

Boarding Policy

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Where available	Staff Handbook, School web-site (unrestricted area)

Boarding Policy

Introduction

This policy addresses the key legislation for boarding regulation as set out in the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (2015) and ISI Documentation Required for Inspections (2020). A major review was undertaken at SLT level in March 2018 and the amended policy approved by the Full Board of Governors in September 2018. It is now scrutinised biennially by the Board's Academic and Personnel Committee.

1. Boarding principles and practice

NMS Standard 1

ISI Regulation 8 and B1a

Aims and objectives

The aims of the School are as follows-

- Providing an education of the highest quality in which each individual can reach his or her academic potential
- Providing a "whole person" education, in which the academic, creative, physical, social and spiritual development of each pupil is promoted in a genuinely co-educational environment
- To foster an atmosphere of self-respect and care for others in which pupils are confident, fulfilled and happy
- To prepare pupils to identify and fulfil their role in society and to provide an education for life
- to work in partnership with parents, governors, staff and former pupils to achieve the School's aims.

The aims of Walbrook (the name of our boarding house) are in sympathy with these aims by

- Providing each pupil with a calm, caring, safe and supportive family atmosphere in the boarding house in which they can develop self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence
- Promoting mutual respect, good behaviour, responsibility, self-discipline and develop independence of action and decision-making amongst the boarding pupils
- Developing integrity, judgement, initiative, loyalty and leadership skills in the pupils.

House ethos

Freemen's provides a small, happy boarding environment in which the boarding pupils work together and support each other. Because numbers are small, staff know the pupils well and every boarding house pupil benefits from individual attention and care; "Cherishing the individual" is a reality, not just a sentence in the prospectus.

2. Induction and support

NMS Standard 2

ISI Regulation B1b, B2b

Before arrival at Freeman's, new boarders and their parents are sent an electronic version of the A-Z guide to boarding (House handbook) and details of what to expect on the first day. New boarders arrive in School before other boarders. They receive a welcome pack, including a hard copy of the A-Z guide to boarding (House handbook) and are introduced to key members of staff. There is a programme of induction activities including information about general rules and regulations, fire procedures, tours of the school and plenty of opportunities to ask questions. Throughout the first term there are a number of 'clinics' running, where new boarders can hear presentations and ask questions relating to induction topics such as opening bank accounts, registering for travel cards and much more.

New boarders are assigned 'buddies' who will help and support them through the first few days or weeks at School. New boarders will be introduced to their Pod prefect within the first few days at School, who will also help to answer any questions they may have.

There is a range of staff to whom a boarder can turn for guidance, including the Head of Boarding, residential staff, non-residential boarding tutors, teachers, medical staff and counsellors. Information is also provided regarding services that pupils can access outside of School, such as Childline, the Office of the Children's Commissioner, counselling and medical services.

3. Health and Well-Being

NMS Standard 3

ISI Regulation 13b, B2a

The health and well-being of the boarders is given very high priority at Freeman's. Most boarding staff have a valid 1st Aid training certificate; all are trained to give out limited medication from the boarding office. Staff are trained in specific conditions and disabilities of pupils in the house. The well-being of boarders is discussed as a regular agenda item in the weekly boarding house staff meetings.

Medicines are stored in the boarding office safely and securely and a record of administration is kept on boarding software accessible only by those who need to know.

During the School day, boarders' medical provision is provided by the School Medical Centre, supported by the boarding staff on duty. Between them a decision is made on a case-by-case basis whether a pupil must remain with the Medical Centre during the day, or whether they may rest in their own rooms. Pupils may make appointments, either through the staff office or privately to see the Counsellor, who is independent of the School staff group.

There are two isolation rooms available in the boarding house for boarders who require them.

All boarders are given the opportunity to register with the local GP and are able to make appointments as necessary. Appointments might also be made by boarding staff or medical centre staff where appropriate.

Boarders requiring prescription medication should store their medicine in the boarding office. Older pupils might be allowed to self-medicate in certain situations and boarding and medical staff will keep a record of this agreement.

Other medical services such as dentist, optometrist and specialist services can be booked privately and the School will assist in this where required. Details of these services, and services reflecting well-being and mental health can be found in Walbrook.

Confidentiality is paramount in medical care of boarders and must always be respected.

4. Contact with parents and carers

NMS Standard 4

The vast majority of boarders will use mobile telephones and electronic devices to contact parents/carers. Many will choose to do this in their rooms, but there is a private telephone box available for use. Boarders who are unable to use their own phones may request to use the boarding house landline in exceptional circumstances.

5. Boarding Accommodation

NMS Standard 5

ISI Regulation 8b, 16a, 30, B8a

We are very fortunate to have a modern boarding facility at Freeman's, and great care is taken by boarding staff and the maintenance team to ensure that the accommodation is safe, suitable, comfortable and well-maintained. Discretion will be used in the case of pupils with particular religious, medical, pastoral, dietary, language or cultural needs.

Annual risk assessments are carried out and improvements undertaken where necessary.

Boys' and girls' accommodation is separate and secured at night time. Each room contains desk space, wardrobe, basin and a lockable drawer for valuables. There is a shared bathroom in each Pod with a bath, showers, toilets and basins. The school will consider on a case-by-case basis any requests by pupils identifying by gender alternative to biological gender.

Rooms can be personalised with pictures and posters, and boarders may bring personal items, provided those items conform with Health and Safety standards and Walbrook and School rules.

CCTV is operational in the communal and public areas of the house for the safety of all residents. CCTV does not intrude upon boarders' privacy in the Pod areas.

The house is secured from unauthorised users by way of a keypad on the boarders' entrance and a fob system on the visitors' entrance. An intruder alarm is activated at night.

There is disabled access to rooms on the ground floor, and a lift allowing access to the first floor.

6. Safety of Boarders

NMS Standard 6

ISI Regulation 11

The safety of pupils in the School is of paramount importance. Walbrook is covered by the School's Health and Safety Policy. The boarding staff communicate with the Maintenance team to ensure that the safety and welfare of the pupils is safeguarded and promoted at all times.

7. Fire precautions and drills

NMS Standard 7

ISI Regulation 12

Freemen's complies with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

Fire drills are carried out during boarding hours at least once per term.

8. Provision and preparation of food and drinks

NMS Standard 8

ISI Regulation 28, B8a

All meals are provided by the Freeman's catering providers, who will cater for those with special dietary, medical or religious needs.

The catering team meet regularly with the boarders to ensure that meals are adequate in nutrition, quantity, quality, choice and variety, and meets the boarders' tastes.

In addition there are two kitchens in the house which provide opportunities for boarders to prepare snacks and drinks at certain times during the day.

Drinking water is available in every bedroom, as well as in the kitchens.

9. Boarders' Possessions

NMS Standard 9

Laundry is cleaned within Walbrook at regular times during the week. In addition the boarders may use the small domestic machines in Walbrook at designated times during the day.

Boarders have daily access to shops where they can obtain necessary personal and stationery items.

Boarders may use the lockable drawers in their rooms to store valuables. There is also a safe in the boarding office which can be used in exceptional circumstances to store boarders' possessions. A maximum of £50 cash should be kept by each boarder at any one time. Parents are requested to ensure that sensible spending limits are set on any debit / credit cards owned by boarders.

If it is deemed necessary to search a boarder's personal belongings, the School's *Searches and Confiscation Policy*, which meets the requirements of section 550ZA of the Education Act 1996, will be followed.

10. Activities and Free Time

NMS Standard 9

ISI Regulation 2c, B8a

There is a whole school co-curricular activities programme which boarders are encouraged to access.

In addition, boarders have access to the Freeman's sports and music facilities in boarding hours and at weekends at the discretion of the member of staff on duty.

Boarders are permitted to visit Ashted village after school hours during the week, and permitted to visit Epsom and Leatherhead towns at weekends, with appropriate permissions from staff members and parents/guardians.

Boarders are able to use their devices to access news articles and information about events in the world outside the School.

Discretion will be used in the case of pupils with particular religious, dietary, language or cultural needs.

11. Child protection

NMS Standard 11

Freemen's complies with all the guidance set out in the Department of Education documents, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'.

12. Promoting positive behaviour and relationships

NMS Standard 12

ISI Regulation 9, 10

The School rules promote good behaviour amongst pupils. In addition, the Boarding House A-Z guide contains further details of rules specific to boarding.

13. Management and Development of Boarding

NMS Standard 13

ISI Regulation 8c, BA1, B13a

The boarding house is led by the Head of Boarding, supported by the Deputy Houseparent, House tutors and Boarding Assistant (Matron). The Head of Boarding sits on the Senior Leadership Team.

The effectiveness of leadership, management and delivery of the boarding and welfare provision is monitored by the Headmaster and the Governor for Boarding.

Regular training is undertaken by the Head of Boarding, Deputy Houseparent, House tutors and Boarding Assistant (Matron) and a history of training is held by the Head of Boarding.

A regular process of self-assessment takes place as part of the whole School Self Evaluation procedures.

14. Staff recruitment and checks on other adults

NMS Standard 14

ISI Regulation 18, 8c

Freemen's complies with the guidance set out in the Department for Education documents, 'Keeping children safe in education' and 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' with regard to safer recruitment checks on all staff.

All staff, including ancillary and contract staff, living and working in Walbrook have an enhanced DBS check held by the School. All contractors working in Walbrook (Boarding House) are accompanied regardless of whether they have DBS clearance. The sponsor is to inform the Walbrook duty member of staff in advance of a visit and then that contractor is to report to the member of staff on arrival at Walbrook. The duty member of staff will then be responsible for them until they leave Walbrook. The sponsor is then responsible for them. During weekend hours, the security guard can escort the contractor to Walbrook and then collect them again.

There is a written agreement held by the School between any adults not employed by the School but living on site specifying terms and guidance.

Visitors to the house are welcome, but are required to sign in using the visitor's book and must remain under supervision of the member of staff on duty. They will be required to wear visitor passes if they are moving about the School and, as with all visitors, accompanied by a member of staff.

Guardianship arrangements are made by the individual pupil and not by the school. The suitability of arrangements is monitored by the Head of Boarding and the admissions team.

15. Staffing and Supervision

NMS Standard 15

ISI Regulation 18, B15a

Staff working in Walbrook have job descriptions reflecting their duties. There is annual induction training in September for new staff. All boarding staff are encouraged and supported with opportunities for CPL in boarding.

There is a minimum of two members of staff on duty in Walbrook after teaching hours and duty staff are identified to boarders each day. Two members of staff remain in the boarding house and on duty overnight each night and keep the house mobile telephone with them at all times. Boarders can contact duty staff overnight either by using the house mobile telephone, or using door bells provided for staff accommodation.

Staff accommodation is suitably located so as to avoid opportunity for inappropriate favouritism or one-to-one contacts between staff and boarders.

All residential staff accommodation comprises living and sleeping accommodation and toilet and washing facilities separate from those used by boarders. Accommodation for non-residential staff

undertaking an overnight duty comprises sleeping accommodation, toilet and washing facilities separate from those used by boarders.

An effective signing in and out system, and exit approval system ensures that staff know the whereabouts of boarders at all times.

The policy and procedures for a missing boarder are clearly displayed in the boarding staff office and staff are aware of their obligations.

16. Equal opportunities

NMS Standard 16

ISI Regulation B8a

Freemen's is fully compliant with the Equality Act 2010 and boarding staff are sensitive to the needs of those with different needs, including those pupils with particular religious, dietary, language or cultural needs.

17. Securing boarders' views

NMS Standard 17

A Boarders' Survey is undertaken each year in which boarders are asked to contribute views and opinions. In addition there are committees formed within the house in order to obtain boarders' views on individual topics, such as catering. Boarding staff regularly encourage boarders to share their views using a counter voting system, and there is a confidential suggestions box where pupils might place notes for boarding staff.

Boarders should never feel uncomfortable or unwilling to raise a complaint or express their views to boarding staff.

In addition, there are two places each on Upper School Council and Sixth Form Council reserved for boarders and elected by their fellow boarders. This enables boarders' views to be represented at whole-school level.

18. Complaints

NMS Standard 18

ISI Regulation 33

Any complaints regarding boarding provision are appropriately recorded and responded to in line with the whole school procedures.

19. Prefects

NMS Standard 19

ISI Regulation B19a

Walbrook has a system of prefects within the community. Prefects are given specific duties and responsibilities and meet regularly with the Head of Boarding to discuss their role and the running of the house. Prefects are appointed from pupils in the 6th Form after a process of application and

review by boarding staff. The views of the boarders may also be taken into consideration when appointing prefects each year.

20. Lodgings

NMS Standard 20

ISI Regulation 8d, 8e, 8f

The School does not make any lodgings or hosting arrangements for pupils. Boarders are responsible for appointing guardians and the School does not make any individual recommendations for guardianship arrangements. Boarders are advised, but not required to use guardians registered with The Association for the Education and Guardianship for International Students (AEGIS).