



# **Statement of Boarding Principles and Practice**

Revised: September 2022

Review date: August 2023

This policy is available on our College website, <https://www.oxfordsixthformcollege.com/the-college/policies/> or in hard copy by contacting the College reception (01865 703333).

All students are provided with an electronic copy of the National Minimum Boarding Standards 2022 upon arrival.

### **Safeguarding**

The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its students. The College follows the principles in *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (DfE September 2022) and *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (DfE July 2018) and the National *Minimum Boarding Standards* (DfE September 2022)(NMBS). The College Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy are available on the College's website and available to any student or parent.

### **Statement of boarding principles and practices**

Boarding is a key aspect of Oxford Sixth Form College's provision and is fully compliant with NMBS 2022. Our aim is to provide a homely and welcoming environment in which boarders feel safe, secure and comfortable, and where their privacy is respected, and our boarders enjoy their accommodation and meal times and feel that their belongings and personal possessions are protected.

We aspire to making boarding a positive experience that enhances College life and helps to develop in students a sense of self-confidence and individual responsibility whilst at the same time enabling them to live happily and study effectively.

We recognise that some students are ready for fully independent living, while others are looking for something close to a university student experience and yet others prefer a family environment; the younger students especially require a high degree of supervision and support. Every effort is made to match the right student to the right environment. We believe that safe, welcoming and secure accommodation can enhance a student's experience at College and enable them to study productively, live independently and develop confidently. Students are encouraged to develop positive relationships with others and to feel part of the community or family in which they live.

Where issues or concerns arise, we aim to act promptly to resolve difficulties, with the student's welfare and well-being the main priority in any decisions. Living independently, whether in a host family or boarding house, brings responsibilities as well as independence and we hope that each student will develop confidence and resilience during their time at the College. Students who are settled and happy where they are living are more likely to be motivated and effective in their studies. Approximately 50% of our students are boarders.

The boarding options we provide are varied and offer a great deal of flexibility and choice for students and parents. Before accommodation is organised the Director of Student Services (DSS) and Heads of Houses are made aware of medical needs, dietary needs, pet or food allergies as gathered via the College's enrolment form for onward transmission to staff in College boarding accommodation and host families.

We source host accommodation as close to the College as possible, but where a bus ride is inevitable this is on a direct route into the town and should take no more than 30 minutes at peak times. Bus stops are usually between a 5 and 10 minute walk from all accommodation.

### **Use of CCTV in boarding accommodation**

The College boarding houses have CCTV covering external door areas, corridors and other communal spaces within these buildings in order to protect the students from unwanted external visitors and peer on peer abuse. The cameras are monitored by the boarding team and are not available to the general staff population or students.

The College is registered with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) and complies with relevant Data Protection Act 2018 and the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.

See the College Health and Safety policy for more information.

### **Communication and support**

We believe that effective communication is very important. The DSS is in regular contact with staff in the boarding houses, with hosts and with students. The Heads of House (HoH) are based one in each boarding house. One daily update from the residences are sent to the Vice Principal (VP), DSS, Senior Tutors and the boarding team with a diary of events at the boarding houses and any issues are identified.

We encourage students to give us feedback on their boarding experience and to raise any concerns as soon as possible. All students are offered support with any issue relating to their experience and the HoH's, the DSS, VP, the Principal and the Senior Tutors all work together to make sure matters are dealt with quickly and effectively. They can do this by talking to the boarding staff or host parent or to their Senior Tutor with whom they meet frequently. We welcome comments on any aspect of the boarding community and aim to act on the comments, suggestions and requests that emerge as far as is practically possible.

Every student in the boarding houses will have an informal meeting once a term to discuss their boarding experience at Oxford Sixth Form College. The HoH, DSS and the Independent Listener hold regular meetings in both of the boarding houses, once every term, or more frequently if there is a problem. We also seek students' views through face to face discussions, questionnaires and feedback surveys: a written survey of boarders' views is conducted twice in each academic year; a 'food survey' is conducted in the two catered boarding houses and host accommodation at least once a year. These address all aspects of the College's provision, including boarding and pastoral support.

### **Admission to Boarding**

As part of the enrolment process, students indicate their boarding preference. All boarding and host families are thereafter arranged through the Admissions team. Individual attention is given to the needs and wishes of each student and their parents, and every attempt is made to ensure that students are placed in boarding or host family which meets their requirements and which will provide a secure, happy and supportive environment conducive to effective study. As it is not always possible for students, parents or guardians, to visit the boarding/host families before making a choice, staff who undertake the admissions interviews will advise students and parents of their options and information is available on the College's website. The Admissions team can be in contact by email and telephone to further discuss the options if required.

The HoH is available in term and the DSS and VP are available in and out of term time to deal with any issues or concerns. At weekends and in the evenings there is a College mobile number for parents or students for any urgent issues if the need arises.

### **Contact Details**

<b>St Ebbes</b>	<b>Head of House: Zig Powell</b>		<b>Pensons Gardens</b>	<b>Head of House: Daniel Kiss</b>
Telephone:	01865 793333		Telephone:	01865 793333
Mobile:	07557 948 905		Mobile:	07557 941 257
Email:	<a href="mailto:Zig.Powell@oxfordsixthformcollege.com">Zig.Powell@oxfordsixthformcollege.com</a>		Email:	<a href="mailto:Daniel.Kiss@oxfordsixthformcollege.com">Daniel.Kiss@oxfordsixthformcollege.com</a>
Out of hours mobile:	+44 (0)7557 919443		Out of hours mobile:	+44 (0)7557 919443

### **Guardians**

All international students under the age of 16 should have a UK guardian and we strongly advise all students over the age of 16 also to have a guardian.

### **Types of accommodation**

The College oversees various types of accommodation:

#### **Host Families (for ages 16+)**

These provide a supportive, homely setting which, in particular for international students living a long way from home, offers a valuable opportunity to live in a welcoming family environment and to develop linguistic skills and cultural awareness at the same time. For UK students, host families offer a degree of support and of freedom.

A student living with a family has a single study bedroom and, in some cases, a private bathroom which is of a comparable standard to the of College boarding. Breakfast and evening meals are provided, and it is usually possible for students to make themselves light snacks. Close contact is maintained with host families, most of whom have been housing our students for a number of years. All accommodation new to the College is carefully inspected and the host and their family interviewed before being recommended to students, and then at least three times a year thereafter.

All host families are carefully chosen and vetted, and most of them have been providing accommodation for students of the College for a number of years. They are selected because the hosts enjoy having students in their home and are keen to provide a caring and friendly environment. The DSS and Host Family Coordinator (HFC) endeavours to match students to hosts who can provide the specific family setting that the student is looking for, taking account of individual preferences with relation to such things as diet, allergies to pets, a family or perhaps a retired couple. Wherever possible, we will endeavour to provide choice and options giving the final choice to the student and his or her parents.

### **College Boarding (for ages 15-18)**

The College has two boarding houses; St Ebbes and Pensons Gardens. St Ebbes, located in the heart of the City and is about a 5 minute walk from the College, provides boarding for students under the age of 18 at enrolment, and of mixed gender. The building has an access system that enables the College to split genders by floors and there is CCTV throughout the communal spaces. All of the study bedrooms have en-suite facilities. There is a communal dining/kitchen and lounge area on each of the four floors. Students are able to make their own snacks, hot and cold drinks between meals with use of the fridge-freezer and microwave in the kitchens. Breakfast and evening meals are provided 7 days a week. There is internet access throughout the building. Laundry facilities are available free of charge throughout both boarding houses. Houseparent's provide 24/7 awake cover to oversee the safety and provide support to the students.

Our second residence, Pensons Gardens, is in St Clements, a 10-minute walk from the College, and is surrounded by local shops and restaurants. Like St Ebbes, each student has an en-suite study bedroom and access to kitchenettes on each floor. There is a lounge on the first floor with soft furnishing, a television and games. The students are provided with breakfast and an evening meal seven days a week. Free Laundry facilities, internet access and 24/7 awake supervision are also provided by a team of Houseparents.

### **Independent Residence (for ages 18+)**

The College's 18+ residence for students at Between Towns Court (BTC) is compiled of three separate clusters within each of which there are six en-suite bedrooms with a shared social/kitchen area. Breakfast is provided but the students buy and cook their own food for dinner/supper, developing skills towards fully independent living. The kitchens are well equipped with cookers, microwaves, food cupboards, fridges/freezers. The residence is managed 24/7 and support is provided to the students as required. The College liaises with BTC regularly so that students are supported where required.

### **Private Rental (18+)**

We do not recommend or offer assistance in finding private flats/houses and suggest contacting local property agents. The dangers of private rental include not having access to students who become unwell and some students have experienced difficulties with landlords and utility companies.

We strongly recommend that contracts are checked carefully before signing and insurance cover is taken out for personal belongings. We also request that you provide the Admissions team with details of the landlord or letting agent and details of how to gain access to the building in an emergency.

### **Students living with their Guardians**

The College does not appoint Guardians for students. Where students are under the age of 18 years the College will take steps to ensure that the student is safe and that the guardian is promoting the physical and emotional wellbeing of the child. Where a student is of statutory school age and is living with their guardian the College will refer the details to the local authority since it will constitute a private fostering arrangement. Any concerns about the Guardianship arrangements will be raised with the relevant authority.

## **Healthcare**

The College requires all students to register with a local doctor on arrival (Unless UK based and require continuing support from their local GP). Similar arrangements should be made to register with a dentist and an optician if necessary.

All students are required to complete a Health Questionnaire before arriving. Oxford Sixth Form College has a link with Northgate Health Centre which is conveniently located only 5 minutes' walk from the main college building and St Ebbes boarding house. Appointments can be made by telephone, by calling into the surgery or if support is required through the College Matron, Senior Tutors or Houseparent.

There are a number of dentists and opticians near to the College. Students may make their own appointments or can ask the College Matron or their Houseparent to make the appointment on their behalf.

## **Smoking**

Smoking is not allowed in College building or in any accommodation arranged by the College. There are strict sanctions in place, please see the Promoting Good Behaviour policy and the Alcohol, Drugs and Smoking policy.

## **Alcohol and Drugs Policy**

The College will not tolerate drugs, paraphernalia and/or alcohol being brought into, consumed, stored or exchanged on College premises or any accommodation arranged by the College. The College's alcohol and drugs policy is available on the College website and available to any student or parent who requests a further copy.

## **Other College Policies and Procedure**

The College's policies and procedures are published on the website. Parents and students may request a printed copy at any point. It is highly recommended that all parents, agents, guardians and students read the following:

- The Parent & Student Handbook
- Boarding Appendix (as required)
- Promoting Good Behaviour Policy
- Alcohol, Drugs and Smoking policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Complaints Policy and Procedures Disability access policy