



BOARDING BRIEFING PAPER

NUMBER TEN

APRIL 2004

THE BOARDING HANDBOOK

A key welfare document

by

Adrian Underwood
National Director, Boarding Schools' Association

THE BSA GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES THE SUPPORT OF THE

department for

education and skills

creating opportunity, releasing potential, achieving excellence

FOR THIS PUBLICATION

The Boarding Schools' Association
Grosvenor Gardens House
35-37, Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1W 0BS
Tel : 020 7798 1580 Fax : 020 7798 1581
e-mail : bsa@iscis.uk.net
Website: www.boarding.org.uk

THE BOARDING HANDBOOK - a key welfare document

This paper is written in response to many requests from boarding staff for a check-list of items to include in a boarding handbook. The following list is not exhaustive and will need to be regularly reviewed and updated.

There are a number of questions that will need to be addressed and answered.

- Will the same handbook be provided to both parents and boarders?
- Will it be intended for new parents only, or will all parents be provided with an annual update?
- Might updates be placed on the school or house website?
- Will an additional version be produced as a boarding staff manual or handbook?
- Will a school-wide template be tailored for individual houses?
- Will the handbook apply to all parents and new pupils (day and boarding), with additional sections for issues involving boarders only?
- Will school policies be included in full, or will the handbook just contain short statements of principle?
- Will the handbook be supplemented or replaced for the benefit of preparatory school pupils by a shorter leaflet appropriate to younger readers?

Schools will need to consider which of the following aspects might be included in different versions of their boarding handbooks.

- Introductory welcome letter
- Aims and objectives of boarding in the school and/or the individual house
- First day and induction
 - arrival time
 - meeting with parents
 - leaving
 - first visit
 - telephone contact
- House organisation and structure
 - map or plan
 - full postal address and telephone numbers
- Profiles of boarding house staff
 - availability of staff
 - contacting staff
 - responsibilities
 - photographs
- School day
 - daily routine in school
 - daily routine in house
 - weekend routine
- Calendar of events
 - regular meetings, parents evenings, etc
- Fire
 - alarm
 - drill

- Clothing and equipment
 - list of essential clothing and equipment
 - school uniform shop
 - laundry arrangements
 - electrical appliances: regulations
 - computers: regulations
 - bicycles: regulations
 - trunks
 - registration of valuable items
- Hairstyles/jewellery/make-up: regulations
- Food/meals - both provided in school, in houses and prepared by pupils
- Contact with home
 - telephone calls
 - mobile phones: regulations
 - e-mails
 - letters
- Activities
 - school-based extra-curricular programme
 - house activities and competitions
 - sport, music, drama
- Academic curriculum
 - tutor system
 - year groups
 - learning support
 - core subjects/streaming
 - examinations (Common Entrance/GCSE/AS/A2)
 - scholarships
 - advice on subject choice
- Support and guidance
 - school and house arrangements
 - pastoral tutoring
 - careers provision
 - school counsellor
 - school chaplain
- Health and sex education
- Homework/prep
 - arrangements
 - supervision
 - time
 - study areas
- Discipline
 - rewards and sanctions
 - expectations of behaviour
 - school and house rules
- Assessment arrangements
 - grade cards and/or school reports
 - monitoring arrangements and follow-up action

- Weekends
 - exeats/leave out
 - church/chapel
 - permission
 - times
 - signing in/out
- End of term arrangements
- Travel arrangements
- Valuables and money
 - pocket money
 - house account
 - storage of passports etc
 - lockable storage for pupils' belongings
 - charging extras to the school bill
 - insurance
- Day pupils inviting boarders out of school
 - procedure for permissions
 - guidance on parties
- Prefect system (school and house)
- Health issues
 - medical centre, school doctor
 - medical confidentiality
- School welfare policies
 - equal opportunities
 - complaints and appeals procedures (for parents and for pupils)
 - child protection
 - confidentiality and disclosures
 - countering bullying
 - drugs, alcohol, smoking
- Parents' association
- List of teaching staff and governors
- Pastoral staff
 - child protection co-ordinator
 - houseparents
 - tutors
 - matrons
 - doctor
 - dentist
- Administrative and domestic staff

This lengthy list will obviously need adaptation to meet the needs of individual schools and houses. Some items are likely to be included in other documents (such as the school's prospectus), and may need cross-referencing.