Cargilfield School Boarding Policy

**History**

Cargilfield was the first prep school in Scotland, founded in 1872, and was historically a full boarding school for 8-13 year old boys.

The approach to boarding changed most significantly at the turn of the century when the need for more day children, flexible boarding and a desire to avoid Saturday school were addressed.

More recently, the boarding at Cargilfield has settled down to a more flexible model

**Rationale**

Boarding offers children the chance of a broader curriculum and the chance to develop their independence, resilience, organisation and social skills.

Over 50% of our children currently experience some boarding during their time at the school. This figure grows to almost 100% when you consider the boarding weekends aimed at specific year groups.

Over 90% of our children go on to schools that are boarding schools. Even if they attend Fettes, Merchiston, Loretto as day pupils, they often have a much longer day and may become boarders during their time at senior school.

Cargilfield is traditionally a boarding school and offers the facilities to manage a boarding community.

A school that has a life beyond the end of the conventional school day offers parents greater flexibility and has more of a ‘soul’.

We strive for a broad curriculum but do find it difficult to squeeze everything in to a five-day week when many of our rivals in England have six days.

**Structure**

We no longer host full or two weekly boarders but can accommodate children for weekly boarding (Sunday or Monday evening to Thursday evening inclusive).

Children can also flexi board during the week for 1-3 nights as they prefer. We are currently allowing children to board for temporary occasions although we would prefer a regular commitment to boarding.

Children are also encouraged to join us for boarding weekends which occur every other weekend. These will either cater for mixed age groups (often with a specific theme) or for a specific year group and run from after school on Friday until 5pm on Sunday.

The School might best be described as having a ‘boarding culture’ as children from Form 4 upwards enjoy a school day that is compulsory until 6pm. All these Upper School children are allowed to stay for supper and may also stay for evening clubs, about 7 or 8 of which run each evening. Children are expected to commit to these for a full half-term.

Boarders join in with this programme of evening clubs and the School is, therefore, still very busy until the boarders go up to bed at 7.45 or 8pm.

**Personnel**

The Headmaster and his wife take charge of the boarding although this is delegated on a day-to-day basis to:

* Heather Thomson (Head Matron and Houseparent for girls)
* Cuan Taylor (Houseparent for boys)
* Alan Pike (In charge of boarding activities)

Other members of staff are involved in boarding, especially the other resident staff and GAP students/Graduate Assistants. They will, for instance, help to cover evenings off for the Houseparents.

* Since 2008, new staff have been contracted to offer two evening activities.
* Since 2012, Upper school staff have been contracted to offer one boarding weekend per term.

**Numbers**

Current Care Inspectorate Guidelines suggest that we can host 60 boarders at any one time and it would not be difficult to re-configure the boarding areas and the first floor classrooms to increase that number. We have been granted dispensation to extend these numbers for specific occasions such as the popular Christmas boarding weekend.

At present, weekly boarding numbers vary from about 10-25 during the year. Another 20-40 children will regularly board on a flexible basis.

**Other features of Cargilfield boarding**

* We suspend evening clubs twice a term for boarders - only evenings where the boarding community can enjoy a treat together.
* Flexi boarders are not allowed to board on the last night of a term as this is only for weekly boarders and there will usually be a boarders feast.
* Boarding staff meet at least once a term to discuss matters relating to boarding. An agenda and minutes are generally published.
* Boarders complete a questionnaire once a term to give feedback on their experience.
* The Headmaster chairs a Boarders Council of children once a term to discuss boarding matters.
* The Care Inspectorate inspect boarding at Cargilfield. These inspections take place on a two or three yearly basis. Annual self assessments are submitted by the Headmaster.

**Mattresses**

In order to maintain standards of hygiene and the comfort of the boarders, the following standards are important.

1. Protectors
2. Bed wetter to have a special protection sheet
3. Mattress replaced every 10 years or if damaged

All mattress should be maintained to the highest standard. Mattress must meet health and safety requirement i.e. fire retardant.

We will have a rolling mattress replacement programme which will entail new mattress every 10 years. However if a mattress has been damaged in anyway it will be replaced before the 10 years replacement programme.

Mattresses are to be rotated around the dorms depending on the number of boarders.

All mattress will be covered by a mattress protectors which will fit correctly .There should not be any stains or rips on any protector. If any mattress protectors are in poor condition then it must be replaced with a better one.

All bed sheets should fit the mattress correctly.

On occasions when a known bed wetter or sick child is using the bed a special mattress protector should be used. A protector which has a plastic sheet attached to the back.

Robert Taylor

Headmaster

March 2018