



# Boarding Handbook

2023-24

Queenswood

# Boarding Handbook for Parents and Girls: 2023-24

## Introduction

At Queenswood, every single girl matters. We provide high quality, bespoke girls' education and allow every girl to succeed to her full potential, regardless of where her talents lead her. There is no such thing as a "Queenswood girl" in the sense that there is not a single type of girl to us; the Queenswood Girl is a girl who follows her talents and her gifts and is the best girl she can possibly be.

Boarding is the perfect way to support the development of our girls into the kinds of young women who can be happy with themselves and who can learn to embrace opportunities to develop while following their own road. In a boarding school, everything which is attractive about single sex girls' education is multiplied and enhanced. Boarding enables girls to stick to a routine, to build relationships that will last them for the rest of their lives and to have access to the most incredible resources; each other. In boarding, there is always someone to work with, to talk to, to explore ideas with, to spend time with and we create opportunities to pursue interests which go far beyond the classroom.

Boarding at Queenswood is flexible and the vast majority of girls here have some experience of boarding. Occasional boarding nights and Flexi boarding offer parents the opportunity to allow us to take care of your daughters on an ad hoc basis or for a regular arrangement each week. This can allow you to travel for work and know that your daughter is in the best of hands; or it can allow your daughter to have an approach to her schooling which has the best of both boarding and day school. Your daughter may wish to participate in after school activities, she may be in a play, or going on a late returning school trip or she may just want to gradually ease into boarding as she moves up the school.

As your daughter gets older, the structured environment of boarding can help her to regulate her independent study. Many girls become boarders as they enter the crucial exam years, and this means that they have access to the library and IT suites, as well as being able to work together in small study groups which helps the girls to develop vital skills for university and work beyond.

The weekends at Queenswood have activities organised by the Assistant Head (Boarding) and boarding staff to ensure that there is never a dull moment. Past trips have included visits to the West End theaters, Thorpe Park, Cadbury World, visits to London Museums, Ice Skating and so much more.

## Background

Founded as a full boarding school in 1894, Queenswood has evolved over the years into a boarding and day school where the boarders make up approximately 50% of the pupil roll.

## Boarding Aims

Queenswood's boarding aims are to provide, in close communication with the parents and carers, an environment which will safeguard and promote the well-being and appropriate physical, intellectual, emotional, social and behavioural development of a girl, as well as protecting the girl from suffering significant harm or neglect. In particular, boarding focuses on the development of girls' skills to live

harmoniously within a community, whatever their individual strengths and weaknesses. The Houses provide a warm and nurturing environment for the girls.

Please also refer to Boarding: Statement of Boarding Principles and Practice found on the Queenswood website.

### **Queenswood Boarding Policy**

Queenswood's Boarding Policy is essentially an application and development of the Queenswood code:

- We respect the privacy, property, culture and religious beliefs of everyone in the community;
- We value and respect each other as individuals, regardless of age or status;
- We accept responsibility for our environment, in order to enjoy and maintain it for the future;
- We uphold the rules of the community in promoting the safety, happiness and well-being of all.

### **Pastoral Care**

The Deputy Head Pastoral is responsible for the provision of all pastoral care within the School, working closely with the Assistant Head (Boarding), the Heads of Years, and tutors to support the Housemistresses, Houseparents and House staff in caring for the boarders. Everyone who is responsible for pastoral care meets regularly to ensure that each girl's needs are being met and to ensure that any issues are effectively communicated to people who need to know. Confidentiality is taken very seriously, and girls are only discussed in relation to their particular needs and only with those staff who need to know the information. Each boarding house has either a Housemistress or Houseparent, who is supported by a number of staff including, Assistant HMs, Resident Tutors, Boarding Assistants and House Tutors.

### **Welfare Support**

The School's Medical Centre provides nursing and counselling support for all girls and the School has access to a range of outside agencies, should the need arise. We have a Resident Counsellor who works Monday – Friday. There is also an Independent Person. Contact details for the School Counsellor and Independent Person are displayed in House.

### **Boarding Facilities**

Younger boarders are accommodated in multiple bedrooms (approximately 5 or 6 to a room) which reduce in the number of beds per room as a girl moves up the School. Sixth form girls are accommodated in single or double rooms. Where possible and in most cases, Upper Sixth girls will benefit from a single room. Accommodation is maintained to the highest possible standards and a rolling

re-decoration and refurbishment programme is in place.

All Houses have House Rooms containing TVs, as well as facilities for making snacks and hot drinks. Each house has communal space for craft workshops and supervised activities, as well as study space. There are cooking facilities available for supervised group cooking activities such as baking, which can be used at weekends and in the evenings and at the Housemistress' or Houseparent's discretion. In the Centre, there is a dedicated social space which includes multi-use common space, kitchen and a cinema room.

## **Types of Boarding available**

We recognise that life has changed in the boarding world and we aim to provide flexible boarding options to suit the needs of your daughter and family. The options available are:

### **Full boarding**

This is the option for those who wish to board for five nights or more each week. Girls stay in school at weekends but may choose to have a weekend at home at any time.

### **Flexi Weekly Boarding**

This is the package for girls who want to board during the school week and go home at weekends. Girls will board for four or five nights each week.

### **Flexible Boarding Packages**

These packages are available at one, two or three nights a week to be taken regularly throughout the year. This option suits those students who may have regular after school commitments, such as sport or a co-curricular activity. This option is also an excellent way for students to start boarding by spending a smaller part of the week in school and having the best of both experiences. With this option, girls will be allocated a bed on the nights they board, but will not have a permanent claim on the space.

Flexi boarders use school bedding and are expected to strip their beds in the morning after their last boarding night and remake the bed for their fellow flexi boarder, who will be boarding on the other nights.

When reducing full, weekly and flexi boarding nights at any point in the year, parents and guardians should read the information on notice periods and, if required, contact the Bursary with any queries.

### **Occasional boarding nights**

Occasional boarding nights are available. For example, your daughter may have a theater trip organised by the English or Drama department that will return late at night. In these circumstances, it may be possible to arrange to board on a one off basis by arrangement with the Housemistress or Houseparent.

These nights will be charged to your account at a rate of £65 per night.

## Essential items for boarding

Every full and weekly boarder has a bed with drawers and a wardrobe, and boarders from Year 9 upwards have a desk with storage space and shelves, so space is generous but not unlimited. Flexi boarders will have an area to store a few belongings but at times this may be shared. **All items should be clearly named.**

### Necessary items:

Bedding: Pillow, pillow case, bed sheet, duvet, duvet cover (**Please note that all Flexi 1,2 and 3 nighters use school bedding. Weeklies and Full boarders can bring their own bedding or use school bedding if they wish to do so.**)

Toiletries

Hairbrush

Towel(s)

Clothes: Uniform items, home clothes plus nightwear and underwear

Coat hangers

Chargers for phones and other devices

Laundry net bag (named)

### Optional items:

Tuck and tuck box

Keepsakes for bedside table, e.g. photo frames, teddies

Extra bed furnishings such as cushions and throws

Battery-operated fairy lights (no mains operated ones)

Posters for bedroom wall & blu-tack

Small padlock for the lockable space in your daughter's dorm

Hairdryer (optional)

## Suitcases and tuck boxes

All Boarders must have a sturdy suitcase in which to pack all their belongings (clearly marked with the owner's name on the outside), which will be stored in the suitcase cupboards during term time. Please do not use a trunk.

## Packing and Storage

During the Christmas and Easter holidays, girls are expected to completely clear their rooms of belongings. During the summer holidays, storage is available for full boarders using School Trunk, a company that will provide crates and storage space. For more information on this service, please contact the Assistant Head (Boarding), Mrs Violaine Ludwick.

## Marking and naming

**All articles of clothing and other items must be marked.** Name tapes with surname and one forename must be on all types of clothing, and girls should have a laundry marker for new items they acquire whilst at school.

Watches must have owner's name engraved on the back. All laptops, tablets, iPods, speakers etc. must be named or coded in some way.

## Jewellery

Girls should not wear jewellery except for a single chain with a religious symbol. No other symbols will be allowed. Gold or silver ear studs may be worn with school uniform. Girls should have no more than two earrings in each ear lobe, and no other piercings will be permitted. Girls are strongly advised not to bring any other jewellery of value to school.

## Insurance

Unfortunately, the school cannot accept responsibility for the loss of pupils' clothing, personal effects or money. You may wish to make your own arrangements for cover for possible losses under your own all-risk insurance policies.

## Electrical Items

Some electrical items may be brought to school for use by girls in their rooms. We are required by law to abide by certain health and safety regulations and we ask that all adapters meet UK standards and must be checked by a member of staff before they are used in houses. Adapters will be regularly checked and any which do not meet UK safety standards will be confiscated. Students have opportunities at weekends to buy adapters with guidance from staff to help convert plugs from other countries.

Personal items can be checked by maintenance staff for safety and each Housemistress/Houseparent reserves the right to confiscate any items which do not meet safety standards or which are being used inappropriately.

Mobile phones, laptops and tablets are collected in overnight for Years 7-10. Y10 may keep their devices at the weekend (Friday and Saturday nights only). This ensures that girls have a good night's sleep and are not tempted to access their devices at night. Misuse of mobile phones has serious consequences and girls are expected to read the technology policy in the houses regularly. If a girl in an older year group is found to be misusing her devices, she may also be required to hand her devices in at bed time in order to ensure she gets a good night's sleep and does not disturb others.

**Allowed items:**

Mobile phones, Hairdryers, straighteners (with heat proof mat), laptop, tablet computers and cameras.

**Not allowed items:**

Cooking appliances, Electric heaters and fans, kettles and coffee makers, fridges and televisions.

Girls are able to access IT suites for study time in the evenings and can print there. Each house has access to Wi-Fi from their personal devices in house and can take their personal laptops to the school IT department for help as needed.

## Laptops

Technology in education is continually advancing and access to the many electronic resources is crucial to providing a well-rounded education. We support most devices on our network but if you are deciding to purchase a laptop for your daughter we recommend you contact the IT Department for advice. The IT Department will provide first line support for student devices and will provide instruction on connecting to the network and the best use of the online resources. Any hardware or warranty issues will be referred back to the student. All students will be given access to the school's network which provides access to electronic resources, curriculum software, e-mail, data storage, printing, and of course the Internet. Our Internet filtering system ensures that students are protected from harmful and inappropriate content and along with instruction on the safe use of the Internet we hope to provide a safe online experience without undue restrictions. Students will notice that filtering becomes more relaxed as they progress through the year groups.

## Weekends

At Queenswood, our weekend programme is an important part of school life. We have three types of weekends in operation: 'Flexi', 'Exeat', and Home Weekends' weekends.

### Flexi-weekends

Flexi weekends can start after a boarder's last commitment on either Friday or Saturday. Girls may return to school on Monday morning in time for 8.00am registration, though most boarders return on Sunday evening. The return on Sunday evening enables girls to catch up with friends, unpack and prepare for the week ahead.

### Exeat Weekends (boarders only)

Exeat weekends take place in the Summer term on the May bank holiday and the last weekend of term.

The school is completely closed for those weekends and boarders are asked to go home or stay with a guardian/host family for the weekend. The houses close at 6pm on the Friday evening and will open at 6pm either on the Sunday evening or Monday evening, depending on whether the Exeat includes a Bank Holiday Monday.

### Home Weekends (Y7 & Y8 only)

Home weekends are weekends when Stamp house is closed for Y7 & Y8. There are two of these each term. All girls are expected to be at home or with a guardian/host family. The weekend commences at 4.30pm on Friday afternoon (the house closes at 6pm). Girls can return on Sunday evening after 6.00pm or by 8.00am on Monday morning.

### Arrangements for Half Terms

Boarders are expected to return to school on Sunday evening at the end of half terms or by arrangement with the Housemistress/Houseparent on Monday morning.

**Years 7 and 8 by 8.00pm on Sunday**

**Years 9-13 by 9.00pm on Sunday**

**All girls by 8.00am on Monday**

The Housestaff cannot accommodate very late arrivals. If a girl is going to arrive after bedtimes then parents/guardians will be required to make alternative arrangements.

Housemistresses/Houseparents must be informed each week of girls' plans for exeat and flexi weekends. Arrangements must be confirmed with the Housemistress/Houseparent by 4.00pm on Wednesday each week either by email, phone or in person.

When girls would like to go out with a friend for the weekend, **the Housemistress/Houseparent must have notice by e-mail or letter from both sets of parents. It is important that if parents send relatives under 21 years old to collect their daughter they notify the Housemistress/Houseparent in writing.** Other girls will not be allowed to be driven by anyone under 21 years of age unless the Principal and parents have given written permission.

All parents and visitors taking girls out on weekends must report to the Housemistress/Houseparent or Boarding Assistant. This is a necessary safety precaution.

### Weekend Activities

In addition to the extensive co-curricular programme during the working week, all girls have access to the



weekend activity programme. The Assistant Head (Boarding) coordinates the term's activity program and a brochure is sent to parents each term to allow them to plan ahead. Queenswood subsidises weekend trips so most of the trips are free. Boarders in Y7-Y10 are expected to attend all the weekend trips. Many of the trips require pre-payment for tickets and deposits so we ask that girls stick to their commitment to attend once they have signed up. If a girl changes her mind once tickets have been bought, a charge may be added to the termly account to cover the costs of booking the activity. On Friday nights, there is a weekly trip to Tesco to stock up on snacks and essentials. This trip is charged at £5 for the coach and will appear on the term's account.

Saturday evenings in house are dedicated to the house staff spending quality time with their girls. Each house will have something planned in house, whether it is hot chocolate and marshmallows, a film night, a "girls' night in" with pampering and chatting or playing board games. The aim is to build those informal relationships which are so important to pastoral care. Girls are welcome in all of the houses at this time but the main aim is for them to get to know their own House staff.

### **Travel arrangements – girls going off site**

It is important for us to know the whereabouts of the girls in our care. We ask that they adopt a responsible attitude to discussing travel plans with us, and signing out from House.

At weekends, girls in Year 11 upwards are allowed to travel without a supervising adult. The rules are as follows:

Girls in **Years 11** may go shopping locally in Potters Bar on Saturday and Sunday afternoons if they are not required for any other school activity. They must be in parties of three or more at all times and return by 4.30pm. They may travel home unaccompanied for the weekend, if parents have given written permission. Year 11 boarders must be accompanied by a parent/guardian on their return journey on Sunday evening or Monday morning or on the school bus.

In the Summer Term they may go to the Hatfield Galleria at weekends if they are not required for any other school activity. Girls must be in parties of three or more at all times and return to school by 6pm.

**Sixth Formers** may do all of the above and go further afield, such as London or a visit to a University, but only when parents have filled in and returned the General Consent Form.

It is essential that girls have permission from their Housemistress/Houseparent before they leave the site. They must agree on the timings and be clear about all the arrangements. The privilege of outings will be withdrawn if abused.

## Travel Arrangements: Exeats, Half Terms and Holidays

The school provides transport to Heathrow airport for the beginning and end of the holidays and this is available for booking by all parents of girls who will be traveling overseas. Housemistresses/Houseparents will be in contact to offer this service and will ask for all of the relevant information about flights. This service is very popular and is operated on a “first come, first served” basis so it is very important to get in touch with your daughter’s Housemistress/Houseparent as soon as possible to book transport. This service is only available for the official end and beginning of terms. If your flights have been booked outside term dates, there will be no school transport available and you or your daughter’s guardian will need to arrange transport to the airport. The school is able to book taxis for students leaving to go home for the school holidays, but do not book taxis for their return at the beginning of the new term.

## Duties in Houses

All girls are responsible for the cleanliness and tidiness of the communal areas of their houses and personal areas and they are expected to share responsibility for tasks such as emptying bins and cleaning the snack kitchen on a rota basis.

## Daily Routines

### Daily routines for boarders Monday - Thursday

7am – Wake up

7.15am – Breakfast in the dining room (optional for 6th Formers who can have breakfast in house)

7.40/7.50 am – Back to House to get school bag organised for the day ahead

8.15am – Leave House to go to registration and begin the school day

4.40pm – Girls take part in co-curricular activities or complete their study

6pm – Supper in the dining room

The post-dinner routine varies depending on houses but there is always Quiet Time where girls can study and the laundry is collected on different days depending on the house. There are also house meetings and Treat Nights. Details of these routines can be found in the individual house handbooks.

## Weekday Bedtimes

Year Group	In Bed	Lights Out
7	8.45pm	9.00pm
8	9.00pm	9.15pm
9	9.15pm	9.30pm

10	9.30pm	9.45pm
11	9.45pm	10.00pm

Girls in years 7-10 are asked to hand in their electronic devices before they go to bed.

Sixth Form are expected to be in their rooms and quiet from 10pm onwards.

On Friday and Saturday nights, girls are allowed to go to bed half an hour later. Year 7-9 girls still hand in their phones at weekends.

There is always a member of staff on Night Duty should a boarder require assistance in the night.

## Meals

All meals are compulsory for all girls and registers are taken. It is important that girls learn social conventions during meal times so mobile phones are forbidden in the dining hall. If girls are seen using their mobile phone at a meal, it is confiscated for 24 hours for the first offence and 48 for the second. Meal times vary at weekends and boarders need to look out for information on house noticeboards. Boarders are expected to dress appropriately in the dining hall and make sure they are wearing outdoor shoes. With permission from the Housemistress/Houseparent, Y11-Y13 are allowed to order take-aways at weekend. Please refer to house handbooks for more information about privileges in the Houses.

## Pocket Money/Passports

Please ensure that your daughter has a bank account set up before she joins the school if you would like her to have one. Unfortunately Queenswood staff are not authorised to open accounts on behalf of girls. If your daughter is an international student and you require proof of her term-time address in the UK, please contact the Admissions Office for a letter.

We would recommend that your daughter has access to her own debit card. However, in Years 7 & 8 bank cards, passports and pocket money are to be handed in and kept in a locked cabinet in the Housemistress/Houseparents' office. Older girls tend to look after their own valuables (unless they ask the House Staff to look after them) and have a lockable cupboard in their House. They are instructed to keep their valuables locked at all times.

## Signing in and out

Safety of all girls is very important and house staff must always know where to find a girl in the event of an emergency. Each house has a signing out book and girls must state exactly what time they leave and exactly where they are going. They must also sign in when they return. Girls may not sign out on behalf

of another girl.

## **Laundry**

All full and weekly boarders have access to a laundry service in school. Each house has a system of laundry and different days for cleaning different items. We do not arrange dry cleaning or the laundry of delicate items such as silk or wool. Each house handbook gives information on the specific laundry system for that house and house staff will be happy to explain the system if needed. This service is provided for all girls who board for four nights a week or more.

## **Medication**

Girls are not permitted to keep their own medication in their rooms. Medication must be handed in to the house staff or the Medical Centre. This is to ensure that no other medication is given to the girls and to make sure that prescription medication is only taken by the intended patient. Herbal remedies are not permitted in school. Older girls (usually Sixth Formers) are allowed at times to self-medicate but this is only in agreement with the Medical Centre.

## **Security**

### **The Site**

Queenwood has 24 hour security caretakers and the site has a perimeter fence with electronic gates. Staff members may enter the site with a card entry system and all visitors must enter through entry phone. The perimeter of the site is monitored by CCTV.

### **Houses**

Each house has an entry code on the door and access to the building is by card entry. Each girl is given an anonymised card for entry to buildings and use as a library card, access to printing and for payment in the school shop. Loss of card must be reported immediately to the tutors so that a replacement can be ordered and the lost card can be deactivated.

## **Staffing in houses**

### **Getting in touch with House Staff**

Please contact your daughter's Housestaff for all enquiries connected to her welfare and pastoral care. This can be anything from dietary requirements to lost property or anything which has happened at home that will affect your daughter's wellbeing. Please contact your daughter's tutor for anything

regarding school attendance, such as doctor's appointments or illness (please copy the Housestaff in any emails), and anything which may affect her academic wellbeing. Each tutor will be in contact with you at the beginning of the year to let you know how to contact him or her. Each house will have its own handbook for parents and staff and all contact details for Housemistresses, Houseparents and Boarding Assistants can be found in the individual handbook. The contact details for all staff are available on the parent portal under "Who to contact" and this is kept up to date each year.

## **Roles of House Staff**

Each house has more than one member of staff with different roles; please see the definitions below:

### **Housemistress:**

This is a senior member of staff who has overall responsibility for a boarding house. She is responsible for all pastoral matters connected to all of the girls in her house. She is a qualified teacher and teaches half a timetable in a subject she is qualified for. The housemistress takes responsibility for all aspects of pastoral care for all of the girls in her house. The housemistress may be supported by an Assistant Housemistress.

### **Houseparents**

Houseparents are non-teaching staff who take responsibility for the pastoral care of the girls in their houses and are supported by Boarding Assistants.

### **Boarding Assistants/Resident Tutors**

Boarding Assistants and Resident Tutors are graduates who work in the houses and support the Housemistresses and Houseparents. Their role is to take part in the day to day administrative tasks of running the house. They also support with taking girls to medical appointments, carrying out dining room duties and supporting in house.

### **Medical Centre**

The Medical Centre is staffed by fully qualified nurses. All house staff have training to treat minor ailments and first aid matters and call on the nurses whenever necessary. A doctor visits the school twice a week and girls have access to specialists when they are referred by the school doctors.

### **Tutors**

Every girl in Queenswood has a tutor to oversee her academic programme. Each tutor is responsible for registering the students and providing them with support each day and throughout the week. They will be your first point of contact for everything related to your daughter's school life. The tutor groups are organised by year group and by attached house to help foster house spirit and sense of community.

### **Evening Tutors**

All Houses have members of the teaching staff who carry out duties in the boarding house in the evenings. These staff are involved in the evening routines of the house and available to support the girls if needed with academic matters.

## **Afterword**

Hopefully, this handbook has provided a suitable starting point for most queries about boarding that you may have. Each house has a handbook to cover the matters specific to that house which will help to relate this general handbook to your specific queries. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch with a member of house staff or Mrs Violaine Ludwick, Assistant Head (Boarding). [violaine.ludwick@queenswood.org](mailto:violaine.ludwick@queenswood.org)