



TAUNTON

SCHOOL
PREPARATORY

TPS Boarding Handbook

2023/24

Boarding Principles and Practice

Our boarding practice aims to:

1. promote the health and welfare of each individual and access to economic well being
2. encourage physical, spiritual, social and moral development
3. develop a sense of identity in a community through common practice and activity
4. embrace partnership with parents and guardians through effective communication

We want our pupils to be fulfilled and happy and, at the minimum, this means they must feel secure and properly cared for by well qualified and experienced people who are well disposed to children and continually updated through appropriate INSET.

A boarding education provides a wealth of opportunities to encourage the all-round development of both the individual and the community. It is a fertile field for the transmission of values.

We recognise the need for privacy, countering the possibilities of bullying and the abuse of all sorts of power.

Our aims are realised by, among other things:

- Clear communication of the principles to and by those with boarding responsibilities
- Acceptance and adoption of these principles by those with responsibilities
- Implementation of appropriate policies and processes in the areas of pupil welfare
- Monitoring policies and practice and measurement and evaluation of boarding standards
- Dissemination of good practice through effective teamwork and communication
- Development of a sound model of pastoral care, appropriately staffed
- Appropriate physical conditions of at least minimum care standards
- Training and induction of those responsible for boarding
- Providing an organised and rich programme of activities beyond the curriculum

The Model

- Taunton Preparatory School operates a single boarding house known as Thone House with boys and girls living on separate floors, with shared communal areas.
- The layout of the House gives individuals opportunity to mix with a range of people of different talents, cultures and background
- The House is led by a BSA Qualified member of staff (Mrs Katherine Wells) and inducted resident House Staff
- There is a team of tutors who work within the House providing both academic and pastoral support to the children as well as supporting their wellbeing.
- There are also two resident Assistant Houseparents who support the Head of Boarding with the running of the house.
- An ongoing programme of refurbishment and redecoration underlines our commitment to high quality boarding.
- All staff who teach in Taunton Preparatory School are expected to have an involvement in the house through weekend trips and onsite activities.

Key Elements in our Practice

- Expectations and policies are agreed and understood

- The Head of Boarding is part of the Pastoral Team, coordinating elements of boarding life and practice through regular communication with boarding house staff and pupils.
- The Deputy Head Pastoral (Mrs Joanna Hall-Tomkin) is the Prep School's appointed Deputy Safeguard Lead and she works closely with Taunton School's Deputy Head Pastoral (Mrs Lyndsay White) who is the whole school Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Discussions between boarding House Staff are regular to discuss wide ranging issues and to promote consistency of practice
- Weekly Common Room meetings may be addressed by Head of Boarding about topical matters
- Policies on problem areas and permanent issues are constantly reviewed
- The House operates a Boarders Committee who help in the running of the house through regular meetings.
- Parents are involved directly through events in school or House and also through school communications
- The Headmaster and the Senior Management Team are available every morning between 0745 and 0820 to any member of the community to discuss any matter of concern.
- We employ five Nurses (specialist Mental Health Nurses), two Doctors, two Counsellors and a Chaplain
- An Independent Person, from outside the school, is available for boarders to talk to.
- There is a School Council where Boarders are represented and there is also a half termly meeting with the Heads of School, Heads of House and Head Boarder.
- There is a weekly Boarding Meeting attended by staff directly working in the House.

General Boarding Information

Start of Term and End of Term

Boarders should arrive the evening before term begins. Requested times of arrival are communicated in a letter from the Head of Boarding.

At the end of term, parents should liaise with the relevant boarding staff with regard to departure arrangements.

Exeat Weekends

TPS generally has two exeat weekends in the Autumn and Spring Terms and one exeat weekend in the Summer Term when all pupils finish school for the weekend at 5:45pm on Friday. The house remains open on these weekends, largely to accommodate boarders residing overseas, but numbers are often very low. Many will choose to stay with family members, friends or host families in order to benefit from a change of scenery. The dates are shown in the school calendar to give families the opportunity to plan ahead.

Activities and Outings

Whilst most activities and outings we offer are included within the fee structure, a few may be subject to an extra charge, especially those involving overnight stays. Permission is always sought before adding any additional costs to the school bill.

Important Telephone Numbers

The Headmaster's PA	(01823) 703305
Boarding Houseparents (Mr and Mrs Wells)	(01823) 703322
Matron	(01823) 703321
School Health Centre	(01823) 703161
Musgrove Park Hospital	(01823) 333444
School Office	(01823) 703307

Please ensure that the School has daytime contact numbers, as well as home numbers for you. If you have mobile phones and e-mail addresses, these would be helpful too. All of these should be kept up-to-date with the School Office being informed of any changes. Please also ensure that your child's off-site consent form and pupil information form, (sent under separate cover), are returned to the School Office. Please note that should you be away at any time, we require a replacement contact number for the duration of your absence.

Insurance

Parents are advised that the School cannot be held responsible for the loss of valuables whilst on the school premises. The School is able to offer parents Personal Effects Insurance through the School's insurers, Marsh Insurance Brokers, and details of this and Personal Accident Insurance are sent out to parents of new pupils. For further information, please contact the Finance Office on 01823 703143.

Pocket Money

All pocket money should be given to the Boarding Houseparents in a named envelope. Children may also have credit cards. These should be handed in to the Houseparents on arrival. The Boarding House staff will not be responsible for money not handed in and suggest £80.00 should be adequate for a term. Any monies left will be refunded at the end of the school year via the school bill. Any extra money will be charged on the school bill each term. The School places limits on the amount of money children may have at any one time.

Electronic Devices

Please ensure that all items are clearly named. We have some regulations for those with electronic devices. The house staff must be informed if your child will be bringing electronics into the House. These are expensive and fragile. They must be kept in a locker when not in use and not used by anyone else. Within the boarding house, electronic devices are to be used in the communal lounge areas and can, should staff feel it appropriate, be taken on weekend trips. We ask that devices are scrutinised prior to entering the boarding house, ensuring all content is age appropriate. All pupils are required to utilise the schools' Wi-Fi services on-site, and 3G/4G/5G access is not permitted. Incorrect usage or content will result in devices being removed. Our 'Bring Your Own Device' policy specifies that each pupil requires a suitable device, in school each day, for use as an educational tool.

Please note that all pupils resident in the UK must take all their possessions home at the end of each term. If this is problematic, parents should liaise with the Head of Boarding.

Telephones

The best time to make calls is between 6.30pm and 8.00pm. It is a good idea to try and keep phone calls to the early part of the evening rather than at the start of their bed time routine.

Weekends

Please notify the boarding staff of the collection arrangements. If you wish to take your child out of school at weekends other than exeat, please inform the Boarding Houseparents personally, by letter, e-mail or telephone. They should be notified no later than the Tuesday evening prior to the weekend in question.

For those pupils who remain in the Boarding House, a number of trips or activities are organised by the Boarding House staff and the day staff who come in on Saturday and Sunday afternoons. Major trips will be in the calendar and any pupil who is in for that day will go on the trip. Normally these will be financed by the school, but occasionally the cost will be shared. Prior notice will always be given.

Staff

The Boarding Houseparents live in the house. They are assisted by an Assistant Houseparent, Matrons and House Tutors. In addition, the Headmaster sees it as important that he involves himself with this aspect of the school. House staff are assisted by a number of Graduate Residential Assistants, who help with the various activities in the evening.

We all care greatly about each individual child, so please contact us if you have any concerns.

Guardianship Requirements

Each boarder whose parents reside overseas must have an adult guardian in this country arranged by their parents, who agrees to be responsible for that pupil on behalf of the parents. This arrangement helps make the boarder feel more secure and at home and gives them someone to contact during the week when they are at school. It is hoped that the guardian will keep regular contact with the pupil, but in particular, a guardian is expected to:

- accommodate a pupil
 - a) at half-term, unless the parents have made alternative arrangements;
 - b) at the end of each term, if necessary, to fit in with travel arrangements;
 - c) in an emergency;
- meet a pupil off his/her train or plane at the start of term and escort him/her to his/her place of departure at the end of term;

- attend various school functions throughout the year and parents' evenings, meet the staff and discuss the child's progress, both in academic and pastoral matters;
- keep regular contact with parents;
- to help with the purchase of uniform and other clothes, where necessary, and name them as required by the school;
- if necessary, to arrange for hair-cuts at appropriate times.

Please contact our Admissions Manager at Taunton Preparatory School on 01823 703303 for further details. She will be able to furnish you with details of Guardianship agencies through the United Kingdom. We are not permitted to suggest particular agencies, or make arrangements on your behalf.

For pupils whose parents live overseas, the Guardianship Form must be completed and return to the School no later than four weeks before the pupils' first day in school.

It is essential that all Boarders living overseas have a Guardian before they start at the school.

Medical Care

Health

Pupils who are taking tablets or medicine MUST hand them in to Matron for safe-keeping and those children who use inhalers should supply Matron with a spare, which she will name and store for that pupil in an emergency.

In the case of injury or illness, Matron will be the first port of call in the Boarding House. If it is more serious she will take the child to the School Health Centre and parents will be contacted. In the case of an accident requiring emergency help, the child will be taken directly from the School Health Centre to Musgrove Park Hospital, Accident and Emergency Centre.

Parents will be informed if pupils suffer any sort of serious illness or injury.

School Health Centre

If you would like further information, please contact Mrs Emily Kane, Sister-in-Charge, Health Centre, Taunton School, Taunton, TA2 6AD. Tel: 01823 703161. Fax: 01823 703704.

GP Registration

All boarding pupils are registered with the School Doctor, at French Weir Health Centre, which is a Doctor's Surgery very close to the School.

French Weir Health Centre, French Weir Avenue, Taunton, TA1 1NW
Tel: 01823 331381

One of the doctors holds a surgery 4 days a week in the School Health Centre. Therefore pupils who need to see a doctor can do so at any time and there are also qualified medical staff in the School Health Centre 24 Hours per day. During School holidays pupils can see a doctor anywhere in the UK, by filling in a form obtained when they visit a health centre.

Hospital treatment

Every effort will be made to obtain consent from the parent or guardian prior to hospital treatment. (i.e. for an emergency operation). If this is not possible then the Headmaster or House Staff, acting in loco parentis, will give consent.

A member of staff will accompany pupils needing treatment at the Accident and Emergency Department of Musgrove Park Hospital, which is only about 3 miles from the School.

Out-Patient appointments

An adult will accompany pupils under 16 to their out-patient appointment at the hospital. A local taxi firm is used for travel to and from appointments and the cost is added to your account.

Physiotherapy

A physiotherapist attends the Health Centre on three mornings a week to treat pupils referred by the doctor. There is a cost for this so prior permission will always be sought. Counselling is also available.

Dentist's and Optician's Treatment

Routine visits to the dentist and optician should, where possible, be made during School holidays. Only emergency dental treatment is available during term time and if treatment is carried out it may have to be paid for. It is increasingly difficult to get free dental treatment anywhere. Parents should consider dental insurance and pupils should continue to visit their own dentist at home.

Pupils Travelling Overseas

Immunisations will be given to pupils travelling overseas in accordance with the guidelines used in the UK; these may be at variance with those of other countries. Consent for these vaccinations will be requested before proceeding. Preventative drugs for malaria can be supplied to pupils travelling to affected areas (including those pupils who normally live overseas as resistance can be lost); there is a charge for this medication.

Medical Treatment during School Holidays

It is important that Matron is informed of any medical treatment, vaccinations given, or medicines prescribed during the School holidays. Pupils should hand any new medications to Matron on return to School.

Medical Questionnaires must be completed and returned to the School Office prior to your child starting school.

Clothing Lists

A full School Uniform List can be found in the Parents' Handbook (located on our website). For boarding pupils the following information applies.

- Please ensure everything is named, including underwear and shoes.
- Clothes are sent to the school laundry and should therefore be suitable for machine washing and tumble drying.
- All bed linen is provided and laundered at school, but boarders may bring their own duvet covers/pillow cases if they wish. Boarders may bring cuddly toys.
- ALL ITEMS MUST BE CLEARLY NAMED AND THE CLOTHING CHECK LIST SHOULD BE RETURNED PLEASE WITH THE TRUNK OR CASE. **Please avoid sending more items than stated as storage space is limited.** Thank you for your cooperation.

Clothing List

Jeans / trousers / leggings / Tracksuit bottoms / skirts	3 pairs
Shorts	3 pairs
Waterproof Jacket – plain	1
Casual Shoes	1 pair
Jumpers / Hoodies	3
T-shirts	3
Wellington Boots	1 pair
Sun Hat	1
Wallet, clipboard, small Rucksack for school trips	1 of each

Accessories

Wash bag (brush, comb, toothbrush and toothpaste)	1 of each
Roll-on deodorant (not aerosol)	
Flannels with loops	2
Bath towels with loops for hanging (to remain at school)	4
Pyjamas	3 pairs
Bedroom slippers (sensible sole for fire drill)	1 pair
Dressing gown	1
Named pillow (School can provide)	1
Spare name tapes (to be sewn on to clothing)	1 packet

Please note that the dressing gown and slippers are **essential** items – flip-flops and hoodies are not acceptable alternatives.

Some toiletries can be purchased from the house staff if children run out during the term and Griffins (the on-site school shop) can be used for toiletries, stationery and tuck, where necessary. A member of the Thone House team will accompany your child to Griffins.