



CARGILFIELD

# A Boarders' Guide



## Welcome

Welcome to boarding at Cargilfield! You have joined a community where hundreds of other children, just like you, have enjoyed growing up here, surrounded by friends.

You might be feeling a little bit nervous – don't worry; everyone can feel like that when they start something new. Remember that there are always plenty of friendly people to help you who will answer your questions and show you the way around.

This guide aims to help you settle into boarding at Cargilfield as smoothly as possible by answering any questions you may already have and to get you excited about starting.



## **We want you to:**

- be happy.
- feel safe – not just in terms of your health and safety but also that you are comfortable in your life upstairs and in the dorms.
- feel that you are part of a community and that you are valued.
- learn to get along with others
- gain a measure of independence and self-organisation
- gradually take on responsibility and, if possible, some form of leadership role.



## **Settling In**



Boarding will be fun, challenging and fulfilling, although living at school will always differ from living at home. When you start boarding, it can sometimes be difficult to settle into a new way of life. Some people manage to make friends and get involved in everything straight away; most people find it takes a little longer. It doesn't matter how young or old you are, it is natural for you to miss your family and for them to miss you.

Most people worry about the same things. Will I make friends? Will I fit in? Will I keep it up? If you

are worried, remember you are never alone. It always helps to talk to somebody and there are LOTS of people happy to listen and to help you.

## **Boarding life**

The boy boarders live in the main house on the second floor. The dorms are spacious and comfy of differing sizes

The girl boarders live on the east side of the school and can be accessed at the end of the teaching corridor on the first floor. The dorms are small and cosy.

The dorms are organised so that you will be in a dorm with other children of a similar age, although one of the positive things about boarding is that you learn how to get on and make friends with lots of different people.



## Who Is Who?

There are many friendly staff who are involved in boarding life at Cargilfield. The Headmaster and his wife, Mr and Mrs Taylor, are in overall charge of boarding at the school and, with their house in the middle of school, they are always around and involved.

### Heather Thomson – Senior Matron

Heather joined Cargilfield in 2013 and lives in the East Wing on the second floor of the girls' dorms. Heather has worked at various prep schools in England and has many years' experience. She looks after the girls as well as booking the day children in for flexi-boarding and boarding weekends. If she's not under a mountain of washing she can be found in her office, near the boys staircase during the day and having a chat with the girls at night.

### Cuan Taylor – Boys' Housemaster

Cuan has lived and worked at Cargilfield for over 10 years and is always up for a laugh. He lives on the boys floor. He settles the boys in dorms and takes care of all their needs and concerns. He is a very keen sportsman, Hockey and Cricket in particular, and you will see a lot of Cuan in PE and games sessions too. He ensures a very supportive, caring and fun atmosphere in the boys boarding wing, which is very welcoming and reassuring for all those who call it home.

Mr Pike teaches throughout the school and also leads and organises all the boarding weekend activities and boarders' evenings that run during the term. During the week, he visits the girls and boys' dorms to catch up, drink some hot chocolate and play a game of some sort.

Mr Walker is the Assistant Headmaster, teaches English and has a flat at the school. Part of his role is to organise all of the evening activities that run after supper from 6:45 – 7:45.

Graduate Assistants: there are 2 Graduate Assistants who have left university and want to train to be teachers. They live at school and cover Heather and Cuan on their nights off.

Gap Students: there are up to 4 gap students who add a lot of humour and fun to our boarding life at Cargilfield, as well as playing an important mentoring role to the children. They come from all over the UK as well as from established links in other countries around the world such as Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. They add a healthy, cosmopolitan outlook to our community.

### Louise MacGregor – School Nurse

Louise MacGregor has known the school for years as both her sons are here. She was at boarding school herself so is understanding and sympathetic. Louise is a registered health professional and is around if you have a medical problem.

Whatever the time of day or night, there will always be a friendly face amongst the staff if you need to talk.



## Boarding Routine

At Cargilfield, you can board in different ways. Some children will board just one, two or three nights per week – perhaps after a favourite club or when their friends are boarding. Others are weekly boarders who arrive on a Monday morning and are collected at 6pm on Friday.



There are also boarding weekends where you can stay after school has finished on Friday until 5pm on Sunday afternoon. There are organised either for all children from Forms 4 – 8 or for a particular year group. The details of these are published in the calendar and your parents will have the programme for the year ahead.

The daily routine for boarders from Monday to Friday is as follows:

### Morning

7:10am Children wake up, wash, shower if they want and get dressed.  
A few checks are made before being allowed to go down for breakfast:

- beds are made and tidy
- bedside locker is tidy
- nothing is left on the floor and laundry handed in
- hair is brushed and, for girls, tidied back
- clothes are tidy and clean.

7:30am Breakfast – a friendly family affair with children sitting in tables of 6 or 8 along with a member of staff

7:50am Back to dorms to clean teeth and gather what's needed for the day

### Evening

6:00pm Supper for all boarders and day children who are staying for evening clubs

6:45pm Various evening clubs take place, which the children can choose between

8:00-8.30pm Get ready for bed

When coming up to bed, children should shower, clean their teeth and hand in laundry. Clothes should be folded on bedside tables and then they can play, read, chat or phone home before being asked to tidy away and settle down before lights out.

8:40pm Quiet reading for seniors and lights out for juniors

9:10pm Lights out for the remaining bedrooms

At the weekend, children lie-in a bit more and aim to get to breakfast between 8:30-9:00am. Likewise, in the evenings, there is a little more flexibility with bedtimes and movie nights are arranged. Lights out during the weekend tends to be between 9:00 – 9:30pm.

## **Food**

The importance of a healthy and varied diet is regularly explained to you. The teachers and boarding staff are with you for your three main meals of the day. The standard of food at school is very high and there is always an excellent choice. The school menu, which is amended according to the seasons and is on a three weekly cycle, can be found on the school website.

**Breakfast** – fresh fruit, fruit juice, yogurts, choice of cereals, toast with spreads and cooked items such as sausages or bacon are available. There is also milk, water, tea and hot chocolate available to drink. This is an informal, family style meal.

**Morning Break (Baps)** – cold drink and fresh fruit

**Lunch** – hot meal choice of at least three cooked meals, soup and an excellent cold, salad bar. Pudding and fresh fruit as well as fruit salad and yogurts are available.

**Afternoon Baps** – after games at around 4:15pm there is a snack with a cold drink.

**Supper** – a choice of cooked meals with salad bar, puddings, fruits and yogurt.

**Evening Baps** – cereal is available before you go upstairs to bed.



At the weekends, there is a fully cooked breakfast in the morning, a roast meal on Sunday as well as ice creams and cakes for pudding.

A Tuck Shop is open for boarders on a Wednesday evening.

## **Pocket Money**

There is no requirement for pocket money at Cargilfield. Boarders are given some money when you go to the Gyle Shopping Centre on the Friday evening of a boarding weekend and, if you need money for any other reason during term time, the school will issue you with the required amount. This may be for outings, plays or theatre trips.

## **Evening Clubs and Special Occasions**

After supper each day, you will find a whole range of activities on offer. These include indoor and outdoor activities such as skiing, fencing, archery, swimming, football, cricket nets, hockey, tennis, squash, climbing, highland dancing, netball and badminton. There are also a lot of slightly more peaceful clubs on offer such as arts, crafts, music composition, chess, coding, cookery, drama, debating and fly-tying are just some of the activities that may fill your evening.



For the older children, you have access to academic help in the evenings with “extras” in all the subjects running on a certain evening during the week. They don’t run all night – just half an hour, so there is still plenty of time for you to go and relax having fun with your friends. There are the common rooms, games room and library to relax in with daily newspapers, table football and table tennis. We stick firmly to age classifications for films and the TVs are only briefly on at certain times.



There are special occasions for the boarders including themed suppers at key dates such as Halloween, and Chinese New Year. All the boarders get to attend the main school events such as concerts and plays. The Christmas boarding weekend is a particular highlight of the boarding calendar, which involves skating in St Andrew’s Square, a theatre trip to watch a pantomime as well as carols by the tree with parents. Barbeques are held on various evenings during the

summer term. Burns Night is also a special evening for the Form 8s, during which they dress up and enjoy a full evening of music, speeches, feasting and reeling.

## **Clothing and uniform**

All of your uniform for weekly boarders is kept upstairs at Cargilfield where it is washed on site and kept ready for each day. In the evenings, your laundry is collected in and clean clothes are laid ready for the morning. Heather and Cuan will check you are wearing clean and tidy uniform. We ask all children to be discreet when changing or getting ready for bed and walking around dorms.



You can wear home clothes in the evenings after supper and during the weekends. Home clothes are also washed at school, so please don’t bring in clothes that require delicate or different washing requirements. You’ll only need two sets of home clothes as space is limited.

All children will need a kilt, white shirt and kilt socks for away matches, concerts, plays and visits. Don’t worry if your clothes need repair or replacing, as Heather will contact your parents and get this organised. There is also a second-hand clothes shop at school, which you should tell your parents about!



## **Personal Belongings and Electronics**

The uniform list details all that you will need as a boarder can be found on the website. Heather is on hand to advise your parents on what flexi-boarders require and weekly boarders are welcome to bring in posters, photos and teddies for your bedroom. Personal items that you bring into school must be named so that they can get back to you if you lose them. The school is not responsible for the losses of valuable items so it is not worth bringing back things that are of great value. Borrowing of clothes is not allowed as they often go missing.

You are allowed your phone once you have showered and cleaned your teeth so that you can phone home each day. They are collected back in by 8:45pm and kept safe by Heather and Cuan.



## **Medical Matters and Hygiene**

Boys and girls can get help if they are feeling unwell at any time of the day or night. At night, there is a bell in both the boys' and girls' dorms, which rings in Cuan or Heather's flat. During the day, if you become unwell, you will be taken to Nurse in the surgery and you may be taken to your own bedroom if you just need some rest or recuperation or, if you are likely to be ill for longer, arrangements can be made for your parents to take you home.

Any prescription medicine brought in to school must be taken to Heather or the school nurse straight away, who will organise the times to take your medicine with you. We keep over-the-counter medicines in stock so there is no need to bring these into school. There is a healthy diet on offer at Cargilfield so you should not require vitamins or other food supplements.



All children shower every day after games and, as a boarder, you will also shower every evening before bed. Soap is provided in the changing rooms' showers but do bring in your own shampoo and shower gel for dorms. Hair for boys should be tidy and off the ears and tied back off the face for girls.



## **Security**

The whole school is protected by CCTV, fire alarms and, in the necessary areas, intruder alarms. Emergency lighting lights all boarding corridors and there are fire alarm practices every term, so you will know what to do if you hear an alarm. If you hear the alarm while you are up in dorms, you will need to walk quickly and quietly from where you are to the muster point which is the sports field next to the car park wearing something warm and with something on your feet. There is always at least one member of the boarding team in and around dorms in the evening. Nobody other than a member of the boarding team will come into dorms.

## **Communication and Getting Used To Boarding Life**

Keeping in touch with your family and friends at home can be done by post, email and telephone. Mobiles are kept safe by Heather and Cuan and may be used in the evenings. The boys may also use the landline telephone in the Heather's office where you can have a private call home. The girls have a landline in the girls' wing.

Most of you have already spent some time at Cargilfield and school routines carry on as usual. If you are a new child, you will be made to feel welcome from day one. Once settled into the working week, we find that boarders are generally fine but occasionally children find that the transition from being at home to school can be a little difficult, such as arriving back after a lovely half term. For the reason, we will encourage you to get stuck into evening activities and to make an effort to make friends, rather than spending too much time e-mailing or being on the telephone.

Some children feel homesick at some stage and all of the staff will be sympathetic and helpful. The teaching and boarding staff are used to dealing with homesickness and you may well find that talking someone, finding a friend or joining in an activity will help.

Make a plan about when to call home so that the person you are calling will be expecting your call. Also, make your bed area your own: bring posters, family photos and a favourite teddy or toy (lots of other children will).

Remember that adjusting to living at school is something that boarders do and benefit enormously from. Sometimes things will not go your way, which may make you feel uncomfortable but learning to deal with this and to make a success of your boarding life will give you great confidence and skills that you can use throughout your life.

# **Have Your Say about Boarding**

There are lots of ways you can have your say in boarding life at Cargilfield.



## **The Boarding Committee**

The Boarding Committee meets once a term and is made up of approximately 8 boarders – 4 boys and 4 girls. They put ideas and suggestions forward and the Headmaster and boarding staff try to implement them.

## **The Food Committee**

Once or twice a term, the food committee meet in Mrs Taylor's kitchen to discuss feedback and ideas about the catering and meal times.

## **The School Council**

This is not just for boarding. Every term, each form group chooses a class member to be a Form Captain who represents the form in the School Council meetings. Suggestions are put forward about all areas of school life at Cargilfield. These are passed on to the Headmaster who writes a reply to each and every suggestion or idea that is put forward.

## **The Beginning of Term**

On the first morning of term, someone will meet you in the front entrance and take you up to your dorm where Heather and Cuan will help you find your bed.

All new children will have a special helper who will look after them over the first two or three weeks. This will be another boy or girl your age that knows the set up and can help you with advice and tips to overcome any fears or concerns. On the first morning of term is very much about getting together and meeting your class. Your Form Teacher will go over routines, timetables, activities, music practice and all other bits and pieces to do with the school day.

## **Top Tips for Boarding**

We try to provide a comfortable boarding environment in which girls and boys can feel happy and secure in a friendly, supportive atmosphere. To help us achieve this, we want you to be sensible, courteous and honest at all times. Previous boarders have helped us compile a few top tips for boarding at Cargilfield:

- Keep busy and get stuck in to all the activities.
- A problem shared is a problem halved.
- If you don't know how to do something ask someone that you trust.

- If you are feeling homesick ... do something! Keep busy and don't sit around.
- Get your rest – your sleep is important.
- Look out for other people.
- Bring in a teddy or cuddly toy.
- Don't worry – it'll all get a lot easier once you've learnt the routine.

## **Anti-Bullying and other Policies**

We all have a responsibility to make sure that bullying has no place at Cargilfield. To try and help with this, we have created our own 10 Cargilfield Commandments, which can be found on the back of your calendar. We also have a number of policies that are displayed on the boarding noticeboards to help you. These include a list of which members of staff are on duty, a copy of the Cargilfield Commandments, what to do if you have a complaint and what Cargilfield does to prevent bullying.

## **Who Can I Contact If I Am Worried?**

Don't panic, there are lots of people who you can talk to:

- Your Form Teacher
- A member of the Boarding Team
- Your Divisional Leaders
- Any adult member of staff (teaching or non-teaching)
- Your friends and parents
- School Prefects
- Childline 0800 11 11

## **Useful Contacts**

Cargilfield School  
45 Gamekeeper's Road  
Edinburgh  
EH4 6HU

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|---------------------------|---|--|
| School Office             | - | 0131 336 2207  |
|                           | - | <a href="mailto:admin@cargilfield.com">admin@cargilfield.com</a>       |
|                           | - |  |
| Heather's Office (Matron) | - | 0131 336 0182  |
|                           | - | <a href="mailto:hthomson@cargilfield.com">hthomson@cargilfield.com</a> |
|                           | - |  |
| School Nurse              | - | <a href="mailto:nurse@cargilfield.com">nurse@cargilfield.com</a>       |
|                           | - | 0131 336 2207 opt. 8   |



