



# Boarding Statement of Principles and Practice

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## Introduction

In the boarding environment at Stoke College, where pupils are in our care day and night during term time, the strong pastoral care system provides the framework and structure by which we ensure that every individual is given the opportunity to fulfil their potential, develop their strengths and therefore thrive in every aspect of their lives. Most importantly, when students board at Stoke College they do not just join a school, they become part of an extended family where:

they have a sense of belonging and know that they are accepted as individuals

their problems will be shared and their triumphs celebrated

they have a safe training ground within which to develop critical life skills, such as the importance of communication, consideration and compromise

every child does indeed matter hugely

Boarding at Stoke College is overseen by the Head of Boarding who liaises closely with other members of the SLT and key members of school staff to ensure that the principles and practices highlighted below are lived out by all members of its community. Beyond Stoke College, the friendships made in boarding endure for many years, if not life. There are 2 houses (Main house and the Stables), each can accommodate approximately 20 pupils. Currently only the Stables is being used for boarding. The boarding house is led by the Head of Boarding who is supported by a team of house staff: the Deputy Head Academic and 2 Boarding Graduate Assistants.

Our aim at Stoke College is to ensure that the environment is one which is good-humoured, fair and consistent, with frequent praise and encouragement. By setting boundaries gently, but firmly, we hope that all pupils know what is expected of them and have high expectations of themselves. Ultimately, we hope that all individuals will leave Stoke College as open-hearted and open-minded young adults who respect the beliefs and views of all. The imperative of safeguarding, as outlined in KCSIE September 2020, and applied through Stoke College's Safeguarding Policy, underpins our entire approach to boarding.



## The principles upon which life at Stoke College is based:

- The development of the whole person, thereby recognising individual talents and nurturing them to their full potential.
- Every pupil is encouraged and given the opportunity to become the person they uniquely are rather than being unduly influenced by others.
- Collectively upholding the College Mission statement: I CAN – Inspire, Celebrate, Aspire and Nurture to make the experience of living, working and studying at Stoke College one that enhances and enriches life.
- Encouraging all pupils within the school to take on leadership responsibilities and to practice leadership within a supportive and safe environment.
- Facilitating a strong sense of respect and understanding for individuals from different countries and cultures and celebrating diversity within the community.
- School life is based upon mutual respect for all its members as well as the local community.
- Ensuring that each pupil can work, play, and relax in an environment free from abuse, intimidation, harassment, teasing and bullying.
- Promoting equality of opportunity and respect for all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, faith, race, sexuality, gender, or disability.
- Recognising that although living together in a close community, staff and pupils acknowledge the right of each other to privacy.
- Giving each pupil the right to extend their intellectual growth in an atmosphere of positive encouragement and in conditions that are conducive to learning. Opportunities are given for all to question, to think and to develop into independent learners.
- Pupils to have a say in the running of the school and ensuring that their opinions are valued and taken seriously.
- Actively encouraging the involvement of parents and guardians in all aspects of school life; despite the distance separating some pupils from their families, links with parents are an indispensable part of the support and development of all pupils at Stoke College.



## In practice, we therefore aim to:

- Encourage all pupils to look within themselves and explore every aspect of their personal development. Everyone is also encouraged to look beyond their natural strengths and - in a supportive environment – challenge themselves to reach beyond their limits.
- Produce an open and trusting ethos in which each pupil feels able to approach any other member of the community (staff or pupil), confident in the knowledge that he or she will be treated and respected as an individual.
- Provide opportunities (via the academic curriculum and co-curricular opportunities) for all members of the community to understand and be given the opportunity to look after themselves – physically and emotionally – using the concepts and principles underpinned by the College Mission Statement.
- Provide opportunities for leadership in all aspects of school life and ensure that positive support for pupil leaders is readily available through training and regular communication.
- Create an atmosphere of tolerance, openness, and trust in which teasing, harassment and bullying in any form would find great difficulty in developing.
- Provide optimum conditions for pupils to develop their academic and intellectual talents through well-structured and inspirational lessons, regular formative feedback and unlimited access to academic staff for help and support within an environment which places high importance on effort. • Provide a wide range of co-curricular activities, trips and lectures related to age and maturity which will assist in the personal, social, and cultural development of each individual.
- Provide opportunities (via the Student Council and Boarding House meetings) for the pupil community to have a voice which is listened to and taken seriously.
- Safeguard and promote the welfare of each pupil, by providing an environment that is, as far as possible, free from physical hazards and dangers of any sort so that all pupils at Stoke College are allowed to thrive within a safe and happy environment.
- Provide accommodation that is comfortable and suited to the needs of pupils, according to age and maturity, and which always provides adequate levels of privacy.
- Encourage pupils to contribute to the needs and welfare of others in the House and school, as well as those in the wider community.
- Provide suitable conditions for pupils to feel able to turn to members of staff and to other members of the wider school community to share the good things in their lives, as well as seeking advice, counselling and support during times of difficulty.
- Provide opportunities for the celebration of the diversity of cultures within the school, thereby engendering a healthy respect and tolerance for all so that everyone understands and values both equality and diversity within the school community.



- Invite all parents / guardians to become involved fully in the educational life of their child at Stoke College through outstanding levels of communication as well as providing opportunities to socialise with other parents / guardians and staff via a wide variety of different events throughout the academic year.