



WOODCOTE HOUSE SCHOOL

Boarding Principles and Practice

Woodcote is the ultimate family-run school, not just *in fact* – the Headmaster and his deputy both live very close to or on site with their families, and currently three members of the Paterson family (who own the school) are on the staff, with the ex-Headmaster also chairing the Advisory Board – but also in *ethos*; the individual care and interest shown in each of the boys is, we believe, second to none.

It is this sense of family, with all the traditions and values that this implies, which is central to Woodcote's philosophy. The school family, backed up by a settled and experienced staff, really know what makes the boys tick, and are committed to ensuring that Boarders are fulfilled, happy, properly looked after, and relaxed – in short we treat them as our own.

Turning these principles into practice requires, amongst other things:

- Clear communication of these principles to and by those with boarding responsibilities.
- Acceptance and adoption of these principles by those with boarding responsibilities.
- Design and implementation of appropriate policies in the areas of pupil welfare.
- Monitoring and evaluation of these policies.
- The development of a sound and effective model of pastoral care, appropriately staffed.
- Appropriate living conditions.
- Training and induction of those responsible for boarding.

Woodcote houses its 60 Boarders in the main school building and also in a 6th form boarding house (Dominies) within the grounds. Ages range from 8 - 13, and with 12 dormitories of different sizes there is ample opportunity to mix with a range of different talents and backgrounds without being overwhelmed by large numbers.

The Head of Boarding and Head of Pastoral Care are in overall charge of boarding. They train and monitor four Matrons, all of whom live in rooms close to groups of dormitories. There is a rota of senior staff who help with the evening routine.

Some key elements in our practice:

- Daily meetings to discuss welfare of Boarders.
- Daily meetings between the Head of Pastoral Care, the Head Matron and Matrons to discuss Boarders' needs.
- Several ad-hoc meetings to discuss wide-ranging issues.
- Weekly staff meetings at which Boarders' welfare is always on the agenda.
- Daily meetings between Tutors and boys, with PHSE on the agenda.
- Half-termly meetings of a school council and food committee, with representatives of each year group, and regular meetings between the Headmaster, 'Full Monitors' and all Year 8.

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