



UT VOCE ITA VITA

EXETER CATHEDRAL SCHOOL

Nursery | Pre-Prep | Prep

Statement of Boarding Principles and Practice

Last reviewed: September 2023

Next review: September 2024

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 (6-7 nights a week)
Flexi boarding

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 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, tolerant and inclusive 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, and an appreciation of the diversity of our boarders and their customs and preferences. 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 House Parent.

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, bowling, local attractions, shopping, cinema, clip-n-climb, 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 supper and there are opportunities (by arrangement) for non-chorister boarders to attend worship in the Cathedral if they wish. The School is mindful of its Equal Opportunities obligations, and is committed to diversity, inclusion and equality, 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 7 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 Boarding House Parent’s office, and a treatment (medical) room (which includes overnight accommodation if required).

Staffing

The House Parent and Head of Boarding is Miss Tamsin Bullocke: she has overall responsibility for the care of the boarders.

The Assistant House Parent is Mr Joe Ward: he covers evening and overnight duties several times a week.

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

Other resident staff (Mr Featherstone) assist with a duty each week.

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

The House Parent has regular meetings with other members of boarding staff and the Deputy Head (Pupils) 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 (the Housemaster is a DDSL) and all members of school staff are issued with a copy of the School's Child Protection 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. Little Tea (comprising bread and butter, fruit 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/vegans or medical/religious requirements.

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 may make use of the House Mobile with permission. Some pupils also have own mobile phones/devices which they are allowed to use at certain times). Boarders also have computer/devices 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 House Parent to confirm that the visit is allowed.

Overseas boarders are required to have a UK guardian. Should a boarder who has a guardian wish to visit another family, the House Parent must contact the guardian or parent and request, in writing or via email, permission to allow such a visit.