

Boarding

Self-Assessment Toolkit

for

compliance with the

National Minimum Standards for Boarding

in England

Version 4

September 2022

**Contents**

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Introduction

I wrote the first toolkit for BSA back in 2002 at which time I was a serving boarding practitioner, a relatively new BSA tutor and the standards were a completely new concept. I have updated it each time since then. This version has been produced to take account of the latest version of the NMS published on September 5, 2022, noting that the standards have now been organised into sections (again!) and that each section now has an ‘aim’. However, the most significant change in this version is the change of expectation from meeting a minimum standard to being ‘good’. The principle has always been that schools are entirely free to adapt this document as they see fit – to use the parts they find useful and ignore the parts they don’t. Good luck with the audit process.

Dale Wilkins

BSA Senior Director

September 2022

How to use this Toolkit

This toolkit is set out in 4 Parts.

Part 1 has a table giving an overview of the standards

Part 2 has a comparison of the ‘old’ 2015 and ‘new’ 2022 standards.

Part 3 provides a comprehensive series of self-evaluation forms and tables relating to the NMS with indications of where additional evidence might be required to show compliance with any new requirements.

Part 4 is a table of relating to policies, documents and auditing records

**Part 1**

**National Minimum Standards - Self Evaluation & Auditing Tool**

**Checklist for the NMS**

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| **Standard** | **Assessed****on (date):** | **Assessed****by:** | **Fully met?** | **Items outstanding****(yes/no)\*** | **Next review** |
| **A: Governance, leadership and management** |
| 1 | **Statement of boarding principles and practice** |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | **Management and development of boarding** |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | **Inclusion, equality and diversity** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Part B: Boarding Provision** |
| 4 | **Boarding accommodation**  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5 | **Boarders’ possessions**  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 6 | **Provision and preparation of food and drinks**  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Part C: Health and Wellbeing** |
| 7 | **Boarders’ health and wellbeing**  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Part D: Safeguarding** |
| 8 | **Safeguarding** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Part E: Health and safety** |
| 9 | **Safety of boarders**  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10 | **Fire precautions and drills**  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Part F: Boarders’ rights, advocacy and complaints** |
| 11 | **Boarders’ induction and individual support**  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 12 | **Contact with parents/carers**  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 13 | **Securing boarders’ views**  |  |  |  |  |  |

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| **A: Governance, leadership and management** |
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| 13 | **Securing boarders’ views**  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 14 | **Complaints** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Part G: Promoting positive behaviour and relationships** |
| 15 | **Promoting positive behaviour**  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 16 | **Preventing bullying**  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 17 | **Promoting good relationships**  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Part H: Boarders’ development** |
| 18 | **Activities and free time**  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Part I: Staffing, guardians and prefects** |
| 19 | **Staff recruitment and checks on other adults**  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 20 | **Staffing and supervision**  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 21 | **Prefects** |  |  |  |  |  |
| 22 | **Educational Guardians** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Part J: Children accommodated off-site** |
| 23 | **Lodgings and host families** |  |  |  |  |  |

**2 COMPARISON OF CURRENT AND FORMER STANDARDS**

The following table links the new standards to their previous version in 2015 and highlights the main changes.

|  |  |  |
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|  | **Previous standard** | **Main changes** |
| **A: Governance, leadership and management** |
| 1 | **Statement of boarding principles and practice** | 1 | Mention of carers as well as parentsTo be ‘known and understood’ by boardersFootnote 7 requires it to be made accessible to those for whom English is not first language. |
| 2 | **Management and development of boarding** | 13 | Enhanced expectations in 2.2, 2.4 and 2.6 of leadership, management, governance and the training requirement and that this leads to boarders’ welfare being safeguarded and promoted.2.8 – the list of things to be monitored now includes all the records in Appendix B. |
| 3 | **Inclusion, equality and diversity** | 16 | The statement has been enhanced to include all *legally* protected characteristics, the other elements previously identified but also that the list is ‘not all encompassing’. An inclusive environment is promoted within the school. |
| **Part B: Boarding Provision** |
| 4 | **Boarding accommodation**  | 5 | Accommodation expected to be ‘good’ in all aspects. ‘Ongoing assessment of risk’ required. Boarders able to express a preference of whom they share with. New requirements around the use of biometric data. |
| 5 | **Boarders’ possessions**  | 9 | Good and regular laundry, good safety for personal possessions. Standard on searching, screening and confiscation has moved. |
| 6 | **Provision and preparation of food and drinks**  | 8 | Good quality food and good quality facilities. |
| **Part C: Health and Wellbeing** |
| 7 | **Boarders’ health and wellbeing**  | 3 | Prompt action to be taken when medical issues arise. Reference to RCN and Royal Pharmaceutical Society guidance, use of the term ‘non-prescription medication’ instead of household remedies. Significant rewording of the other elements, including enhanced expectations around staff training and also engagement with external services. Accommodation for sick children to be ‘good’ but requirement for separate boys’ and girls’ facilities removed. |
| **Part D: Safeguarding** |
| 8 | **Safeguarding** | 11 | In addition to the reference to Keeping Children Safe in Education, there are new bullet points on ‘everyone’s responsibility’ and online elements. 8.4 also specifies requirements of what the ‘child protection policy’ must contain. |
| **Part E: Health and safety** |
| 9 | **Safety of boarders**  | 6 | Increased expectations on staff training, provision of a ‘safe environment’ where they can live and learn. New sections on contingency arrangements and safety of boarders off-site |
| 10 | **Fire precautions and drills**  | 7 | Expectations stated more clearly on staff and pupil awareness and plans for those with particular needs. Requirement for an overnight drill and for awareness by flexi-boarders. |
| **Part F: Boarders’ rights, advocacy and complaints** |
| 11 | **Boarders’ induction and individual support**  | 2 | Clarity required about collection and transport arrangements for boarders. All requirements of this standard to be covered during induction. Change of terminology to ‘independent person’. Children must be able to contact any member of staff with personal, academic or welfare concerns. Updated references to helplines and support services. Advocacy support for those children who require it. |
| 12 | **Contact with parents/carers**  | 4 | Awareness of the needs of international pupils and of individual circumstances. |
| 13 | **Securing boarders’ views**  | 17 | Systems to be clear and easily accessible and boarders to be given feedback. |
| 14 | **Complaints** | 18 | Separate sections on parental and boarder complaints, including requirements for recording. |
| **Part G: Promoting positive behaviour and relationships** |
| 15 | **Promoting positive behaviour**  | 12 and NEW | This is significantly different from the previous standard, including considerable detail on the elements required in the behaviour policy, including restraint, and staff training in de-escalation techniques where necessary. |
| 16 | **Preventing bullying**  | NEW | Sections on the anti-bullying strategy, dealing with incidents effectively and the additional vulnerabilities of boarders. |
| 17 | **Promoting good relationships**  | NEW | Sections on the links to appropriate education, boarder friendships, staff awareness and the need for professional curiosity. |
| **Part H: Boarders’ development** |
| 18 | **Activities and free time**  | 10 | The need for a stimulating environment and for the need for risk-assessment not to prevent activities with ‘challenge and adventure’ |
| **Part I: Staffing, guardians and prefects** |
| 19 | **Staff recruitment and checks on other adults**  | 14 | Requirements for checks on adults housed elsewhere on site. |
| 20 | **Staffing and supervision**  | 15 | Continuity of staff. Need for awareness of local protocols. Pupil access to staff accommodation only in exceptional circumstances – see footnote 44 and policy statement |
| 21 | **Prefects** | 19 | No change. |
| 22 | **Educational Guardians** | 14.1, 14.2 and NEW | Staff not to be appointed as educational guardians. Schools to act on any concerns about guardian arrangements, even if they have not made the arrangement. |
| **Part J: Children accommodated off-site** |
| 23 | **Lodgings and host families** | 20 | Higher expectations around the quality of accommodation and greater awareness of any risks in the environment. Safeguarding training for homestay families and checks to be termly. |

**3. AUDITING (MEETING AND EXCEEDING) INDIVIDUAL STANDARDS**

**Part A: Governance, leadership and management**

**Aim: The leadership, management and governance of the school enables a culture to thrive which is child-centred, safeguards children’s wellbeing and is ambitious for the progress of every child. Monitoring and accountability is strong and adds value.**

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| **Standard 1 – Statement of boarding principles and practice** |
| * 1. 1.1 A suitable statement of the school’s boarding principles and practice is available to parents, carers and staff, is known to and understood by boarders, and is seen to work well in practice.
 |
| How the school MEETS and EXCEEDS the standard (with appropriate evidence) |
| **How the school addresses the requirement of footnote 7**: Individual schools will be best placed, on a case-by-case basis, to ensure the statement is accessible to those for whom English is not their first language. |
| Plans for future improvement (with indicative timescale) |
| Assessed by |  | Date |  |
| Next review |  |

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| **Standard 2 – Management and development of boarding** |
| 2.1 The school’s governing body and/or proprietor monitors the effectiveness of the leadership, management and delivery of the boarding and welfare provision in the school, and takes appropriate action where necessary.  |
| 2.2 The school’s leadership and management, including its governing body where appropriate, demonstrate good skills and knowledge, appropriate to their role and undertake appropriate training as required.  |
| 2.3 There is clear leadership and management of the practice and development of boarding in the school, and effective links are made between academic and residential staff. |
| 2.4 The school’s leadership and management fulfil their responsibilities consistently and effectively so that the standards are met. |
| 2.5 The school’s leadership and management and governance actively promote the wellbeing of pupils |
| 2.6 Senior boarding staff are knowledgeable and experienced and have undertaken appropriate training in the management and practice of boarding. They use this to ensure that boarders’ welfare is safeguarded and promoted. |
| 2.7 The school follows and maintains the policies and documents described in Appendix A. |
| 2.8 The records specified in Appendix B are maintained and monitored by the school and action taken as appropriate. |
| **Specific evidence relating to the heightened expectations around training and of governance in 2.2, 2.4 and 2.6** |
| How the school MEETS and EXCEEDS the standard (with appropriate evidence) |
| Plans for future improvement (with indicative timescale) |
| Assessed by |  | Date |  |
| Next review |  |

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| **Standard 3 – Inclusion, equality and diversity** |
| 3.1 Boarders are not discriminated against, paying particular regard to the legally protected characteristics and requirements set out in the Equality Act 2010. In addition, boarders are not discriminated against because of their cultural background, linguistic background, special educational needs, or academic or sporting ability (the list is not intended to be all encompassing, the key factor is protecting boarders from discrimination). These factors are taken into account in the care of boarders, so that care is sensitive to different needs and an inclusive environment is promoted within the school. |
| **Evidence relating to the additional requirement for schools’ consideration of this standard to be ‘all-encompassing’** |
| How the school MEETS and EXCEEDS the standard (with appropriate evidence) |
| Plans for future improvement (with indicative timescale) |
| Assessed by |  | Date |  |
| Next review |  |

**Part B: Boarding Provision**

**Aim: The school provides a homely and welcoming environment in which boarders feel safe, secure and comfortable, and where their privacy is respected. Boarders enjoy their accommodation and meal times and feel that their belongings and personal possessions are protected.**

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| **Standard 4 – Boarding accommodation**  |
| 4.1 Good quality sleeping accommodation is provided for boarders. It is well organised and managed with ongoing assessments of risk (which should be documented) and findings acted upon to reduce risk for all boarders. Accommodation gives boarders appropriate privacy, taking into account sex, age and any special requirements. Where children share a bedroom, they are able to express a preference about whom they share with.  |
| 4.2 Good quality living accommodation and equipment, including appropriate internet9 access, is provided for boarders for the purposes of organised and private study outside school hours and for social purposes. |
| 4.3 Sufficient toilet and washing facilities with good quality fixtures and fittings and access to hot water are provided for boarders, are readily accessible from the sleeping accommodation and take into account sex, age and any special requirements. |
| 4.4 Boarding houses and other accommodation provided for boarders are well lit, heated and ventilated, cleaned and maintained, and reasonable adjustments are made to provide accessible accommodation for any boarders with disabilities.  |
| 4.5 Accommodation is well furnished and of sufficient size for the number, needs and ages of boarders accommodated, with appropriate protection and separation between boarder accommodation and staff accommodation. Bedding is warm, clean and comfortable. |
| 4.6 Boarders can personalise an area of their accommodation with suitable posters and personal items if they wish. |
| 4.7 Boarding accommodation is reserved for the use of those children designated to use it, and is protected from access by unauthorised persons. Any use of school facilities by individuals or groups does not allow members of the public (including members of organised groups using school facilities) unsupervised11 access to boarders, or to boarding accommodation while occupied by boarders |
| 4.8 Any use of biometric data/technology or surveillance equipment (e.g. CCTV cameras) or patrolling of school buildings or grounds for security purposes does not intrude unreasonably on boarders’ privacy. Any schools which use biometric technology and/or CCTV should set out the rationale for its use in the school’s security policy. In addition, schools using CCTV must be registered with the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) and comply with relevant data protection legislation including the UK General Data Protection Regulations, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. |
| **How the school assesses that the accommodation is ‘good’** |
| **How the school demonstrates ‘ongoing assessment of risk’** |
| **How boarders are able to express a preference about whom they share with** |
| **How the school meets the requirements of 4.8** |
| How the school MEETS and EXCEEDS the standard (with appropriate evidence) |
| Plans for future improvement (with indicative timescale) |
| Assessed by |  | Date |  |
| Next review |  |

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| **Standard 5 – Boarders’ possessions** |
| 5.1 Good and regular laundry provision is made for boarders’ clothing and bedding. Boarders’ clothing is stored safely while in the process of being laundered and returned to the right boarder following laundering. . . |
| 5.2 Boarders are able to obtain personal and stationery items whilst accommodated at school. |
| 5.3 Good protection is provided for boarders’ personal possessions and for any boarders’ money or valuables looked after by the school. |
| **Evidence that laundry provision is ‘good and regular’** |
| How the school MEETS and EXCEEDS the standard (with appropriate evidence) |
| Plans for future improvement (with indicative timescale) |
| Assessed by |  | Date |  |
| Next review |  |

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| **Standard 6 – Provision and preparation of food and drinks** |
| 6.1 All boarders, including those with special dietary, medical or religious needs, are provided with good quality, nutritionally balanced meals with choice and variety and of sufficient quantity. |
| 6.2 Good quality facilities are provided for the hygienic preparation, serving and consumption of boarders’ main meals. These may be situated in the main school building provided it is adjacent to or reasonably accessible from the boarding accommodation. |
| 6.3 In addition to main meals, boarders have access to drinking water and to food or the means of hygienically preparing food at reasonable times. Schools are sensitive to boarders’ individual needs in this respect. |
| 6.4 Boarders with disabilities are provided with appropriate assistance to eat, in a manner which promotes dignity and choice. |
| **Evidence that the standard of food (6.1) is of good quality, and that the facilities are good (6.2):** |
| How the school MEETS and EXCEEDS the standard (with appropriate evidence) |
| Plans for future improvement (with indicative timescale) |
| Assessed by |  | Date |  |
| Next review |  |

**Part C: Health and Wellbeing**

**Aim: Boarders’ health needs are fully met, and their physical, emotional and social wellbeing and mental health are promoted and supported. Any health care provided is in the best interests of the child.**

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| **Standard 7 – Boarders’ health and wellbeing**  |
| 7.1 The school has, and implements effectively, appropriate policies for the care of boarders who have medical conditions and/or are unwell, ensures that the physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing of boarders are promoted and prompt action is taken when health concerns are identified. The policies include first aid, care of those with chronic conditions and disabilities, dealing with medical emergencies and the use of both prescription and non-prescription medication (including controlled drugs). Policies for administration of medication should reflect, where appropriate, guidance provided by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society and the Royal College of Nursing. |
| 7.2 Boarders are supported and educated to understand their health needs, how to develop and maintain a healthy lifestyle and to make informed decisions about their own health.  |
| 7.3 Effective arrangements are made to care for boarding pupils who are sick or injured. Boarders are accommodated away from other children where this is necessary to care for the child in question or to protect other boarders (e.g. from contagious conditions). Where boarders need to be cared for away from their usual accommodation, they are provided with good quality accommodation, including toilet and washing facilities. The accommodation is staffed appropriately and provides boarders with appropriate privacy, taking into account sex, age and any special requirements. |
| 7.4 The school ensures boarders have access, as appropriate, to local medical, dental and optometric services and provision. In addition, the school engages effectively with health agencies, including specialist services (such as CAMHS, sexual health services and those providing support for victims of sexual abuse) when appropriate, responding in a timely manner to boarders’ needs.  |
| 7.5 The school facilitates access to all relevant health, counselling and support services (set out above) as required. It should be clear who is responsible for making emergency and routine health care appointments for children, including where consultation between parents/carers and staff is necessary. |
| 7.6 All medication is stored safely and securely and accurate records are kept of its administration. Staff are properly trained to provide the support that pupils need when administrating medicines. Prescribed medicines are given only to the boarders to whom they are prescribed. Boarders allowed to self-medicate are assessed as being sufficiently responsible to do so. Where applicable, schools have regard to government guidance. |
| 7.7 Boarders’ confidentiality, rights, privacy and dignity as patients is fundamental and is appropriately protected. This includes the right of a boarder deemed to be ‘Gillick Competent’ to give or withhold consent for their own treatment. |
| **Evidence that prompt action is taken** |
| **Evidence of compliance with relevant guidance (7.1)** |
| **Assessment that the medical accommodation is of ‘good quality’ (7.3)** |
| **Evidence of links with external agencies as appropriate (7.4 and 7.5)** |
| How the school MEETS and EXCEEDS the standard (with appropriate evidence) |
| Plans for future improvement (with indicative timescale) |
| Assessed by |  | Date |  |
| Next review |  |

**Part D: Safeguarding**

**Aim: Boarders are safe, including in the school’s boarding accommodation and away from the school’s premises. Effective measures are taken to manage safeguarding risks and protect children from harm, and to manage well any incidents that do occur.**

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| **Standard 8 – Safeguarding** |
| 8.1 The school should ensure that:  • arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and  • such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State. |
| 8.2 The school should ensure that all staff are aware that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility throughout the school and the boarding facilities. |
| 8.3 It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. The school’s approach to online safety should be reflected in the child protection policy, having regard to the Department’s Keeping children safe in education guidance. |
| 8.4 Keeping Children safe in education sets out that boarding schools have additional factors to consider with regard to safeguarding. As such it will be important that the boarding school’s child protection policy (and/or other policies if appropriate) reflect: • the school’s policy on sexual relationships between children (and importance of boarders understanding this policy); • the school’s approach to child-on-child abuse, reflecting the unique nature of boarding accommodation and the risks associated with children sharing overnight accommodation;the approach to protecting children where there is a significant gender imbalance in the school; and  • the approach to harmful online content and how boarders’ devices are managed in terms of bringing a device into the school, and harmful content that may already be downloaded on to it, and the opportunity to download harmful content via 3,4 and 5G that will bypass the school’s filtering and monitoring systems. |
| **Evidence relating to staff awareness (8.2)** |
| **Compliance of child protection policy with the requirement of 8.3 in relation to online safety** |
| **Details of the relevant policies/ documents which contain the elements required in 8.4** |
| How the school MEETS and EXCEEDS the standard (with appropriate evidence) |
| Plans for future improvement (with indicative timescale) |
| Assessed by |  | Date |  |
| Next review |  |

**Part E: Health and safety**

**Aim: Boarders are safe while at school, including in the school’s boarding accommodation and when away from the school’s premises, but under the care of the school, on an educational visit for example. Effective measures are taken to manage risk and protect children from harm, and to manage well any incidents that do occur.**

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| **Standard 9 – Safety of boarders** |
| 9.1 The school ensures compliance with relevant health and safety laws by drawing up and effectively implementing a written health and safety policy. Staff undertake sufficient training to ensure the policy is followed in practice. |
| 9.2 The school premises, accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured, and they are provided a safe environment in which they can live and learn. |
| 9.3 The school ensures that the welfare of boarders at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy and appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified. |
| 9.4 The school, as part of its health and safety policy, has written procedures setting out the contingency arrangements in case of a major incident, including what happens in the case of an overnight emergency where the premises need to be evacuated. |
| 9.5 Schools should have procedures to ensure boarders’ safety when off site, but under the care of the school, including when on organised visits. These procedures should be proportionate and focus on managing assessed risks. |
| **Evidence relating to staff training (9.1)** |
| **Evidence relating to providing a ‘safe environment’ (9.2)** |
| **Compliance with Standard 9.5 – visits off-site** |
| How the school MEETS and EXCEEDS the standard (with appropriate evidence) |
| Plans for future improvement (with indicative timescale) |
| Assessed by |  | Date |  |
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| **Standard 10 – Fire precautions and drills** |
| 10.1 Boarders and staff know what they would need to do in an emergency and can be evacuated safely.  |
| 10.2 The school complies with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and ensures alerting systems are accessible and there are clear evacuation plans for all children subject to their needs.  |
| 10.3 In addition, fire drills are regularly (at least once per term) carried out in ‘boarding time’. At least one drill per year should be carried out overnight, unless the school has assessed that this would be detrimental to boarders’ welfare.  |
| 10.4 Schools with ‘flexi’ boarders may (this will be based on their own risk assessment) need to carry out additional fire drills to ensure pupils with flexible boarding arrangements know what to do in an emergency. |
| **Evidence of overnight drills (10.3) and awareness by flexi-boarders where appropriate (10.4)** |
| How the school MEETS and EXCEEDS the standard (with appropriate evidence) |
| Plans for future improvement (with indicative timescale) |
| Assessed by |  | Date |  |
| Next review |  |

**Part F: Boarders’ rights, advocacy and complaints**

**Aim: Boarders are enabled to communicate, and develop positive relationships with staff, make their views known and maintain a good relationship with their family or carers (unless precluded by law). Boarders’ views, wishes and feelings about their boarding experience are sought and taken into account by the school.**

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| **Standard 11 – Boarders’ induction and individual support** |
| 11.1 There is an appropriate process of induction and guidance for new boarders and that process includes information covering the standards 11.2 through 11.6. |
| 11.2 The school should make arrangements, with parents and carers, which are clear about who is responsible for the collection and transport of boarders (including arrangements for international pupils) at the start and end of the school term and where there is any temporary absence from school. |
| 11.3 Boarders are able to contact any member of staff with personal, academic or welfare concerns. All staff should know what to do if a boarder approaches them with a concern. |
| 11.4 The school identifies at least one person other than a parent, outside the staff, and those responsible for the leadership and governance of the school, who children may contact directly about personal problems or concerns at the school. This person may be known as the ‘independent person’. Children know who this person is, know how to contact them and feel comfortable talking to them. The person is easily accessible. |
| 11.5 Boarders are also provided with details of two or more child specific support services, such as Childline or the Children’s Commissioner’s Help at Hand service, to contact in case of problems or distress.  |
| 11.6 Boarders are provided with appropriate advocacy support where necessary and are made aware of what advocacy services are available, how they may access such support and any entitlement they may have to advocacy provision, and that advocacy provision adheres to the National Standards . |
| **Evidence relating to this content being included in the induction process (11.1)** |
| **Clarity about transport arrangements (11.2)** |
| **Evidence of ‘all staff’ awareness that boarders can contact them (11.3)** |
| **Arrangements for the ‘independent person’ (or equivalent) (11.4)** |
| **Details of external helpline awareness and arrangements (11.5)** |
| **Advocacy arrangements (where these are required) (11.6)** |
| How the school MEETS and EXCEEDS the standard (with appropriate evidence) |
| Plans for future improvement (with indicative timescale) |
| Assessed by |  | Date |  |
| Next review |  |

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| **Standard 12 – Contact with parents/carers** |
| 12.1 Schools facilitate arrangements so boarders can contact their parents/carers and families in private, at a time that is suitable for both parties, considering relevant time zones for international pupils. Schools should operate proportionate systems to monitor and control the use of electronic communications in order to detect abuse, bullying or unsafe practice by boarders. Schools are sensitive and comply with individual children’s circumstances such as restricted contact with families. |
| **Evidence relating to arrangements for international pupils** |
| **Evidence of ‘proportionate systems’ to detect abuse, bullying or unsafe practices** |
| How the school MEETS and EXCEEDS the standard (with appropriate evidence) |
| Plans for future improvement (with indicative timescale) |
| Assessed by |  | Date |  |
| Next review |  |

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| **Standard 13 – Securing boarders’ views** |
| 13.1 Boarders are actively encouraged to contribute their views to the operation of boarding provision. There should be clear and easily accessible systems for boarders to provide their views and raise concerns. Boarders’ views are considered in decisions about the running of the school and boarding provision and boarders are provided with feedback about their expressed views. Boarders are not penalised for raising a concern in good faith.  |
| **Evidence of systems being easily accessible and of feedback** |
| How the school MEETS and EXCEEDS the standard (with appropriate evidence) |
| Plans for future improvement (with indicative timescale) |
| Assessed by |  | Date |  |
| Next review |  |

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| **Standard 14 – Complaints** |
| 14.1 The school has, and follows, an effective policy on recording and responding to parental complaints that is compliant with the relevant regulatory standards. The policy is clear on how to make a complaint, how it will be dealt with and the timescales for a response.  |
| 14.2 The school should also have a clear and easily accessible process for boarders to raise their own complaints about boarding provision. The school’s procedures should be clear about how it will respond to complaints from boarders. Boarders are not penalised for raising a complaint in good faith. |
| 14.3 The school’s written record of complaints identifies those complaints relating to boarding provision, and action taken by the school as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld). The school should keep a record of complaints made but later withdrawn. The school should keep under review any emerging patterns arising from complaints. |
| **Evidence of the procedure for boarders’ complaints** |
| How the school MEETS and EXCEEDS the standard (with appropriate evidence) |
| Plans for future improvement (with indicative timescale) |
| Assessed by |  | Date |  |
| Next review |  |

**Part G: Promoting positive behaviour and relationships**

**Aim: Boarders behave well and develop healthy and respectful relationships with fellow pupils and staff. Positive behaviour and respectful relationships are encouraged and praised. Any sanctions for misbehaviour are well understood and implemented fairly and consistently.**

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| **Standard 15 – Promoting positive behaviour** |
| 15.1 The school has and consistently implements a written policy to promote good behaviour amongst pupils, including boarders. The school’s approach to behaviour is easily apparent to anyone joining or visiting the school and is evident in the actions and messages from all staff and pupils, including boarders. The school behaviour policy includes detail on: • the underlying objective to create a safe environment in which all pupils, including boarders, can learn and reach their full potential and to reflect the values and ethos of the school;• the role of designated staff in maintaining consistent behaviour expectations, including the responsibilities of school leaders, any resources allocated, and the involvement of governors or trustees; • the behaviour expected of pupils (including boarders), including treating others with dignity, kindness and respect, and the measures to promote positive behaviour, including positive reinforcement and reward and consequence systems; • how the needs of all pupils, including boarders, and staff are met so members of the school community feel safe knowing that bullying, physical threats or abuse are not tolerated, and that they belong;  • school systems and social norms, including rules, routines and consequences systems for pupils, including boarders’ behaviour when in the charge of the school and including when outside of the school premises and online; • pupil (including boarder) support, including the roles and responsibilities of designated staff and the support provided to pupils with additional needs where those needs might affect behaviour; • measures to prevent child-on-child abuse and the response to incidents of such abuse, including disciplinary action; • when restraint, including reasonable force, is to be used and other physical contact and how this will be managed; and • arrangements for searching and screening children and their possessions and how this relates to safeguarding policies. Any search of boarders’ personal belongings should be carried out in accordance with section 550ZA of the Education Act 1996 and with regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State. |
| 15.2 The policy complies with relevant legislation and has regard to guidance, and is accessible, clear and easily understood by staff, pupils, parents and carers. |
| 15.3 Senior leaders should monitor the use of restraint, take appropriate action to prevent the inappropriate use of restraint, and take effective action when inappropriate restraint has been used. |
| 15.4 The headteacher should consider whether members of staff require any additional training and support to enable them to de-escalate potential confrontations between pupils, or potentially violent behaviour, to minimise the need for restraint.  |
| **Evidence relating to 15.2 – policy easily accessible and easily understood** |
| **Evidence relating to use of restraint and staff training (15.3)** |
| How the school MEETS and EXCEEDS the standard (with appropriate evidence) **in relation to all the elements of 15.1** |
| Plans for future improvement (with indicative timescale) |
| Assessed by |  | Date |  |
| Next review |  |

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| **Standard 16 - Preventing bullying** |
| 16.1 The school ensures that all forms of bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory), at the school, are prevented in so far as reasonably practicable, by the drawing up and implementation of a proactive and effective antibullying strategy. The strategy should include accessible and effective systems for children to report bullying. .  |
| 16.2 Any instances of bullying are dealt with effectively. Staff take steps to help pupils to overcome the impact of bullying. All school staff are trained to recognise bullying and know who to go to, if required, in order to ensure bullying is dealt with |
| 16.3 The school’s anti-bullying strategy should reflect that unlike at day schools, boarders who are being bullied (off line) cannot escape their bullies for long periods of time as they are not going home as often. |
| **This is a new standard. Evidence relating to 16.1:** |
| **This is a new standard. Evidence relating to 16.2:** |
| **This is a new standard. Evidence relating to 16.3:** |
| Plans for future improvement (with indicative timescale) |
| Assessed by |  | Date |  |
| Next review |  |

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| **Standard 17 – Promoting good relationships** |
| 17.1 Boarders are supported to develop good relationships with fellow pupils and staff which are based on mutual trust and respect. Through regulations made under section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, boarding schools are required to teach relationships education to primary school pupils and relationships and sex education to secondary school pupils.  |
| 17.2 In schools with both day pupils and boarders, boarders are encouraged and enabled to make and sustain respectful friendships within and outside the boarding community.  |
| 17.3 Staff understand and help boarders to understand what makes a healthy, nurturing relationship. Staff are trained to think curiously about and recognise the signs of children at risk of or involved in damaging relationships with others, including teenage relationship abuse, criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation and child-on-child abuse, and take appropriate action when they have a concern |
| **This is a new standard. Evidence relating to 17.1, particularly with regard to the relevant relationships/ relationships and sex education teaching:** |
| **This is a new standard. Evidence relating to 17.2** |
| **This is a new standard. Evidence relating to 17.3, particularly with regard to staff thinking ‘curiously’ (see also para 19 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022)** |
| Plans for future improvement (with indicative timescale) |
| Assessed by |  | Date |  |
| Next review |  |

**Part H: Boarders’ development**

**Aim: The boarding experience aids and enhances boarders’ development and helps them to develop social skills, living skills and resilience in line with their age and needs.**

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| **Standard 18 – Activities and free time** |
| 18.1 Schools should create and make accessible a stimulating environment to encourage boarders to develop their emotional, intellectual, social, creative and physical skills in an age-appropriate way taking account any special requirements.  |
| 18.2 All boarders are able to access a good range and choice of activities outside teaching time, including sufficient and suitably timed free time each day. Suitable risk assessments are in place and followed for any activities which may put boarders at risk of harm. These should not prevent children having experiences that provide challenge and adventure.  |
| 18.3 Boarders have access to a range and choice of safe recreational areas, both indoors and outdoors, and there are safe areas at school where boarders can be alone if they wish. |
| 18.4 Schools where there are unusual or especially onerous demands on boarders ensure that these are appropriate to the boarders concerned and do not unacceptably affect boarders’ welfare.  |
| 18.5 Boarders have access to information about events in the world outside the school, and access to local facilities which are appropriate to their age. |
| **Evidence relating to there being a ‘stimulating environment’ (18.1)** |
| **Suitable elements of challenge and adventure, appropriately risk-assessed (18.2)** |
| How the school MEETS and EXCEEDS the standard (with appropriate evidence) |
| Plans for future improvement (with indicative timescale) |
| Assessed by |  | Date |  |
| Next review |  |

**Part H: Staffing, guardians and prefects**

**Aim: Boarders are supervised by well-trained, experienced and skilled staff who have been vetted to ensure their suitability. There are sufficient staff to provide care for each child, and good continuity of staff. Any use of prefects is appropriate and well-managed.**

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| **Standard 19 – Staff recruitment and checks on other adults** |
| 19.1 Schools operate safer recruitment and adopt recruitment procedures in line with the regulatory requirements and having regard to relevant guidance41 issued by the Secretary of State. |
| 19.2 For all members of staff households who are aged 16 and over (not on the roll of, nor employed by, the school) and who live on the same premises as boarders, an Enhanced certificate with a check of the Children’s Barred List must be obtained from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). For all other persons aged 16 and over, not on the roll of, nor employed by the school, who live on the same premises as boarders, an Enhanced certificate with a check of the Children’s Barred List must be obtained. The same premises would include, for example, an abbey or teacher housing on the same grounds as the school, requiring the use of the same entry and exit points. |
| 19.3 There is a written agreement between the school and any person aged 16 and over not employed by the school but living in the same premises as children (for example, members of staff households). This specifies the terms of their accommodation, guidance and expectations on contact with pupils, their responsibilities to supervise their visitors, and notice that accommodation may cease to be provided if there is evidence that they are unsuitable to have regular contact with children. They must be required to notify an unrelated designated senior member of staff if they are charged with, or convicted of, any offence. |
| 19.4 All persons visiting boarding accommodation or staff accommodation (e.g. visitors, outside delivery and maintenance personnel) are kept under sufficient staff supervision to prevent them gaining unsupervised access to boarders or their accommodation. |
| **Evidence relating to checks for ‘those housed on the same premises’ (19.2)** |
| How the school MEETS and EXCEEDS the standard (with appropriate evidence) |
| Plans for future improvement (with indicative timescale) |
| Assessed by |  | Date |  |
| Next review |  |

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| **Standard 20 – Staffing and supervision** |
| 20.1 Any staff member or volunteer employed or volunteering in a position working with boarders has a job description reflecting their duties, receives induction training in boarding when newly appointed, and receives regular reviews of their boarding practice, with opportunities for training and continual professional development in boarding.  |
| 20.2 Any role of spouses, partners and/or other adult members of staff households within boarding houses is made clear.  |
| 20.3 The staff supervising boarders outside teaching time are sufficient in number, training and experience for the age, number and individual needs of boarders, and the locations and activities involved. |
| 20.4 Boarders are at all times under the responsibility of an identified member of staff who is suitably qualified and experienced. There is continuity of staff, as far as is reasonably possible, such that boarders’ relationships with staff are not overly disrupted.  |
| 20.5 Staff know the whereabouts of boarders (or know how to find their whereabouts) in their charge at all times.  |
| 20.6 Staff working within the school know and implement the school’s policy, and any local protocols, in relation to boarders going missing and understand their role in implementing that policy. Staff actively search for boarders who are missing, including working with police where appropriate. |
| 20.7 Schools should ensure that they have a suitable number of staff (and at least one) sleeping or on duty in each building, who is responsible for the boarders and available to meet boarders' needs during the night.  |
| 20.8 Boarders are able to contact a member of staff easily in each building at night and know how to do this.  |
| 20.9 Suitable accommodation (consisting of accommodation in which meals may be taken, living accommodation, and sleeping accommodation) and suitable toilet and washing facilities are provided for residential staff. This accommodation is appropriately separated from the accommodation and facilities provided for boarding pupils. |
| 20.10 No boarders have access to staff residential accommodation44, other than in exceptional circumstances. Where this occurs a one-to-one situation should be avoided with boarders with another adult always present. There is no inappropriate favouritism or inappropriate one-to-one contact between staff and boarders. |
| **Standard 20.10 Footnote 44:** This standard applies to the private parts of staff residential accommodation. It does not apply to public or shared use spaces. If a public or shared use space exists within staff accommodation, the school should clearly articulate this in writing in relevant policies and have a clear policy on safely managing the use of such spaces. This standard does not prevent boarders visiting their friends who live in staff residential accommodation. As with any such visit (such as boarders visiting friends’ houses off site) the school should have clear policies ensuring such visits are conducted safely |
| DfE policy statement: The change to what is now standard 20.10 has been made from a safeguarding and welfare perspective. We are clear that generally speaking there is no reason for boarders to be spending time in the private residence of staff, except for exceptional circumstances or where the visit is one where boarders are visiting friends (that is children who live in the private accommodation). We do not want to be prescriptive on what exceptional would look like, but it is very likely to include a safeguarding and/or welfare element. We are clear the standard does not prevent boarders visiting their friends. However, as with any boarder visiting a friend’s home (be that private staff accommodation or a friend’s home outside the boarding school) the school is still responsible for the welfare of the child and will have policies in place to ensure such visits are conducted safely. We also recognise the importance of boarding schools offering friendly and nurturing environments for their boarders and the use of staff accommodation can play an important part in that process. As such, we do not want to be overly prescriptive on the use of public and shared use spaces, as individual schools will be best placed to satisfy themselves that their arrangements are safe. We understand parts of staff accommodation are used, such as gardens, kitchens and dining rooms for a wide variety of legitimate reasons, such as hosting parents and educating and supporting boarders. The key factor will be any public or shared use space is very clearly defined in writing, it is very clear where the demarcation is between shared and public use space and the staff members private residential accommodation and there is a clear policy on safely managing the use of such public or shared use spaces. What this policy says and where it is hosted (be that in the child protection policy, another welfare related policy or a standalone policy) is entirely a matter for the school. The key factor will be the policy safeguards and promotes the welfare of boarders. |
| **Evidence of ‘continuity of staff’ (20.4)** |
| **Awareness of local protocols for children going missing (20.6)** |
| **Compliance with the requirements of 20.10, with reference to any appropriate policy statements or procedures** |
| How the school MEETS and EXCEEDS the standard (with appropriate evidence) |
| Plans for future improvement (with indicative timescale) |
| Assessed by |  | Date |  |
| Next review |  |

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| **Standard 21 – Prefects** |
| 21.1 Any prefect system (or equivalent) gives prefects (or equivalent) appropriate specific duties and responsibilities that are appropriate for them, with adequate staff supervision, training and measures to counter possible abuses of the role. |
| How the school MEETS and EXCEEDS the standard (with appropriate evidence) |
| Plans for future improvement (with indicative timescale) |
| Assessed by |  | Date |  |
| Next review |  |

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| **Standard 22 – Educational Guardians** |
| 22.1 All educational guardians appointed by the school are subject to the same safer recruitment procedures as staff.  |
| 22.2 Where the school is responsible for appointing educational guardians it regularly monitors the suitability of its arrangements. |
| 22.3 Whether an educational guardian is appointed by the school or a parent/carer the school takes appropriate steps to ensure that the guardianship arrangement is promoting the welfare, physical wellbeing and emotional wellbeing of the boarder.  |
| 22.4 Any concerns about an educational guardianship arrangement should be acted upon immediately and referred to any relevant agencies |
| 22.5 Under no circumstances should school staff be appointed as an educational guardian for boarders. |
| **Arrangements for compliance with 22.3** |
| How the school MEETS and EXCEEDS the standard (with appropriate evidence) |
| Plans for future improvement (with indicative timescale) |
| Assessed by |  | Date |  |
| Next review |  |

**Part J: Children accommodated off-site**

**Aim: Boarders accommodated off-site, placed by the school in the care of a third-party, are kept safe and protected from harm at all times.**

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| **Standard 23 – Lodgings and host families** |
| 23.1 It is clearly stated to parents/carers whether any lodgings accommodating pupils are to be arranged by the school or by parents/carers themselves.  |
| 23.2 Any lodgings arranged by the school to accommodate pupils provide good quality accommodation and supervision, are checked before use, and are monitored by the school during use including checks at least termly.  |
| 23.3 Any lodgings provided or arranged by the school are of a comparable standard to accommodation provided by the school.  |
| 23.4 The school visits all potential lodgings it may arrange, and interviews any adult who will be responsible for the accommodation of the pupils in each lodging, takes up references, and has recorded a satisfactory assessment, before any boarder is placed there. Unless the host family are in a family relationship with the boarder, the school can demonstrate that all members of the host family aged 16 and over, who will be living at the lodgings whilst the boarder is staying, obtain an Enhanced DBS check, with check of the Children’s Barred List, with satisfactory outcomes known, before any boarder is placed. |
| 23.5 The school ensures that all adults providing lodgings for boarders on its behalf have undergone suitable safeguarding training at least every three years, and that they understand the school’s policy in relation to boarders going missing and their role in implementing that policy.  |
| 23.6 The school has a satisfactory written agreement with each adult providing lodgings for boarders on its behalf.  |
| 23.7 At least once per school term a member of staff discusses their lodgings separately with each boarder accommodated by or on behalf of the school in lodgings, recording the boarder’s assessment in writing and taking action on any concerns or complaints.  |
| 23.8 The school provides satisfactory written guidance to host families accommodating boarders on behalf of the school, covering the school’s policy and practice for lodging pupils. This might include clear advice on risks such as passive smoking, medicine management, access to the lodging’s wifi, access to and the showing of age restricted material, such as films etc with restricted content (e.g. certificate18) and access to alcohol to children living in lodgings. |
| 23.9 Schools alert the local authority to any arrangements that may constitute private fostering. |
| **Evidence relating to accommodation being ‘good’** |
| **Evidence of termly checks (23.2)** |
| **Training for host families (23.5)** |
| **Detail of the ‘written agreement’ containing the relevant items (23.8)** |
| How the school MEETS and EXCEEDS the standard (with appropriate evidence) |
| Plans for future improvement (with indicative timescale) |
| Assessed by |  | Date |  |
| Next review |  |

**4 AUDIT OF POLICIES AND RECORDS**

**4A: Audit Form for Policies and Documents**

The following list of policies and documents required is in Appendix A to the National Minimum Standards. New content is in bold

| **Policies** | **Relates to standard** | **Located in****(e.g. ‘Staff Handbook’)** | **Last review** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Countering bullying ***and initiation/ hazing type violence and rituals*** | 15,16 |  |  |
| Child protection **and safeguarding** | 8 |  |  |
| Discipline (including sanctions, rewards and restraint) | 15 |  |  |
| Staff disciplinary, grievance and whistle blowing policy | 20 |  |  |
| Care of boarders who are unwell, including first aid, care of those with chronic conditions and disabilities, dealing with medical emergencies and the use of household remedies | 7 |  |  |
| Safety and supervision on school journeys | 20.3 |  |  |
| Access to school premises by people outside the school | 4.7, 9, 20 |  |  |
| Pupil access to risky areas of school buildings and grounds | 9 |  |  |
| Health and Safety | 9 |  |  |
| Pupil access to a person independent of the school staff group | 11.4 |  |  |
| Provision for pupils with particular religious, dietary, language or cultural needs | 3, 6 |  |  |
| Supervision of ‘unchecked’ staff | 4.7, 19, 20 |  |  |
| **Documents** | **Relates to standard** | **Located in****(e.g. ‘Staff Handbook’)** | **Last review** |
| Staff Handbook/ guidance for boarding staff(this document may include many of the policy documents listed above) | 20 |  |  |
| Statement of the school’s boarding principles and practice | 1 |  |  |
| Requirement for staff to report concerns or allegations of risk of harm to pupils | 8 |  |  |
| Complaints procedure | 14 |  |  |
| Procedure for enabling pupils to take problems or concerns to any member of staff | 11.3 |  |  |
| Responses to alcohol, smoking and substance abuse | 15 |  |  |
| **Risk assessment and** plans for foreseeable crises | 4,9,18 |  |  |
| Staff induction, training and development programme | 2.6, 20 |  |  |
| Prefect duties, powers and responsibilities | 21 |  |  |
| Key written information for new boarders | 11.1 |  |  |
| Job descriptions for staff with boarding duties | 20.1 |  |  |
| **where applicable:** |  |  |  |
| **Clarification of responsibilities of any educational guardians and homestays** | 23 |  |  |
| Agreement with any **educational guardians and homestays** | 23 |  |  |
| **Clarification of responsibilities of school for lodgings arranged by the school** | 23 |  |  |
| **Educational guardianship agreement** | 23 |  |  |
| Agreement with any adult providing lodgings, on behalf of the school, to pupils | 23 |  |  |
| **Additional relevant items not listed in Appendix A of NMS** |
| *Equal opportunities* | *3* |  |  |
| *Policy on missing pupils* | *20.6, 23.5* |  |  |
| *Risk Assessment Policy* | *9.3* |  |  |

**4B: Audit of Records**

The new version of the NMS requires all the following records to be audited. The previous Appendix 3, which had a shorter list, has been withdrawn. New items are in bold.

‘All of the records should be regularly monitored by the Head or a senior member of staff, to identify whether review or change in welfare practice is needed. The records should contain on appropriate level of information to support monitoring, reviewing and changing policy and process.’

| **Record** | **Relates to standard** | **Location****(e.g.’ Prospectus’)** | **Last monitored by** | **Date** | **Type of monitoring**  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Child Protection allegations or concerns | 8 |  |  |  |  |
| Major sanctions | 15 |  |  |  |  |
| Use of*reasonable force* | 15 |  |  |  |  |
| Complaints **and their outcomes** | 14 |  |  |  |  |
| Individual boarders’ records (Containing personal. Health and welfare information) | 7 |  |  |  |  |
| Administration of medication/ treatment/ first aid (kept confidentially) | 7 |  |  |  |  |
| Significant illnesses | 7 |  |  |  |  |
| Significant accidents and injuries | 9 |  |  |  |  |
| Parental permission for medical and dental treatment, first aid and non-prescription medication | 7 |  |  |  |  |
| Risk Assessments and **action taken in response to risk assessments**  | 4,9,18 |  |  |  |  |
| Staff recruitment records and checks **(including checks on others given unsupervised access to children or residential accommodation)** | 19 |  |  |  |  |
| Staff duty rotas | 20 |  |  |  |  |
| Staff supervision, appraisal and training | 20 |  |  |  |  |
| Fire precautions test and drills | 9 |  |  |  |  |
| Risk assessments *under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005* | 10 |  |  |  |  |
| Menus | 6 |  |  |  |  |
| Pocket money and personal property looked after by staff | 5 |  |  |  |  |
| Care plans (where applicable) | 3,7 |  |  |  |  |
| Parental permission for high risk activities | 9.18 |  |  |  |  |
| Checks on licensing of relevant adventure activity centres  | 18 |  |  |  |  |
| Assessment of lodgings arranged by the school | 23 |  |  |  |  |
| Assessment of off-site accommodation used by the school | 4, 9,18 |  |  |  |  |
| Suitability of any guardianship arrangements | 22 |  |  |  |  |
| **ITEMS NOT MENTIONED IN THE NMS APPENDIX B – but worth monitoring** |
| *Pupil signing out and in* |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Agreements with adults other than staff* | 19,20,23 |  |  |  |  |
| *Parental responsibility/ contact details* | 12 |  |  |  |  |
| *Boarders’ views (e.g. minutes of meetings if held* | 20 |  |  |  |  |