



ABINGDON

Boarding Handbook 2011/2012

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The Principles and Policies of Boarding at Abingdon

Welcome to boarding at Abingdon. This handbook is designed to inform you of the principles and policies by which we run the Boarding Houses. We hope very much that your experience of boarding at Abingdon will be positive.

Principles of Boarding at Abingdon

Boarding at Abingdon is a smaller community within the larger School community. As such it shares the principles, aims and practices of the whole school, but also defines others for itself.

It is our aim that the boarders form a co-operative, tolerant and purposeful community in which every member can feel comfortable and accepted, and to which all are encouraged to contribute. The policies and practices which follow are designed to achieve this aim.

We recognise that boarding is a very different type of life to that experienced by living at home; that both have attractions and detractions; that both offer differing opportunities but also require concessions. We recognise that every boy will respond distinctively to the experience and hope that we as a School will be able to cater individually for each boy's needs. We also encourage each boy to appreciate his corporate responsibility to the welfare of the House as a whole, and that it is in the balance between his rights and responsibilities that all our interests will be best served.

Although there will be certain minor discrepancies between the different Boarding Houses we try to ensure that there is as much common ground and parity as possible. Boarders should remember the need for common sense, courtesy and communication at all times.

New Boarders

However daunting they may at first appear, most of the systems will become very familiar to boarders surprisingly quickly. There will be urgent issues at the beginning such as uniform, timetable, layout of the School and the daily routine, which will be covered in induction sessions in the first few days. Each new boy will also be given a mentor to whom he can go with any queries in the first few weeks.

Although boarding is second nature to those of us who have lived and worked with it for years, it can present emotional difficulties for many new boys and their families, especially in

the first few weeks and months. We hope that you will feel able to talk to us about any homesickness that does occur so that we can share our experience of it and try to help.

Dayboys that are assigned to a Boarding House will be expected to follow the House rules and it is hoped that they will play a major role in the House development. Awareness that the House is a boarder's "home" will be important to remember for successful integration and depending friendships.

This booklet is designed as both a record of the School's policies relating to boarding and a reference for boys, parents and staff. It should clarify the way we run the Boarding Houses. Inevitably there will be questions that are not addressed here, but the Handbook should cover most of the routine matters of boarding life; if you feel there are important omissions please let us know.

The Handbook is unavoidably dry in tone, and you may also feel that much of the information is not relevant to you due to the fact that the Handbook serves as a guide for the different viewpoints and responsibilities of staff, boarders and their parents. Most of the policies contained in the Handbook are standard good practice; some are particular to Abingdon and others are required of us by outside authorities. Sometimes this burdens us all with inconveniences and even cost, but they are all necessary to ensure the welfare and safety of the boys.

The Handbook occasionally refers the reader to 'whole-school policies'; these apply to both boarders and dayboys. These are also available on the school website:

http://www.abingdon.org.uk/school_policies/.

Communication

Undoubtedly, good communication is the key to a positive and effective working relationship between a pupil, the School and his parents. This is particularly the case for boarders whose parents are set at a distance from the daily workings of the School and who rely on this triangular communication. From the School's perspective the chances of a pupil being able to make a really positive contribution to the School is vastly enhanced by maintaining fluent and co-operative communication with him and his parents. Finally, a series of guidelines and statutory requirements are designed to ensure that communication over every imaginable aspect of a pupil's education and welfare is maintained in his best interests.

Between boys and parents

Parents are welcome to visit their sons at School, however for reasons of welfare supervision, the Housemaster or Matron should be informed beforehand.

All boarders have a choice of ways to keep in contact with their parents:

- E-mail and Skype access through House computers
- Mobile phones are permitted at all times except during lesson time, prep or after lights out. Please be aware that insurance companies are loath to accept claims for stolen mobiles.
- Payphone

Between staff and boys

We try to encourage an easy and open dialogue between boarders and staff. Every boy should feel comfortable in approaching a member of the boarding staff with an issue either great or small (in practice most likely his Housemaster, Tutor or duty master, but in theory anyone).

The rota of duty staff is displayed; so also is the duty mobile number, on which the duty master can be contacted in an emergency or if he cannot be found.

Boarders are to give their mobile telephone numbers to their Housemaster so that they can be contacted in an emergency. A sheet of contact numbers is kept in the staff duty file.

For Boarding concerns, the Head of Boarding, Mr Aitken, can be contacted on douglas.aitken@abingdon.org.uk.

Between staff and parents

The first point of contact between the parents and the School is through the Tutor. Parents receive a report every half term and are contacted on any specific issue relating to their son's education or welfare. Similarly parents are encouraged to contact the Tutor with any information that they feel might have an influence on their son's welfare and happiness; any concerns they may have about his life at School, or feedback that they wish to share. Tutors will make contact with parents in the first term and exchange contact details.

All staff contact details, including e-mail are available on the website:

http://www.abingdon.org.uk/staff_list/ .

Parental consent

Under Health and Safety legislation there are many activities for which the School will require parental consent. Consent can be given by signing a letter from the School via the pupil, who will return it to the relevant member of staff. On occasions where the parents are not available to sign the letter the Housemaster will sign it on receipt of an e-mail or letter from the parent.

The School will also seek parental consent for any additional costs to be put on the bill. There may be exceptions for small charges for costs such as weekend trips and activities.

Risk Assessments and Qualified Supervision

The member of staff in charge of an activity will conduct a written risk assessment before any outing or off-site activity. As part of this assessment (s)he will ensure that the supervisors of the activity are appropriately qualified and licensed and that the appropriate safety procedures are adhered to at all times.

The Fabric of the House

Accommodation

The Boarding Houses have a diverse range of accommodation. Great pains are taken to ensure the room allocation is fair to provide for a best environment for all concerned. If there are concerns they should be expressed to the Tutor and the Housemaster.

Each boy is allocated an area in his room that includes:

- A bed
- A desk
- Storage space for books, clothes, personal belongings etc.
- A lockable cupboard/drawer
- A bedside light
- A combination safe
- Newly refurbished rooms also have a sink, where plumbing constraints allow.

Boarders should change for games in the Sports Centre changing rooms. Rugby boots and other dirty footwear must not be worn inside the House.

The importance to boarders of their roommates is obvious. The Housemaster will consult with boys and staff and allocate rooms with consideration to all factors, including boys' friendship groups. Requests to change rooms will be reasonably considered.

All Boarding Houses are centrally heated. Most radiators have thermostatic valves with which boys can control the temperature of their room.

For staff

The Boarding Housemasters have accommodation for their families and every Boarding House has flats that are assigned to resident Tutors.

Keeping an orderly room

Boys are expected to make their beds in the morning and keep their area of the room tidy. Clothes should be stored neatly in cupboards and books on shelves. Floors should be left clear for cleaning.

There is a room check by the Matron once a week.

Posters can be put up on the boards provided, using drawing pins; blue-tack must not be used on the walls. Poster content is monitored within reasonable taste.

Food (apart from snacks) should not be brought into rooms; the kitchen is the place for preparing and eating food.

Property and Damage

Property

It is essential to the well-being of a Boarding House that property is respected. Boys are expected to safeguard their own property, take care of the School's property and not take that which belongs to others.

All boarders should have their personal belongings insured under their parents' household insurance, and named. Suspected thefts must be reported as soon as possible and will be investigated.

Naming all property is essential.

No claim can be made against the School's insurance for boys' property.

Boarders are encouraged to hand valuable items, including passports and large quantities of money, to their Housemaster for safekeeping, however all rooms have electronic safes.

Damage

Any damage should be reported as soon as possible to the Matron so that repair can be made as quickly as possible.

In cases of avoidable or deliberate damage the cost of repair to the School's or other boys' property may be charged to the parents' bill; parents will be informed in advance of billing.

Money and Chits

Bank accounts can be set up with any bank in Abingdon. Housemasters will provide a letter from the School confirming the pupils' residence at Abingdon.

The Matron can issue chits for boys to purchase items from selected shops in Abingdon, which are then charged to the bill.

Purchases of School clothes, sportswear, stationery and sweets can also be made from the School Shop.

Name tapes for labeling all clothes are available from the School Shop. *All clothes must* be labeled. Spare labels should be left with the House Matrons.

Communal Areas and Facilities

The Boarding Houses have the following facilities:

A kitchen that is equipped with an oven/grill/hob, microwave, fridge, toaster, kettle and sink. There is a selection of miscellaneous cooking equipment available for use, as long as it is cleaned and returned to the correct stowage after use.

Provisions of bread, butter and milk are provided every morning. Tea (a snack and a drink) is provided at 5.15pm. Boys are encouraged to tidy up and wash up their own dirty dishes. The kitchen is also cleaned each day and tidied by the duty rota.

Games Rooms have a variety of leisure activities available such as table tennis and pool tables. Newspapers are provided daily and magazines on publication.

A television room: TV and DVDs (rated 15 max) can be watched after prep and at other appropriate times at the Housemaster's discretion.

A computer room: Computers (i-Macs) are wired into the main School system and are subject to certain rules and all boarding houses have wireless internet in communal areas. Boys may use their own laptops to access information during the evenings.

- a. Boys' activity on-line may be monitored; inappropriate use will lead to the boy's log-on being withdrawn for a period of time (at the Housemaster's discretion).
- b. Computers must be used for work only during prep.
- c. Boys should use their School e-mail address and check for messages regularly; *games are discouraged and chat rooms are forbidden.*
- d. Pupils will be expected to sign and follow the guidelines set out by the ICT department. Pupils should remember that by logging into the School system that they are agreeing to abide by the School's guidelines.
- e. The School does not provide internet access in boys' rooms as it is not conducive for the community.

The Houses all have washing and loo areas on each floor.

Clothes and Laundry

Clothing requirements:

Boarders wear the same uniform as dayboys but can change into their own clothes at 5.15 pm.

Boarders are recommended to have the following in addition to their School uniform:

- 10 pairs of socks and underpants
- Enough own clothes to wear in the evenings and at weekends if necessary (but please not so much that it cannot be stored).
- 2 pairs of pyjamas
- A dressing gown and slippers
- 3 bath towels and personal toiletries
- A duvet, 2 duvet covers and 2 pillow covers
- Swimming trunks, goggles and swimming hat

All clothes should be named and the Matron informed of any clothes that are new or unnamed. Name tapes can be charged to the parents' bill and are available from the School Shop.

All School clothes can be purchased from the on-site shop and charged to the parents' bill.

The Laundry system

All laundry is done centrally in the School Laundry. Each boy is given a named shelf on which to store his spare clothes and linen. The Matron replaces clean laundry on the shelf.

Bed linen is changed once a week and boys are asked to place their old sheets and pillowcases in the bins by 8.30 am.

Socks are packed into sock bags. (Sock bags are provided by the School for all boarders.)

Cleaning

A team of five cleaning ladies, supervised by the Matron, clean the Houses daily. At the end of each term the Houses are spring cleaned ready for the next term.

Fire Regulations and Practice

The fire-extinguishing equipment is checked every month and records submitted to the Health and Safety officer.

A fire practice is held in each Boarding House twice a term, and as near to the start of the Michaelmas term as possible to induct new boarders into fire procedures.

A report is submitted to the Health and Safety officer after every alarm; false, practice or otherwise.

The fire procedure is as follows in the event of the alarm sounding:

Between the hours of 8.30 am and 5.30 pm:

- All persons inside the building to evacuate immediately and calmly.
- Members of staff or senior boy present to manage the evacuation and check whether the alarm is false or real. In the event of a real fire the fire services will be called.

Between the hours of 5.30 pm and 8.30 am:

- All persons in the building to evacuate immediately and calmly.
- A register to be taken by the duty staff or senior boy present.
- If persons are unaccounted for attempts will be made to find out where they are without anyone re-entering the building yet.

- The duty staff will go to the monitor to locate the alarm, and then check whether the fire alarm is false or has detected a real fire.
- In the event of a real fire appropriate action will be taken and the fire services can be called.
- In the event of a false alarm the alarm will be reset and boarders re-admitted to the building.

Electrical appliances are checked every half term for safety. A charge is made to each boy's bill for the testing of their personal electrical equipment.

Security and Safety

The Boarding Houses are kept secure by the following means:

- Daily and nightly rota of porters to patrol the School grounds and respond to calls for assistance from the boarding staff.
- All duty staff are made aware of the duty porter's mobile number.
- Key pad locks on all doors leading into the Boarding Houses. Codes are changed at least once a year, and boarders are regularly reminded to keep the codes confidential to House members only.
- Outside doors locked at 10.30 pm and kept locked overnight.
- System for boarders to sign their visitors in and out to monitor who has been in the building.

Checks are made regularly of potential safety hazards and steps taken either to remove them or to bring them to the boys' attention. Comments on notable safety aspects:

- Electric sockets must not be overloaded - a maximum of one four-socket extension per socket.
- Windows are fitted with safety restrictors in potentially hazardous locations. Boarders are reminded not to lean out of windows beyond the waist.
- Boys are reminded not to climb over gates or walls - the relevant gates should be open at the times they are required and boys should report any diversion from this to their Housemaster.

In addition there are occasional episodes of verbal exchanges between Abingdon pupils and teenagers from outside the School. Boarders are briefed on how to respond to such episodes and instructed not to respond to aggravation, but to contact a member of staff as soon as possible to deal with the situation.

The Pastoral System

The Role of the staff

The boarding Housemaster has overall responsibility for the boys in his House and their welfare. He is assisted by a team of Tutors, both residential and non-residential. The staff share certain responsibilities towards the boys:

- To set an example of civility, tolerance and responsibility to the boys.
- To show equal respect and attention to all boys, under all circumstances.
- To respect the boarders' right to privacy e.g. knock before entering a room.
- To encourage the boys in an active participation of life in the Boarding House.
- To maintain the principles and the letter of boarding regulations and of the Law.

Tutors have specific responsibilities towards their tutees:

- To oversee their tutees' welfare in the School, both academically and otherwise.
 - e.g. Checking their work and organisation.
 - e.g. Monitoring the balance of their work/play/sport/service.
 - e.g. Trying to manage their behaviour/manners/morality/tidiness etc.
- Representing the School to the pupil and the pupil to other staff.
- Being a conduit of administrative information e.g. chasing absences, arranging teams etc.
- Collecting and writing reports before half terms and ends of terms.

Evening duty

There is a member of staff on duty every evening on a rota. This involves looking after the House in tandem with the duty prefect. Specifically the duty evening entails:

- Ensuring that every boy has been accounted for after supper on the register.
- Managing incidents, referring to the Housemaster if required and logging them in the duty diary.
- Communicating with the duty prefect and monitoring his actions as duty prefect.
- Being around the House and contactable on the duty mobile from 5.30 - 11.00pm.
- Ensuring that the House is quiet and secure at the end of the duty.

If in any doubt boarding staff should refer to their Housemaster, and Housemasters to the Head.

Staff should not hesitate to call 999 if they are in any doubt as to the correct response to a medical issue or emergency.

Prefects and the disciplinary system

The Boarding Houses follow the School's system of Rewards and Sanctions. In addition boarders' equipment such as mobile phones and computers may be confiscated for a period of one week for improper use.

The Head of House and House prefects are appointed by the Housemaster from the Upper Sixth. Prefects' responsibilities are:

- to assist the staff in the running of the Boarding House;
- to help in the pastoral support of the boys in the House and help to safeguard their welfare.

Prefects are expected to use their status and authority in a mature and sensitive manner, and in turn expect the respect of those under their care. They are given training by the Housemaster in how to carry out their duties. Prefects are allowed to use the following sanctions or punishments:

The copy - The pupil who has been given the copy has to collect from the Head of House a page of prose approved by the Housemaster, copy it out and hand it back to the punishing prefect within 48 hours. The Head of House records the details of the sanction in the Copy Book which he holds. If the pupil does not do his copy within the prescribed time, or disputes the copy, the matter is reported to and arbitrated by the Housemaster. The Housemaster will check the Copy Book each week.

Report - A Pupil may be put on a Report Card to monitor behaviour and punctuality. This may only be administered by the Housemaster.

School Detention - Pupils may receive a two-hour Friday Detention for poor behaviour. Pupil will be expected to report to the Masters' Common Room at 5.00pm on a Friday evening. This may only be administered by the Housemaster.

Duty Prefects

In the morning the duty prefect will be expected to collect the register from the Housemaster and note who attends breakfast. Non-attendees should be sent to the Housemaster.

Evening duty

Duty prefects will be expected to make contact with the duty master and to carefully supervise teas.

To ensure that pupils are in Prep by 7.30 pm and that the House is quiet.

At 9.30 pm to make contact with the Duty Masters to discuss the supervision of bedtimes.

At 10.30 pm to discuss with Duty Master any concerns from the evening and ensure that the Housemaster is informed.

In general the duty prefect is expected to be active around the House.

Note on physical restraint:

All boarding staff and prefects are made aware of their obligation to avoid physical contact with younger boys, except when physical restraint is immediately necessary for the safety of himself or others or to prevent serious damage to property. Any episode in which physical restraint has been used must be reported to the Housemaster who will make a record of the incident.

Peer relations and bullying

The School has an effective policy on bullying. More information can be found on the website: http://www.abingdon.org.uk/school_policies/ .

Peer relations and friendships are particularly important within a Boarding House. Therefore a specific policy applies to bullying in a Boarding House:

We acknowledge that living together (while also under academic and other pressures) can be challenging and requires the development of patience, consideration and diplomacy.

All boys are encouraged to speak up about bullying before it becomes harmful.

Attempts are then made to defuse tensions where they occur between particular boys and to repair relations before any boy is tempted to engage in verbal or physical bullying.

Our policy assumes that sometimes adolescent boys lack awareness of the impact of their behaviour on other people, which can explain their behaviour. Our first step therefore is to discuss the effects of bullying behaviour with the parties involved and encourage self-awareness before resorting to disciplinary measures.

When bullying within a Boarding House is brought to the attention of a prefect or staff the following procedure is followed:

- i. Those boys involved in an incident are brought together to discuss the issue with the Housemaster, and possibly also with Tutors and prefects. Most first cases will be dealt with in a non-disciplinary manner, but more serious ones may incur sanction. All concerned are expected to write a report of the incident. At this point all concerned will be warned of the consequences of further bullying.
- ii. If the bully continues and the victim continues to feel bullied, the latter should tell someone. It does not matter who is told: parents, prefects, staff, Matron. **JUST TELL SOMEONE AND SOMETHING CAN BE DONE.** At this point a disciplinary procedure will be followed.
- iii. Parents are kept informed as much as possible throughout the process.

The issue of bullying within the Boarding Houses is reviewed regularly at staff, prefect and House meetings and in the Boarders' Council.

Drugs, alcohol and smoking & management of incidents

The whole-school policy on Drugs and Substances (see http://www.abingdon.org.uk/school_policies/) applies to boarders.

The Boarding Houses operate a specific policy on alcohol and smoking.

Alcohol

No boarder is allowed to purchase or consume alcohol unsupervised by a member of staff while at School. Any boarder doing so will be referred to the Head whose sanction will be determined by the factors involved (e.g. quantity and strength of alcohol, age of the drinkers, distinction between purchaser and consumer etc.). The exception is when a Housemaster or other staff offers an occasional drink to Sixth form boarders.

No boarder is allowed to visit a pub unless they are accompanied by their parent, guardian or another approved adult.

Any boarder visiting a pub illegally or without the Housemaster's permission will be referred to the Head for sanction.

Housemasters may ask a boarder to take a breathalyser test in order to determine whether or not he has been drinking.

The only exception to the above is when a Housemaster gives permission to boarders who are in the Upper Sixth and over 18 years old to visit the pub. In such cases, the Housemaster will agree beforehand with the boarder which pub he should visit, and the boarder will be expected to report to the Duty Master in the House at an agreed time on his return. Boarders are expected to drink in moderation and, as a guide, should not exceed the national legal limit for driving of 80 milligrams of alcohol in every 100 millilitres of blood. Boarders who are suspected of being over this limit may be breathalyzed, at the Housemaster's discretion. Exceeding the limit will result in suspension of the privilege and may incur disciplinary action.

Tobacco

The School strongly discourages smoking tobacco as it is highly addictive, is seen by many as anti-social and can kill. Smoking is therefore forbidden at any time when boys, irrespective of their ages, are subject to School discipline, such as while they are travelling to and from School, when they are in School uniform, when they are on School premises, or when they are taking part in official School activities.

(The School - buildings and grounds - is a designated no smoking area which applies equally to adults.)

Boys caught smoking or who have clearly been smoking will be required to do all of the following:

- serve a Head's detention.
- attend a seminar organised by the Health Centre on the medical consequences of smoking.

For a second offence they serve a Housemaster's detention, are seen by the Head, and receive a warning.

For a third offence within a calendar year the offender will be referred to the Head and sanctions, including the possibility of suspension, will be imposed at her discretion.

Any boys caught smoking inside School buildings will be automatically suspended given the increased fire risk.

Follow-up to alcohol or tobacco offences

A boarder who has been sanctioned for unauthorised consumption of alcohol or tobacco will be referred by the Housemaster to the Health Centre staff, who will discuss the dangers and issue of his drinking/smoking with the pupil.

Involvement of staff and parents

Staff who have good reason to suspect a boarder of smoking or drinking alcohol should question the boy they suspect, and if necessary ask them to empty their pockets. Any further action should be handed over to the Housemaster.

Parents will be informed of all incidents in which their son is involved with alcohol or cigarettes.

The management of incidents

The whole-school policy on management of incidents should be followed in any investigation.

The first stage of any investigation should be to ask pupils to volunteer information or an admission.

Searches: the Housemaster, accompanied by another member of staff, may need to conduct searches of a pupil's area and ask the pupil to turn out his pockets. Physical searches of pupils are not permitted.

Interviews: even when under suspicion a pupil will be assumed to be innocent until proven guilty. Care should be taken to minimise the stress and damage to trust caused by an investigation. Pupils should provide written statements and interviews must be conducted by more than one member of staff, be minuted, formally written up and copied to the Head.

Where possible staff should make sure that another member of staff is present at each stage of the investigation.

Help and counselling

We all have times when we need to talk to someone about issues in our lives that worry us. Some like to share them with friends or family. Others might have a prefect, Tutor or member of staff whom they trust. Any of these people will be sympathetic and supportive and may be able to give you practical advice, or just put your problem into perspective. If none of these options appeal to you then you may wish to contact the School counsellor. Appointments can be made through the Health Centre. She can offer you professional advice in confidence, which others may not be able to promise.

Otherwise there are a number of telephone call lines that you may wish to try:

Childline	0800 1111
Drugs helpline	0800 776600 (Frank)

Whatever you do please do not suffer in silence. Even if it may not seem so, there are people out there who can help and there are also many other people who feel similarly to you, so don't be embarrassed.

Medical Care

The School has three main points of Health Care:

- The Boarding House Matron
- A professionally staffed Health Centre
- A School doctor

Medical staff and facilities

The Boarding House Matron is the primary contact for medical care, so boys must try to see her before going to the Health Centre. She is trained in First Aid and authorised to give boys over-the-counter medicines e.g. paracetamol, indigestion tablets, throat lozenges etc. In her absence such medicines may be provided by the duty member of staff. If the illness persists after 12 hours of over-the-counter medication the pupils will be seen by the nurse or doctor.

The Health Centre is staffed or on call 24 hours a day. There is a room with three beds for boarders who require the supervision and medical care of the Health Centre staff.

Every boarder should be registered with the School doctor, Dr Faiz Khan. His surgery times are on Tuesdays from 8.30 - 9.30 am. Boys can make appointments to see him either directly through the Health Centre or through the Matron.

The resident nurse will be available for evening surgery and for advice on personal, social and health - related issues.

Permitted medicines and medical records

Boarders are allowed to keep certain over-the-counter medicines in their possession. To enable proper health care pupils are obliged to register them with the Matron and keep them locked away:

Middle School: 12 Strepsils or similar.
 12 Rennie's or similar.
 Small supply of medication supplied by the Health Centre.
 No paracetamol

Sixth Form: 12 Strepsils or similar
 24 Rennie's or similar
 12 paracetamol
 16 Ibuprofen
 Small supply of medication supplied by the Health Centre.

Parents are asked not to provide their sons with unauthorised medication and to inform the School of any medication being provided to their son.

Medical records and meetings

Records of all medical episodes and medicines dispensed are kept by the provider.

Parents are asked to fill out the medical form before their son's arrival at School and to keep the School informed of medical developments.

Meetings are held fortnightly between the Health Centre staff and the boarding Matrons, and monthly between the Health Centre staff and boarding Housemasters.

Hospital visits and care for ill boarders

If a boarder needs to go to hospital a member of staff will escort him. During the weekday this will usually be the Housemaster, and at other times the Matron or one of the tutors. Parents of weekly boarders will be contacted first and asked whether they wish to take their son to hospital themselves. For various reasons it may be necessary to order a taxi to travel to the hospital; if this is the case and the parents cannot take their son themselves, the cost will be charged to the boy's bill.

Boarders who are ill and require supervision will be cared for in the Health Centre by the duty nurse. Regular checks are made and medical back-up is readily available.

Medical confidentiality

In accordance with the School doctor's and nurse's professional obligations, medical information about pupils, regardless of their age, will remain confidential. However, in providing medical care for a pupil, it is recognised that on occasions the doctor or nurse may liaise with parents or guardians, the Head or other academic staff and House staff, and that information, ideally with the pupil's prior consent, will be passed on as appropriate. With all medical matters the doctor and nurse will respect a pupil's confidence except on the very rare occasion when, having failed to persuade a pupil or his or her authorised representative to give consent to divulgence, the doctor or nurse consider it in the pupil's better interests, or necessary for the protection of the wider School community to breach confidence and pass information to a relevant person or body.

Managing the spread of illness or 'epidemics'

Parents are asked not to bring their sons to School if they are ill or carrying a contagious illness.

In the event of an illness spreading among the boarding community the School doctor will be consulted as the risks of contagion, after which parents and guardians may be asked to take their sons home for a short period to prevent the risk of the illness spreading.

For major health concerns/epidemics, you should consult the School website and other medical websites for advice. Common sense steps will be taken to secure the health of individuals and the community.

Daily Timetable, Activities and Duties

Daily Timetable - Weekdays

Mornings

7.30 - 8 am	Breakfast – prefects will take a register for Middle School
8.15 - 8.30 am	The Housemaster will be in his study and Matron in her Office
8.35 am	Registration with Tutor
8.50 am	Lessons start

Lunchtimes vary from day to day.

There are 5 lessons per day – 4 on Wednesday.

“Other Half” activities also take place on a daily basis.

http://www.abingdon.org.uk/the_abingdon_school_day

5.15 - 5.30 pm	Tea in Boarding Houses
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Evenings (Mondays-Thursdays)

5.30 – 6.40 pm	Activities for Boarders
6.45 – 7.20 pm	Supper
7.25 pm	Registration in Houses
7.30 – 9.00 pm	Prep

Evenings (Fridays)

A combination of a prep session, a guest lecture, an outing or an activity, varying from week to week according to the termly timetable.

<i>Bed Times</i>	<i>Prepare for bed</i>	<i>Lights out</i>
Third year	9.30 pm	9.45 pm
Fourth year	9.45 pm	10.00 pm
Fifth year	10.00 pm	10.15 pm
Sixth Form	10.30 pm	11.00 pm

Weekends

Full boarders may go into Abingdon on Saturday afternoons. They may also go into Oxford on Saturday or Sunday afternoons if they get permission from the duty staff.

Supper on Saturday and Sunday at 6.45 pm in the dining hall.

Breakfast on Sunday is served between 9.30 and 11am.

All year groups should be in bed and lights out by 11pm on Saturday. Normal bed times apply on Sunday.

Activities are arranged as appropriate on Friday evenings, Saturday mornings, Saturday evenings and some Sundays. This programme will be published on the boarding area of the school website. Middle School boys are expected to attend at least one of the three formal prep sessions between the end of school on Friday and Saturday lunchtime; this includes weekly boarders who have elected to stay in school. All boys will be required to do at least one activity on a Saturday morning – either a prep session, a sporting activity or a full morning outing. There will be the occasional compulsory activity on a Friday evening – a guest lecture or a formal dinner, but normally there will be a large element of choice.

Activities and Duties

Activities

There is also a vast range of educational opportunities within the School in the evenings. Events are published in the Calendar and publicised in the weeks before, and include subject-specific talks and lectures, music concerts, plays, art exhibitions etc.

In addition to the weekend activities described above, there will be a programme of weekday evening activities which aims to provide a balance of sport, culture and entertainment once prep has been done.

The music school will be open from 5.15 – 6.45 pm for boarders' music practice.

Duties

Every member of the Boarding House is expected to contribute by performing certain duties.

Notes:

1. Only Sixth form with private study may be in the House during lesson time - working quietly.
2. Prep is done either at a boy's desk, or in the Library or in the computer room. Everyone is expected to be in prep unless they have the Housemaster's permission, and prep must be quiet. Music can be played through headphones but not out loud.
3. In general the Houses should be quiet after 10.00 pm.

Registration, Coming and Going for Boarders

The Housemaster and the House staff have a duty to know the whereabouts, and ensure the safety, of the boarders during term time. The following rules are applied rigorously to ensure that they are able to fulfill this duty.

Daily registration for boarders

A registration is taken of each boy in the tutor group at 8.35 am, at the beginning of afternoon School, and in the evening after supper. Boys must ask and receive permission from the Housemaster or Matron in person for leave of absence from School. Failure to do so may result in a gating or similar sanction. The Duty Master is expected to ensure that all pupils are accounted for at final lock up.

Signing out and signing guests in

A signing out file is available in each House. Boarders are expected to sign themselves out if they are either

- leaving the School premises at any time.
- leaving the House after 5.20 pm.

Sanctions are imposed on boys who neglect to sign themselves out as it breaks the trust that we have in boys to let us know their whereabouts.

Boys can bring other members of the School into the House as guests and should sign them in and out. Guests should be accompanied at all times by the friend signing them in. Any guests from outside the School will require the housemasters' permission to come in to the House.

Policy in the event of a boy going absent without leave

If a boy leaves the School without permission this procedure should be followed:

- i. Duty master to contact the boy's friends, roommates and prefects to determine his possible whereabouts. Prefects only may be asked to leave the School grounds to look for the absent boy.
- ii. Duty master to try to contact him on the absent boy's mobile using the list in the duty file.
- iii. If no contact still made after a maximum of 30 minutes the duty master should alert the Housemaster.
- iv. If there is no sign of the boy after 60 minutes the Housemaster will contact absent boy's parents and the Head to alert them to the situation.
- v. If there is no sign of the boy after 90 minutes of unauthorised absence the Housemaster will call the police.
- vi. Once the absent boy has been recovered the cause of his absenteeism will be investigated at an appropriate occasion. The episode will be written up and submitted to the boy's file.

In or out at weekends?

Parents can register their sons as full or weekly boarders at Abingdon. Parents are asked to inform the Housemaster directly whether their son will be boarding on a weekly or full basis. Should a change of status be required, parents are asked to inform the Housemaster by e-mail or phone.

Weekly boarders may go home on Friday when any school commitment is complete and should return to the House either on Sunday evening by 9.30 pm for registration (please call if later) or on Monday morning by 8.30 am for registration. They may also choose to stay in school on Friday evening and Saturday morning.

Leaving the school during the week

- Middle School require a chit from the Housemaster or Matron.
- Sixth Form can go into town at lunchtime and after School without permission.
- Albert Park is out of bounds.

Weekend leave for full boarders

Full boarders wishing to go away for the weekend or weekly boarders wishing to spend the weekend in the Boarding House must get the permission of the Housemaster in person. The Housemaster will require parental authorisation from both sets of parents for a boy to stay with another family. Early notice is expected either by letter or e-mail.

Beginning and end of Terms

New boarders who wish to leave their belongings at School a day or two before term begins are asked to contact their Housemaster.

Boarders are expected to return to their Houses by 8pm on the evening before the start of term. The School cannot accommodate boarders before the publicised start of term. Parents are asked to inform the Housemaster of any late arrival or early leaving that may be different from the published dates.

Pupils are expected not to stay at School outside the published term dates. In exceptional circumstances parents should ask the Housemaster if their son needs to stay in the Boarding House for one night either side of term, in which case he will be under the direct supervision of the Housemaster during that time.

All boarders will be expected to provide details of movements during Exeat weekends and holidays.

Transport Arrangements

Booking taxis

We recommend that parents contact their guardian to make transport arrangements between the airport and School.

For reasons of welfare supervision pupils are not allowed to book taxis independently. The procedure for booking and paying for taxis is as follows:

- i. Pupils book the taxi through the Matron.
- ii. The Matron keeps a record of the booking, and cost.
- iii. For weekly/'local' boarders the Matron will attempt to contact the parents for confirmation.
- iv. The Matron will pass invoices from taxi firms for payment and charging to the parents' bill.

n.b. All taxi drivers within the Vale of the White Horse have passed a Criminal Records Bureau check.

Parental permission for other forms of travel

It is assumed that parents are willing for their sons to travel in a minibus or car driven by a member of staff. Only those staff that have passed a professionally assessed test can drive pupils in a minibus. Staff are covered by the School's insurance to take pupils in their private cars.

The Housemaster will appreciate being informed by the parent of arrangements which involve their son travelling to School by any means other than the parent driving their son themselves (e.g. public transport, private car driven by a friend etc.).

Bicycles

Boys may keep bicycles at School and are encouraged to use the locked bicycle sheds. Boys may ride their bicycle outside the School grounds but helmets must be worn at all times.

Older boarders and cars

Due to the limited supply of parking space boarders are not allowed to keep their cars at School. Exceptional requests should be made to the Housemaster, who will keep the keys between the agreed times at which the pupils can use the car. It is expected that cars left at School are to be used only for commuting from School to home. Only the designated driver may use the car and they may not give lifts to anyone else.

Transfers between Day and Boarding

Transfers from boarding to day

In order to maintain a stable boarding community pupils who have entered the School as boarders are encouraged to remain so throughout their School career. The Head may consider transfers in the following cases: where the School has agreed in advance to keep a day place open, at the end of the lower or middle schools, or in special circumstances.

In all cases transfer will be at the discretion of the Head and no automatic right to transfer should be assumed.

Transfers from day to boarding

Parents of dayboys who wish to transfer into boarding should contact the Registrar and again transfer will be at the discretion of the Head.

Dayboys may be accommodated in Boarding Houses on an occasional/temporary basis but only if a bed is available in the appropriate year group and with the agreement of the Housemaster.

Overseas Students

Integration

Integration is central to Abingdon's philosophy and culture. In everything from room and set allocations to informal sports we encourage and celebrate the positive aspects of ethnic, national and cultural diversity, in the belief that it enriches the education of every pupil.

Catering

Main meals and snacks

All meals are taken in the dining hall, and boys attendance is required at breakfast, lunch and dinner. For breakfast and dinner boys do not have to wear School uniform but should be clean and smart.

'Rations' of bread, butter and milk are provided daily to each Boarding House and boys can use the House kitchens to make themselves meals or snacks.

Catering feedback

Termly menus are published in advance and displayed on House notice boards. A choice of two meals and a vegetarian option is always available.

Pupils are encouraged to engage in a dialogue regarding the food they eat. There are several avenues for this:

- a School Food Committee (2 representatives per house) which meets once per half term.
- termly meeting between the Caterers and each house.
- informal daily feedback to catering staff is encouraged.

n.b. There are several obvious difficulties with satisfying everyone's expectations: different tastes, nutritional requirements versus 'popular food' such as burgers and chips, and pupils are asked to recognise these difficulties and be constructive in their comments.

Guardians and Exeats

You can find a list of accredited guardians on the AEGIS (the Association for the Education and Guardianship of International Students) website: www.aegisuk.net.

Every overseas pupil must have a guardian appointed by his parents as a condition of entry into the School. A pupil may have more than one guardian. It is very important for the welfare of the pupil that the guardian is actively interested in the pupil's education and welfare and lives close enough for the pupil to visit at exeats and half terms.

The provision of guardianship is monitored by Boarding Housemasters as well as by the parents who employ the guardian. In certain circumstances a Housemaster may call into question the suitability of a particular guardian and would hope that the parents would take the necessary action in the best interests of his or her child.

The School will under no circumstances recommend or arrange guardianship on behalf of the parents. Responsibility for the welfare of pupils while in the care of their guardians, and while travelling to and from them, rests solely with the parents and not with the School.

It is essential that half-term and end of term travel/accommodation details are provided to fulfill immigration regulations. (See Section below on Visas.)

Exeats and Activities Weekends

There are five exeats each year, usually at the quarter points of each term. Exeat dates are published in advance on the School website.

Full boarders are strongly encouraged to use the exeat weekends to visit their guardian or stay with a friend. However the Houses will remain open for all those who wish to stay on site supervision; medical cover and catering will remain standard.

Housemasters take a register of where each pupil will go for an Exeat and satisfy themselves that the arrangement is appropriate and has the parents' consent.

Flights and Punctuality

Obviously flights become heavily booked up months in advance around the beginning and end of term dates, as many schools operate a similar calendar. Early booking is strongly advised. Term dates are published four terms in advance and are published on the website and the School calendar. *The School regards persistently late arrival or early departure as unnecessary* and very much to the detriment of the pupil, as important events and information are often programmed into the first and last days of terms.

Visas

The UK made changes to the visa system in 2009 for certain groups of migrants entering the UK. As part of these changes children who are citizens of countries outside the European Economic Area and who are studying, or wish to study, at schools in the UK for a period of more than 6 months (away from parents), need to follow a new points based system. Further information may be obtained from the UK Government visas and Home Office websites: www.ukvisas.gov.uk and www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk.

Complaints and National Standards

Internal Complaints

A School policy on Pupils' Complaints Procedure can be found on the Website:

http://www.abingdon.org.uk/school_policies/ .

Complaints regarding any aspect of a boarders' welfare should be addressed to his Housemaster. We hope that the boarder himself will have sufficient trust and confidence to approach his Housemaster in person. If not then he could approach him through a prefect, a Tutor or his parents. The complaint will then be discussed and a mutually acceptable outcome sought. The Head of Boarding may also be approached for clarification on all policies and procedures. If this is not possible the Head's decision will be sought.

Pupils are not penalised for making a complaint in good faith.

A record of serious complaints will be kept and communicated to the staff's line manager.

Complaints will be dealt with as swiftly as possible.

External Authorities

ISI is responsible for inspecting the welfare of boarders at Abingdon and should be approached with any major complaints. Their address is:

Independent Schools Inspectorate
CAP House
9 - 12 Long Lane
London
EC1A 9HA

The latest ISI full school inspection report (March 2011) which includes a report on our boarding provision is available online:

http://www.abingdon.org.uk/isi_inspection_report_mar11/ .

Emergency Cover

Boarding Staff Cover

In the event of absence through illness or any other reason the following cover applies:

Housemaster	covered by	Resident appointed Tutor
Tutor	covered by	Housemaster
Matron	covered by	Housemaster
Cleaning staff	covered by	Matron

July 2011