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EXETER CATHEDRAL SCHOOL

Nursery | Pre-Prep | Prep

Statement of Boarding Principals and Practice

Last reviewed: September 2019

Next review: September 2020

Governor oversight: Pastoral

Exeter Cathedral School is proud to be the only independent school in Exeter to offer boarding. The School believes that its community atmosphere is enhanced by the presence of boarders, and that it is able to stay loyal to its founding raison d'être – that of a choir school to serve the Cathedral – through, among other things, providing comfortable and homely boarding accommodation for the choristers. The School is pleased that non-choristers choose to make use of the boarding house, too: this further enhances the community atmosphere of the School and the integration of choristers and non-choristers across the age range.

Boarding at Exeter Cathedral School is not compulsory for any pupils (including choristers). It is offered as:

Full boarding (7 nights a week)

Flexi boarding (1-6 nights a week)

Occasional boarding (occasional nights)

Boarding Ethos

Exeter Cathedral School recognises the central importance of educating the whole child and of the development of character alongside, and as part of, a rigorous and exciting curriculum. We are committed to knowing each of our pupils as an individual, and are proud of our very fine reputation as a school which really nurtures, cares for, and values each individual child, and for our reputation as a school which is welcoming, inclusive, tolerant and loving. The ethos of the boarding house mirrors this approach, and boarders are nurtured and valued as individuals, as well as as an important community.

Exeter Cathedral School is an Ancient foundation with Traditional values and a Modern approach.

We seek to:

- Be a happy and purposeful community where people matter.
- Promote the central importance of the development of character.

- Be a place where children can be children, where learning – in all its forms – is taken seriously, and where each and every child is known and valued as an individual.
- Offer a first-rate all-round educational experience where the focus is on developing the whole child. Our job is to work with families to help our pupils acquire the right habits for life.
- Foster a supportive, purposeful, stimulating and gently-Christian environment, in which the following provision to pupils is recognised as being paramount and held in high regard:
 - Academic rigour
 - Exceptional pastoral care and pupil wellbeing
 - Bright and modern facilities
 - A broad and exciting range of extra-curricular activities
 - A high-calibre sporting and wellbeing education
 - A world-class musical education
 - An unparalleled musical heritage and history
 - A sense of spirituality, timelessness, and wonder, borne out of our ancient foundations as a 12th century choir school

Accordingly, our boarding house is a warm, friendly, inclusive and welcoming environment where great importance is attached to pastoral care, pupil wellbeing and to being a supportive and tolerant community.

Boarding at ECS should develop a strong moral sense where pupils pride themselves on being truthful and honest. They should have a high regard for the happiness of others and for their possessions and privacy. We aim to develop leaders and team-players: appropriately confident pupils who can work with others. Senior Boarders have a clear job description and meet routinely with the Housemaster.

The School also greatly values learning and development opportunities outside of the classroom. A range of activities is available to boarders. During the week these tend to be in-house activities (craft, board games, the occasional movie, story time, games in the playground) as the choristers' commitments continue until supper time. At the weekends, chorister schedules and boarding numbers permitting, off-site trips and activities are arranged (museum trips, swimming, beach activities, shopping, cinema, forest walks etc).

A range of facilities is also available for boarders in the evenings, including the School's gym, playground, music facilities (there are several pianos in the boarding house), dining hall and classroom space.

As the Cathedral School, the Christian values of tolerance, kindness, love, compassion and acceptance play a large part in the feel of the School – including the boarding house. In particular, boarders will usually say Grace at mealtimes and there are opportunities (by arrangement) for non-chorister boarders to attend worship in the Cathedral if they wish. On a Sunday morning, all boarders not involved in the Eucharist will attend as members of the congregation. Consideration will be given to requests from parents/guardians for alternative arrangements to be made due to religious beliefs. The School is mindful of its Equal Opportunities obligations, and no boarders will be treated differently as a result of any protected characteristic.

BOARDING PRACTICE

Accommodation

Exeter Cathedral School has one boarding house (“Eyre House”), accommodating up to approximately 38 boys and girls between the ages of 8 and 13. Accommodation is by dormitories (some small, some large): the boys’ dormitories are on the first floor; the girls’ dormitories are on the second floor. There is a common room, a games room, laundry facilities (staff only), a bistro (usable by pupils by arrangement), the Housemaster’s office, and a treatment (medical) room (which includes overnight accommodation if required).

Staffing

The Housemaster and Head of Boarding is Mr Cédric Baurance: he has overall responsibility for the care of the boarders.

He is supported by the Boarding House Matron (BHM), Miss Hazel Rhodes: she oversees the medical, pastoral and domestic needs of the boarders and undertakes duties.

There are also three resident Gap Tutors: they support the Housemaster and the BHM in the carrying out of duties and in being a point of contact for the boarders.

Other resident staff (Mr and Mrs Fitzpatrick, Mr Featherstone) assist with a duty each week and provide Saturday overnight cover according to the published rota.

At weekends, members of the school teaching staff carry out a day duty on a rota basis.

The Housemaster has regular meetings with other members of boarding staff and the School’s Senior Leadership Team to discuss any areas of concern, to work on boarding development, and to ensure that continuity of care is achieved.

The School recognises the importance of Boarding House/home communication and contact is made with parents/guardians quickly if a problem arises. A close relationship between the boarding house and the home is vital in order to provide the best care for all concerned.

Admissions

The School’s policy regarding admissions to the School is available in the prospectus.

Medicines

Boarders have (controlled) access to non-prescription medication and to their own prescribed medicines. Medicines are securely stored and appropriately administered and logged. Full details are in our Administering of Medicines policy.

Pastoral Care

Boarding at ECS should, as far as is possible, reflect family life. We aim, therefore, to be an open and trusting community where a sense of individualism and collective responsibility is fostered. Boarders should feel safe and secure, free from the threat of all forms of bullying, and in an environment where they can be happy, healthy and fulfilled.

The number of boarders will vary considerably on a nightly basis, according to uptake and the routines of families: many of our boarders are flexi-boarders or occasional boarders. When they are ‘in boarding’, they are nonetheless treated as a member of the boarding family. The boarding house must be seen as one community – boarding staff, their families and pupils. The relationship between pupils

and staff must be one which engenders mutual respect and encourages easy dialogue and the sharing of feelings. It is expected that boarders should develop an increasing awareness of, and tolerance of, people of different views, beliefs or cultures.

The Deputy Head (pupils) is the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead and all members of school staff are issued with a copy of the School's Safeguarding Policy. This is also available to parents. All pupils and their parents can access the School's Concerns and Complaints Procedure which contains useful information, contacts and telephone numbers.

Privacy

It is expected that staff and boarders respect the privacy and dignity of other as far as possible. Everyone should knock on doors before entering bedrooms, and all boarders are afforded appropriate privacy.

Meals

Meals take place in the School dining room, and are prepared by the catering team. Fruit is always available in the boarding house, and boarders are given a break time snack (at breakfast). Little Tea (comprising a sandwich and piece of cake) is also available for boarders immediately after school each day. In addition, boarders have access to drinking water and may (by arrangement) prepare snacks in the boarders' Bistro. Our catering staff are happy to provide special diets for vegetarians or medical requirements.

The Housemaster may occasionally invite boarders into his home to share (eg) a home-cooked meal together.

Contact with home

Apart from the restrictions laid down by bedtimes, lessons and other school or choral commitments, there are no (reasonable) limits on the times or frequencies that pupils may telephone parents or vice versa. Parents are encouraged to visit whenever possible – for example to take their child out for tea etc - and as the majority of our boarders are from within a fairly short distance of Exeter this is easily achieved. Pupils have use of a private (and free) 'pay-phone' in the boarding house (some pupils also have own mobile phones/devices which they are allowed to use at certain times). Boarders also have computer access and are able to email or write letters home

Inspection

The Boarding House is subject to regular inspection by the ISI. Opinions of school staff, boarders and their parents are sought as part of the inspection process.

Boarders visiting other families

The parents of both children involved should call or email the Boarding House Parents to confirm that the visit is allowed.

Should a boarder who has a guardian wish to visit another family, the Boarding House Parents must contact the guardian or parent and request, in writing or via email, permission to allow such a visit.