



St Hugh's
School

Woodhall Spa

Parents' Guide To Boarding

2024-2025

Boarding Ethos:

The Boarding House at St Hughs School is a close-knit community that shares the same values and principles as the school itself. Designed to be a 'home-from-home,' the Boarding House reflects the atmosphere of a happy family, where respect for the individual is paramount. Boarders are encouraged to personalise their own spaces, while also respecting each other's belongings. The boarding experience promotes self-reliance and responsibility, allowing children to develop at their own pace within a supportive and stable environment.

The Houseparents, Assistant Residents, Matron, duty tutors, as well as the Headmaster and his family, all live within the school grounds or the nearby village. This close proximity helps create an atmosphere of approachability, where boarders feel comfortable seeking advice, support, and sharing both happy moments and concerns. No matter how small the issue, boarders always have access to a member of the boarding staff, including Matrons, Houseparent, Boarding Tutors, and, if needed, the independent listener, Julie Turbin.

The boarding team is dedicated to meeting the emotional needs of the children, offering support while respecting their need for privacy and personal space. While children do have access to telephones, we encourage them to address small issues within the school before calling home. Our goal is to foster a happy and respectful atmosphere where values such as politeness and thoughtfulness thrive. The combination of modern facilities and traditional values makes boarding at St Hughs a unique and enjoyable experience.

Boarding Staff

House Parents:

Mrs. Warwick-Smith, as the Head of Boarding, manages the operations of the boarding house and is the main point of contact for all boarders. She lives in the main building with her husband, Mr. Smith, their son Grayson, and their dogs, Lola and Slippers. You are welcome to reach out to us about anything—if it matters to you, it matters to us.

Mrs. Warwick-Smith is responsible for overseeing all aspects of the boarding house and the welfare of all boarders. She handles decisions regarding dorm assignments and bed placements. She can be contacted via email at boarding@st-hughs.lincs.sch.uk or smith@st-hughs.lincs.sch.uk, or by phone at 01526 352169. Mrs. Warwick-Smith will contact parents if there are any significant concerns about their child's welfare at school and will also reach out periodically throughout the year with updates on the boarding house via email or social media platforms.

The Matrons:

Miss Green, the Matron, is supported by Mrs. Ellicker-Campling. Together, they are responsible for managing medical and health concerns, hygiene, laundry, and maintaining tidiness. They are always happy to chat and are available throughout the day.

If your child requires any specific medication, it should be given to the Matrons along with a signed consent note and any necessary instructions. For further details on this process, please

contact them directly. You can reach the Matron team by phone or via email at matron@st-hughs.lincs.sch.uk.

Resident Staff:

Miss Kilby and Miss Pratley are our Resident Assistants, responsible for helping manage the Boarding House on a daily basis. Miss Kilby is based on the boys' corridor, while Miss Pratley is on the girls' corridor. Both are available throughout the night, in addition to the flat bell.

They support the Houseparent in the running of the boarding house and assist with dorm duties. The boarders will regularly see Miss Kilby and Miss Pratley around the boarding house, as well as in the classrooms and on the sports fields.

Other Boarding Staff:

In addition to the Resident Assistants, the following staff members are involved in boarding, taking on dorm duties and attending various boarding events. While staff may change from year to year, there is a core group of staff who have been part of the boarding team at St. Hugh's for several years. These include Mr. Jeffery, Mrs. Costello, Madame Clayton, Mrs. Corner, Miss Henderson, Miss Brabant, Mrs. Foote, Mr. Short, and Miss Fish.

No matter the time, day or night, there will always be a friendly face among the staff.

Boarding Options:

Weekly Boarding offers pupils the opportunity to fully engage in the boarding experience, helping them establish stable routines and develop positive social relationships within the boarding community. It is the ideal preparation for students who will board at their senior school. Our Weekly Boarders typically stay with us for 3 or 4 nights, with many returning home after Wednesday matches when convenient for parents. While we encourage Weekly Boarders to stay all 4 nights, as this better prepares them for full-time boarding at senior school, we understand flexibility is sometimes needed.

Flexi-Boarding allows pupils to experience boarding in a more flexible way, which can enhance their social development and provide valuable support for parents. We aim to be as flexible as possible and recognise that circumstances may change during the term. For any changes to boarding nights, we ask that parents make a formal request directly to Mrs. Warwick-Smith or the School Office at least 7 days in advance. In these cases, there will be no additional charge. Please note that 'swap' nights may not always be possible, as our domestic and catering teams require adequate notice to ensure your child receives the best possible boarding experience.

We also kindly ask that parents of Weekly Boarders inform Mrs. Warwick-Smith if their child will not be boarding on a particular night, especially on Wednesdays, so that activities can be appropriately planned and catered for. While we take pride in being flexible, we emphasise the importance of consistency in the boarding experience to help children settle into the routines that boarding life offers.

Principles of Boarding:

Boarding at St Hughs is designed to:

Foster positive social interactions and empathy among pupils.

Promote cooperation within the boarding community.

Enhance each child's self-esteem and independence.

Develop personal organisational skills.

Instill a sense of personal value, ensuring all boarders feel respected and integral to the community.

Support pupils in making and maintaining friendships while understanding the importance and joy of these connections.

Teach children to take responsibility for their own health and hygiene.

Encourage a sense of accountability.

Promote respect for oneself, others, and the shared boarding environment.

Prepare students for the experience of boarding at Senior School.

Routine:

Morning:

07:00: Boarders wake up, wash, and get dressed. They brush their teeth, make their beds, and tidy their dorms.

07:40: Breakfast, followed by a final dorm inspection.

08:15: Head to form rooms, and the school day begins.

Evening:

17:00: Tea, followed by prep and a range of boarding activities. These activities are balanced with downtime, where boarders can use the Common Rooms (equipped with a TV and various games) or the new Games Room. The Library is also available for quiet time or studying.

After tea, boarders can change out of their uniforms into casual clothes.

19:30: A hot drink and supper are served.

Technology use is permitted between 19:45 and 20:15, but it is important to note that the mobile device policy must be read and acknowledged, which can be found on the [website](#). By booking your child into boarding, you confirm that you have read and agreed to this policy.

Bedtime:

Years 3/4: First call at 20:00 to brush teeth and get ready for bed, with reading time starting at 20:15 and lights off at 20:30.

Years 5/6: Bedtime routine starts at 20:15, with reading at 20:30 and lights off at 20:45.

Years 7/8: Bedtime starts at 20:30, with reading at 20:45 and lights off at 21:00.

Weekly boarders should place their laundry in the designated basket.

Dormitories:

The dormitories are arranged by age group to help with the staggered bedtime routine, making it easier for the Houseparents, Matrons, and staff to care for each group of children and ensure they settle before the older boarders head to bed. However, due to the number of Flexi-Boarders, boarders from consecutive year groups may occasionally need to share a dormitory. Dormitory placements are determined by the Houseparents, and while we aim to

accommodate preferences, the number of beds in each dorm may limit dormitory arrangements.

One of the benefits of boarding is that children learn to interact with a wide variety of people, fostering friendships across different dorms. Boarders are encouraged to personalise their bedrooms to make them feel more at home, and can bring photographs, pictures, and their own duvet covers and pillowcases (clearly labeled).

Boarders should always keep a reading book by their bed for the quiet reading time before lights out. If they forget to bring one or finish a book, there are plenty available to borrow from the book baskets in each room, with new selections added throughout the year. We also allow Kindles for reading, in case boarders find it difficult to fall asleep or wake up during the night.

Health and Hygiene:

All boarders are required to shower daily. Children who board for three nights or more keep spare uniforms and underwear at school. Clean underwear and socks are provided every day, and other items of uniform are regularly laundered. Routine medical checks are carried out, and we monitor the general wellbeing of all boarders on a daily basis.

For Weekly Boarders, laundry baskets are provided each evening, and clean underwear and socks are issued daily. Shirts, trousers, skirts, and sweaters are laundered twice a week at school. Towels are washed weekly, and bedding is laundered every two weeks.

The St. Hugh's surgery is always available for any boarder who is feeling unwell. However, as Matrons are often busy, they may not always be in the surgery when a child needs to see them. Ideally, any child who is unwell should report to a Matron in the morning, during morning break, afternoon snack time, or during evening surgery hours. If a Matron is unavailable, pupils should go to the main reception, where the staff will contact the Matron.

Head Lice:

Head lice are a common issue in schools, but we make every effort to minimise their occurrence at St Hugh's. If you discover that your child has head lice while they are boarding, please notify a Matron as soon as possible so that the child can be treated while they are at school. If head lice are found in a pupil's hair, the Matron will verify the presence of lice and then contact the child's parents to advise them on treatment options.

If the child is a flexi-boarder and is scheduled to board that night, the Matron will suggest that the child be taken home at the end of the school day to begin treatment, in accordance with the school's treatment policy.

Keeping in Touch with Home:

Boarders have access to a telephone for private calls to their parents. We aim to limit phone calls during regular school hours unless there is an urgent need. If boarders or day children wish to make a call during the school day, they are advised to speak with a staff member in the School Office. Any calls home after 18:30 should be communicated to the duty staff member.

Boarders are permitted to bring mobile devices to boarding, provided they have read and understood the Acceptable Use of Mobile Phones Policy. By enrolling your child in boarding, you acknowledge this policy. This policy can be found under the "Boarding" section on the school [website](#).

While contacting home can be beneficial, it can also have unintended negative effects depending on the circumstances. We encourage children to address minor issues independently and make use of the support available within the school before calling home. Boarders typically manage better when they are guided to resolve problems on their own. For this reason, Flexi-Boarders returning home the next day generally do not need to use the phone.

Although staff are available to take calls in the evening, we kindly ask that parents only call if it is necessary.

Food and Drink Mealtimes:

Each breakfast includes cereals, fruit juice, fresh fruit, yogurt, toast, and either a hot dish or continental pastries. Biscuits are available during the morning break. For lunch, a hot meal with vegetables or salad is served, accompanied by dessert and fresh fruit. You can find details of our [weekly menu](#) on the school website. Tea consists of a hot meal with pudding and fruit, with toast offered as an option. Supper is a lighter evening meal that changes daily and may include options like toasties, nachos, cake, and pitta pizzas, with both hot and cold drinks, as well as toast and fruit, available upon request.

We have a boarding council that meets once per term to discuss various aspects of boarding, with food always on the agenda. This provides all boarders with the chance to contribute to menu planning through their year group representatives. We also welcome menu suggestions from home. While the food at St Hugh's is of high quality, there may be occasional meals that don't suit every child's tastes. However, the meals are designed to meet nutritional needs, and we encourage children to make an effort to eat what is served. Vegetarian options are available, and we cater to specific dietary requirements, which are noted in our medical records and shared with all staff members.

Birthday Teas:

If a child is a weekly or flexi boarder staying on the night of their birthday, we can make special arrangements to celebrate the occasion and tailor activities accordingly. Please contact Mrs. Warwick-Smith to inform her and coordinate any plans for your child's birthday.

Clothing and Possessions:

Parents must clearly label all items of clothing, bedding, towels, and luggage that a boarder brings to school. Play clothes should also be properly labeled and kept to a minimum. There are plenty of activities and people at school to keep boarders entertained, so there's no need to bring expensive games. Storage space is limited, and items may get lost or damaged. Boarders can bring a teddy, books, and playing cards, but these must be clearly labeled. It is

important for boarders to take care of their belongings and return them to their proper places after use.

Valuables such as money or bank cards should be handed in to Matron, who will record the item on a 'Valuables' sheet and store it securely. The responsibility for handing these items lies with the boarder. The boarder will need to sign the item in and out when collecting it. Any items found around the boarding house will be stored in lost property by the Matrons, and unclaimed items will be displayed at the end of term. Any remaining unclaimed items will be donated to charity.

Mobile phones brought into school must be handed in to the school office at the start of the school day for secure storage. When phones are permitted in boarding, they will be collected and returned to the office before bedtime.

What should Weekly Boarders bring to school?

At the beginning of each term, Weekly Boarders are welcome to return on the evening before the first day of school. A detailed [packing list](#) is available on the school website.

How are new boarders made to feel welcome?

At the start of Year 2, parents and pupils will receive the relevant boarding guides to introduce the possibility of starting their boarding journey once they turn 7. During the summer term, all Year 2 pupils will be invited to a taster evening during the week when our Year 8s are away on their residential trip. This is a great opportunity to come and explore the boarding experience with friends.

Each year, a wellbeing advocate is assigned to the boarding house to ensure that younger boarders are settling in well and have a buddy. This 'boarding buddy' helps them adjust by showing them the facilities and guiding them through the boarding routines. On a boarder's first night, the boarding staff will either email home or update social media to provide parents with updates on how their child is settling in.

We also have boarding hoodies available for purchase from the school uniform shop, and these are typically worn during boarding trips.

What if my child has a problem at school?

If your child encounters a problem at school, they are encouraged to talk to someone about it. This could be the Houseparent, the Matrons, their form teacher, any other staff member they feel comfortable with, or even a friend. Additionally, our independent listener, Julie Turbin, is available as an external resource for boarders if they wish to speak with someone outside the school.

We always encourage any issues to be addressed at school before a child calls home. In the boarding house, we also have post boxes on the main landing where children can submit suggestions, comments, or complaints. These can be made anonymously if a child prefers, providing an alternative to speaking directly with a staff member. If necessary, the school's

complaints procedure should be followed, and further details can be found in the Complaints Policy.

Living in a Boarding House - A Few Golden Rules

Boarding is a lot of fun, but to ensure everyone enjoys their time, we ask that children follow these basic rules:

Show respect to all members of the boarding team.

Be polite to everyone in the boarding house, both children and adults.

Respect others' privacy and belongings.

Only enter someone else's dorm with permission from boarding staff.

Respect everyone's right to sleep – NO TALKING after lights out.

Be a thoughtful boarder – care for one another.

Boarding Council:

The Boarding Council is composed of year group representatives, who are selected during the first term of boarding. Boarders typically decide who they believe would best represent their year group, and the selection process is informal, with plenty of discussion and voting. The representatives work closely with the Houseparent and boarding staff to reflect the views and opinions of the entire boarding community.

In addition to attending regular meetings with the Houseparent and Boarding Council, representatives are expected to set a positive example, take pride in the boarding house, follow the St. Hughs Way, and demonstrate politeness and respect. They will also be responsible for welcoming and supporting new boarders, acting as role models to their peers, and effectively representing the views of their boarding community.

The Boarding Council meets every term to discuss various issues raised by their peers. Council members gather feedback from their fellow boarders and present it to the Houseparent during regular meetings. They should also communicate the outcomes of these meetings back to their peers. Members of the Boarding Council should be approachable, open-minded, trustworthy, and capable of accurately sharing others' opinions, as well as engaging in open discussions about different matters within the boarding house.

Child Protection:

Child Protection is a key priority at our school, and we are committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of every child in our care. We have comprehensive policies and procedures in place to safeguard children from harm, including clear reporting mechanisms and designated staff members responsible for child protection matters.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead for St Hugh's School is Mrs. Wallis, with Miss Hainsworth and Mr. Wyld acting as deputies. Please contact Mrs. Wallis if you have any concerns or questions at nwallis@st-hughs.lincs.sch.uk.

All staff undergo thorough training to recognise signs of abuse or neglect and to respond appropriately. Any concerns about a child's safety or welfare are taken seriously and investigated following our safeguarding procedures. We also encourage children to share any

concerns they may have, whether about their own safety or the safety of others, and we provide them with a variety of trusted adults they can talk to.

If a child needs extra support, we have various services available, including access to our independent listener, counselors, and safeguarding officers. The school's Child Protection Policy outlines our commitment to keeping children safe and can be found on the school website for further details.

House Safety & Parental Access to Dorms:

The boarding areas are equipped with alarms. Once activated, these alarms prevent anyone from entering or exiting the areas without alerting everyone. In the event of a fire alarm, the children will follow the evacuation procedure that is practiced every term. The entrances to the boys' and girls' dormitories, located at the top of the main stairs, are secured with a keypad entry system.

Evening Activities:

A range of activities are available after tea and prep, with slight variations depending on the season, as detailed on the school calendar. Boarders can also enjoy the on-site grounds, communal rooms, games room, and library as places to unwind. The sports hall is accessible for boarders, with a boarding staff member present to supervise.

There is ample opportunity for reading, playing board games, or simply watching television. During the lighter months, boarders are encouraged to spend time outdoors, playing with friends in the grounds.

Our ultimate goal is to ensure that all boarders at St. Hughes have an enjoyable experience, feel cared for and supported, and make the most of the resources, stability, community, and environment that a boarding house provides. Welcome to the St. Hughes family!
