

PLYMOUTH COLLEGE STATEMENT OF BOARDING PRINCIPLES & PRACTICE



Last reviewed:	September 2025
Next review date:	August 2026
Responsibility:	Head of Boarding

Plymouth College Boarding Principles and Practice

Boarding at Plymouth College caters for boys and girls at the Senior School aged 11 to 18+. In certain cases, we sometimes accommodate younger boarders. We welcome pupils with a diverse range of cultures and backgrounds from all over the world as well as from the UK. In our boarding community, we encourage all staff and boarders to have respect and consideration for each other. We encourage our boarders to be happy, healthy and successful individuals with a mature and responsible attitude towards their studies, and with the life-skills necessary for their futures. Our philosophy is to ensure a safe, secure and friendly environment for all members of our boarding community. We achieve this through dedication, compassion and sensitivity to the needs of our young people.

Admission

The first step to securing a place in boarding is to complete a school initial application form. It is then important to make an appointment to meet the Head and boarding staff and to look round the school and boarding houses. A place is offered subject to availability and dependent on satisfying school entrance requirements.

Pastoral Care

Our aim is for boarders to feel at home as soon as possible. Initially this involves a look around the boarding accommodation with parents, followed by a welcome letter and joining pack of written information. On arrival a member of the boarding staff and a member of the sixth form support new boarders. A new boarder is linked with an experienced boarder of a similar age where possible. Each boarder has access to useful information on all aspects of boarding life through weekly house meetings and on notice boards. In a caring community such as ours, there are many people that boarders can turn to for help or advice, including Sixth Form House Prefects.

Welfare Support

The school nurse, supported by the doctors' surgery, provides medical care for all boarders. A nurse is available in the school health centre during school hours from 8.30am to 5.15pm. After school hours the boarding staff are responsible for boarders' immediate medical care. Most boarding staff have regular first aid training and adhere to the school's policies when administering medicines. Academic support is provided for boarders who need it by the school's Learning Support Department. The school's EAL Co-Ordinator provides language support for international students. Boarding staff, tutors, heads of year and prefects provide general welfare support. Boarders are encouraged to speak to someone they feel comfortable with about any problems. This could be a member of the school community, a counselling service or an independent listener.

Guardianship for Students whose Parents are not Resident in the UK

A Guardian, who is over the age of 25 or a Guardianship Agency must be appointed for any student whose parents are not resident in the UK. In addition to the Christmas, Easter and Summer holidays there is a break from school in the middle of each term, known as Half Term, when boarders cannot be accommodated by the school. If a boarder is unable to return home during school holidays they will need to be looked after by a guardian based in the UK.

Boarding Status and Activities

Weekly boarders often arrive on Monday morning in time for school and return home on Friday. Occasional boarding is available for day pupils who need to sleep over at school for up to 14 nights per term. Full boarders stay throughout the weekend so as to participate in school sports, drama, and music. Once training or sporting commitments have been met, Saturday is a free day for boarders to plan their own amusements. Sunday activities, arranged by boarding staff, include ten-pin bowling, cinema trips, and tobogganing. Parents will be asked to pay for some activities which can be added to next term's fees. There is a sports hall session available weekday evenings for boarders with a variety of activities on offer such as football, badminton or basketball. The cardiovascular suite is also available. There is an optional fun, life-guarded swim session for boarders every weekend. Boarding at Plymouth College provides a unique residential experience in a location close to the city centre as well as to the beautiful moors and beaches of the South West of England.

Organisation

The Head of Boarding is responsible for the organisation of the boarding houses and leads a team of resident and non-resident staff. There is regular communication between boarding staff, teaching staff, coaches, parents, the school nurse and the boarders themselves to ensure that the boarders are getting the best out of their boarding experience. There is always a member of staff on duty in each house supervising Study Times or mixing freely during leisure time to assist in creating a pleasant atmosphere.

College House is a terrace of seven properties on the Ford Park site that provides accommodation for all boarders. The Head of Boarding and his family live in the central residence, which separates the boys' house (Colson) from the girls' house (Mannamead).

Boarding Facilities

The co-educational structure of College House creates a family atmosphere with boys and girls encouraged to socialise together in a variety of recently refurbished ground floor communal rooms. Facilities provided include Smart TVs, pool tables, air-hockey and space for quiet reflection. The boarding offices in Colson and Mannamead houses, which are staffed at key times throughout the day, are hubs for boarders and staff to socialise. Boarders may also bring their own devices to access the Internet wirelessly. All meals are provided in the school dining hall and the communal house kitchens are available for additional drinks, snacks and cooking at other times. The school field and hard surfaces are available during evening and weekend free times for boarders' own activities. The House laundry system operates on weekdays, although sixth form boarders may do their own washing. The bathroom and sleeping accommodation upstairs is divided by gender and comprises some single bedrooms used for senior boarders and a range of shared bedrooms with two or three beds. There is adequate storage space and a lockable storage space/drawer for each boarder. The evening midweek study times are supervised by boarding staff so as to monitor and help boarders' homework sessions effectively. Athletes on Plymouth College provided sports programmes have easy access to their training venues on site and are taken by school minibus to other venues as necessary.