every Friday along with other dirty laundry. We have tried to keep the extra equipment for weekly boarders to the minimum. Parents may find it difficult to return everything laundered on a Monday in which case we recommend that extra items of uniform are purchase. The Houseparent operates a laundry service for pants and socks.

If boarders would prefer to bring a favourite duvet cover to school (to be washed and kept here) they are most welcome to do so. Favourite soft toys are equally welcomed. Toys and electronic games are not advised and we cannot be responsible for accidents which may occur to them in School.

## Code of Behaviour

- Music practices at 7.15 a.m. arranged by the Housemother. Boarders practise their instruments for 20 minutes or so.
- After breakfast, pupils brush their teeth etc. and tidy their rooms, including making their beds. Any boarder who leaves an unacceptable mess will be called over at mid-morning break by the Housemother to sort it out.
- Boarders are supposed to have reached their classrooms by 8.20 a.m. Chorister boarders are required to be at choir practice by 8.00 a.m.
- Boarders are required to take everything they need for the day. If they need to go to their room during the day they must ask permission of the Housemother or School Secretary. Everyone goes to tea at 3.40 p.m. but eating is voluntary.
- At tea, the House Tutor and Housemother check how each pupil will be occupied until first prep. In practice, most boarders do an 'after school activity' on most evenings. The boarders are encouraged into joining an activity.
- Prep is a silent, supervised, independent working time in a supportive and encouraging atmosphere. At the discretion of the duty master, individuals or a group or two or three may be allowed to go to another room to test each other on learning or to process work on a computer. Those who finish early read a book or newspaper.
- During the free time after supper, pupils can go to their room, or go up to the Prep School (only with permission) to use the computers or the library. Ball games are allowed outside, if it is dark this happens in the Main Hall but only if an adult is present. (Ball games in the Hall are with a soft ball and restricted in length). In the summer, boarders are free to wander within bounds (see map of campus) and are expected to respect delicate shrubs (e.g. when playing '40/40' or 'hide and seek'). Tennis is popular in the summer term.
- Boarders are not allowed into each other's rooms.
- Boarders are expected to take a shower regularly and in most cases every day, at arranged times.
- 7.50 pm Yrs 3, 4 & 5 get ready for bed. Yrs 3 & 4 come down for refreshment then go to bed at 8.00 pm. Yr 5 have refreshments and go to bed at 8.30 pm.
- 8.50 pm, Year 6 and 7 go to bed. Year 8 boarders are allowed to stay up late (until 9.10 pm) at the Housemother's discretion but have to understand that this is a privilege that depends on their cooperation over the smooth running of the house, particularly in the matter of settling quietly for the night.
- Quiet talking is allowed for 10 minutes after lights out; then boarders are told to go to sleep.
- Boarders do not use the front staircase, unless accompanied by an adult. The exception of Yr 8 finally going to bed (when the others could be asleep).
- Boarders are expected to help with various tasks about the house, sometimes on a rota (e.g. laying up, clearing away).
- Rewards and sanctions are similar to day pupils, plus on rare, appropriate, occasions: Doing some community service for the good of all.

### **Communication**

Parents will be informed of matters of concern and should feel free to let us know of any concerns either they or their child have. The level of informal communication between staff and parents is high and Mr Curl and Mrs Hounsell are always around for an informal chat or are willing to meet with parents by appointment should the need arise.

During boarding evenings, parents can contact Mrs Hounsell by ringing the school telephone number (01872 273011) and leaving a message on the answer machine. The telephone will not be manned during this time, although messages will be checked at regular intervals up until 9.00pm. Any email correspondence regarding boarding should be sent to [thounsell@polwhelehouseschool.co.uk](mailto:thounsell@polwhelehouseschool.co.uk)

For communication purposes within the school and to ensure continuity between boarding and school time for boarders; there is a book located in the staff room in which staff can identify in writing any areas relating to that student which may be pertinent to their school day following their boarding evening.

### **If things go wrong...**

At Polwhele House we are very fortunate in having adults to whom children and their families may turn if they feel something needs to be sorted out or if they have any suggestions. In the boarding house, children's views are sought and respected with regard to any matters relating to their lives within the school, both informally through the day to day contact with individual staff or when notices are given out at mealtimes. There may be times when a boarder feels unhappy about being away from home or about something which has happened to her or him. If this arises then the most important thing to stress is that they should seek out an adult with whom they feel they can discuss it. The house staff are always available to talk to children and their families if there are any concerns. These concerns may be about general routines or managing as a boarder and should be quickly resolved.

### **Responsibility:**

Life is not without risks and pupils are taught to be sensible and to think before acting. The challenge is to manage risk in a way which enables our pupils to experience situations which develop common sense and make themselves responsible about their own safety and the safety of their peers.

## Daily Routine

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7.00am	Wake-up
7.15am	Music practice
7.30am	Breakfast (Boarders' notices follow breakfast, and the children then return to their rooms to brush their teeth, tidy bedders and get organised for the day ahead.)
8.00am	Go to Prep School
3.40pm	Academic day finishes. Boarders go to 'tea'.
4.00pm	After School Clubs (Boarders are expected to attend a club other than Prep Club as they have Boarders' Prep before supper.)
5.00pm	Boarders return to house to change
5.15pm	Boarders' Prep
6.00pm	Supper
6.30pm	Activities
7.30pm	Junior boarders (Y3-Y5) return to house for bedtime routine, i.e. shower, pyjamas, lay uniform out for next day.  Second prep session for senior boarders (Y6-Y8)
7.45pm	Bedtime snack (Juniors)
8.00pm	Bedtime - quiet reading (Juniors)
8.15pm	Lights out (Juniors)  Senior boarders return to house for bedtime routine, i.e. shower, pyjamas, lay uniform out for next day
8.30pm	Bedtime snack (Seniors)
8.45pm	Bedtime - quiet reading (Seniors)
9.00pm	Lights out (Seniors)

### **Pupil 'No go' zones, unless accompanied by a teacher**

Maintenance workshops  
Stables, sand school and paddocks  
Ponds, woods  
Old cow shed, walled garden  
Drive  
Staff car park, cattle grid  
Pre-Prep School  
Laboratory

### **General Safety/Risk Management:**

All staff are vigilant in looking out and reporting potential hazards, using forms which are completed and given in to the school office whenever anything faulty or dangerous is observed. There are two maintenance staff on site each day who can usually give immediate attention to anything reported.

### **Sleeping**

Getting enough sleep is very important, particularly when life is as active as it is here at Polwhele House. Bedtime routines and lights out times have been carefully planned to allow children as much free time as possible, balanced with appropriate rest. After lights out there will be 5 minutes 'whispers' after which there should be no noise. If children have difficulty sleeping, they should talk to a member of staff.

### **Music Practice**

For those learning an instrument morning instrumental practice will take place in one of the music rooms and will be monitored by the Choral Scholar.

### **Boarders' Prep**

Prep is supervised by members of the boarding staff ensuring that it takes place in a studious environment and that any children requiring assistance can receive it from a qualified teacher.

### **Reading**

All of the children have a period of 15 minutes reading before lights are switched out at the end of another full and profitable day! Children who may require some adult assistance with their reading will receive this as part of their bedtime routine from a member of the boarding staff.

### **Meals**

Food is very important to all of us and particularly to growing children. There is always a careful line to be drawn between 'snacking' and eating a proper balanced meal and we as a boarding team are aware of this. Boarders have breakfast, lunch, tea and supper in the dining room each day. Fresh fruit is also available at mealtimes and in the boarding house in the evening. Vegetarian and special diets are catered for.

away from the sense of community then they should spend some time doing some good for the community. Continuing or serious problems will, of course, be discussed with parents.

## **Medication**

Where school staff are asked to give children prescribed medicines or tablets they will be given in accordance with written instructions from the parents or prescribing doctor. Such drugs are stored safely where children do not have access to them – in the locked medical cabinet. These must be handed in to the school office, accompanied by a consent and detail form from the parent. Whenever administered details are recorded. To prevent misuse, children are not allowed to have medicine in their possession (with the exception of asthmatics).

## **Boarders – Medical Notes**

If your child has suffered during the school holidays from any infections or contagious disease, it must be reported to the Housemother at the first opportunity after he or she returns to School.

If your child is thought likely to have been in contact with any infections or contagious diseases during the school holidays, the Housemother must be informed of the facts, preferably in writing, by the time he or she returns to school.

If your child has been in the care of a doctor during the holidays, a brief note from him would be appreciated so that medical records can be kept up to date.

All dental and ophthalmic treatment should take place at weekends or in the holidays, as far as is possible. It is strongly recommended that boarders' eyes and teeth are checked before they join the Polwhele Household.

All medicines and drugs must be clearly named and labelled with instructions and handed in to the Housemother. A form may be obtained from the office.

## **Protocol for the Provision of non-Prescription Medication for Boarders**

Any boarder who is ill is sent home, if possible.

Paracetamol/calpol may be administered (subject to permission being given in the boarder's personal data form which must be checked on each occasion).

If a boarder is ill, the Housemother will communicate with the parent/guardian/carer and any suitable medication is mutually agreed (e.g. paediatric cough medicine).

Any administration of any medical care for boarders is noted in the First Aid book.

## Conclusion

There will undoubtedly be things that are not covered in this handbook and if this is the case then please do not hesitate to let us know. This is meant as a working handbook which will develop and evolve when new issues are raised. Boarding at Polwhele House is a wonderful experience full of excitement, enjoyment and purpose shared by staff, children and their families. We are confident that we provide an environment within which boarders and their families can thrive and this can only be achieved by honest and open communication between staff, children and parents.

Should you wish to discuss anything further with regard to boarding at Polwhele House please do not hesitate to contact us.

Boarding Staff	Mr Curl and Mrs Spencer	01872 273011
	<a href="mailto:headmaster@polwhelehouseschool.co.uk">headmaster@polwhelehouseschool.co.uk</a>	
Housemother	Mrs Hounsell	01872 273011
	<a href="mailto:thounsell@polwhelehouseschool.co.uk">thounsell@polwhelehouseschool.co.uk</a>	

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**Medical Record for Boarders and Form of Authority for School to Act in an Emergency**

Child's full name:.....

Date of birth:.....

Family History: Is there any family history of the following diseases:

Diabetes/Asthma/Tuberculosis/Hayfever/Migraine/Allergies

Previous illnesses: What accident, operations or illnesses has your child had?

.....  
.....

Name and address of family doctor:.....

.....

Has your child had any of the following illnesses? Please give dates:

Chicken Pox:..... Mumps: ..... German Measles: .....

Measles: ..... Other: .....

Please indicate which of the following your child has been immunised against and date of the last injection:

Tetanus:.....

TB Prevention:.....

Has he/she had a Heaf Test (to test immunity to TB) Y/N

Has he/she had a BCG injection (to give immunity to TB) Y/N

Has he/she had a chest x-ray Y/N

If, in an emergency, my child should need to have any treatment, anaesthetic or operation which requires my prior permission and I am not available to grant it, I hereby authorise the school to act on my behalf

Signed:..... Signed:.....  
(Father/Guardian) (Mother/Guardian)

Date: ..... Date: .....

***If your child is new to boarding or if any details have changed, please complete and return this form to the school office at the start of the Michaelmas term 2016.***