



Boarding Policy

Mission statement

To educate young people to meet the challenges of life courageously, to use their talents to the full, and to live the values of Christ's gospel.

At Thornton College we aim:

To enable students to grow in the knowledge and love of God and to encourage them to serve Him in others and to spread the knowledge of the Gospel.

To foster the students' academic, physical and spiritual growth.

To provide an environment where students will be happy and where they will strive for excellence.

To enable our students to discover their true potential and to work towards their full development.

To encourage students to respect and value others and respond to their needs.

To encourage students to see themselves and what they have to offer in the context of the wider community.

To ensure that our young people are well prepared for life in a rapidly changing world.

To provide students with religious, dietary, language and cultural needs as appropriate.

Principles upon which boarding is based:

- The formation of the whole person, the communication of values and mutual respect for all members.

All boarders should be given opportunities to develop spiritually, culturally, morally, and socially during their time in boarding.

- Families are integral to the development of their daughters and contact with them is maintained consistently.
- Each boarder has the right to work, play and relax free from intimidation.
- There is equality of opportunity and respect for all boarders, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, gender, or disability.
- Each boarder and each member of staff is to be recognised as an individual and respected by other students and by staff, acknowledging the right of each person to privacy.
- Each boarder has the right to extend her intellectual and social development in an atmosphere of positive encouragement and in conditions that are conducive to work.

- To promote growth in independence and maturity in preparation for confidently meeting the challenges of the wider world

The BSA (Boarding Schools Association) Boarding toolkit is used to check our boarding provision and is written in accordance with the National Minimum Standards for boarding schools 2022.

Objectives of boarding

In boarding we aim to:

- Maintain an open and trusting environment in which each boarder is confident enough to approach members of the community to share personal and family achievements and challenges and to seek advice, counselling, and support.
- Provide the conditions for boarders related to age and maturity that will assist their intellectual and social talents through structured activities, prep, and access to staff.
- Safeguard and promote the welfare of each boarder, for example, through implementing the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the Health and Safety Policy and all accompanying risk assessments.
- Provide accommodation comfortable and suited to boarders' needs according to age and maturity and provides adequate privacy levels.
- Develop respect for self, for others, for the environment.
- Encourage qualities of leadership and to work cooperatively as part of a team.
- Provide an independent person who is easily accessible, other than a parent, outside the staff and those responsible for the leadership and governance of the school, who boarders may contact directly about personal problems or concerns at school. Boarders are informed who this person is, and how to contact. See end of policy for more details.

Supervision of students

It is vital that Thornton College creates a culture of a safe environment for our boarders. As such adults who have regular contact with our boarders will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information. A person will be considered to be in 'regulated activity' if because of their work they:

- are responsible, on a regular basis, in any setting for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; or

- will carry out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children; or
- engage in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once.

Guidance for staff

Each student's dignity and entitlement to privacy are respected. This includes recognising the student's right to personal space. Staff should not enter a student's bedroom without knocking and indicating their presence. Only in exceptional circumstances, such as a medical or other emergency, should staff enter without doing this. In such cases, the presence of another adult is desirable.

- Staff will undertake regular and relevant training in both pastoral support and safeguarding and will adhere to the school policies.
- Staff will follow the guidelines in the Boarding Staff Handbook.
- Staff are encouraged to operate an open-door policy and avoid one-to-one conversations with students behind closed doors.
- It is recognised that the relationships between students and the House Team will be, by their very nature, different from those of the students with their subject tutors. Therefore, staff need to guard against actions which may be misinterpreted, e.g. the use of sarcasm or jokes. Staff must always maintain their professionalism.
- Cultural diversity is to be celebrated for its richness. Staff should recognise and be sensitive to cultural issues. Stereotyping comments should not be used.
- Boarding staff work closely with the medical team and follow the Medical Policy. Medication given is recorded in the medical records system (ISAMS) with all relevant information logged and following the procedures outlined in the policy.
- Staff supervision of the Houses is of primary importance, the House should not be left unattended, and a member of staff should always be accessible in boarders in the Boarding House. Students should always have the numbers of the House mobile, the independent listeners, Childline and the Children's Commissioner for England readily accessible in Common Rooms and in their rooms or on their corridor.
- Access to the internet is monitored by our monitoring software however staff should also be aware of the age appropriateness of any material that the students are accessing in common areas. Age categories on DVDs or streaming services must be observed and parental permission sought if there is any doubt.
- Students should be reminded at the beginning of every term of our expectations of appropriate behavior and relationships with each other. Students should socialize in common areas rather than each other's rooms and behaving in an inappropriate manner with another student will, ordinarily, result in a severe warning both verbally and in writing.
- Students should also be reminded of the expectations laid out in the Code of Conduct signed by both them and their parents. The use of alcohol, cigarettes and e-cigarettes/vaping is against school rules and will result in sanctions ranging from a letter to parents and a warning to exclusion from boarding or from the school.
- Breaking the rules and being out of bounds are treated seriously as a breach of trust.

Parents will be contacted, and students will have privileges withdrawn, for example being gated during free time.

Independent Listener:

Mrs Angela Sinott: 01908 281564 or 07779 249853

Boarders are also provided with one or more appropriate helpline(s) or outside telephone numbers, including the Office of the Children's Commissioner, to contact in case of problems or distress (020 7783 8330, Website: www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/).