



Welcome to Boarding at Sevenoaks

SEVENOAKS SCHOOL





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Boarding at Sevenoaks School

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We very much look forward to welcoming your child to our boarding community. This booklet will give you a flavour of what we believe boarding is all about and some key information about our boarding houses and Sevenoaks town. Each house also has its own specific handbook which will be sent out later in the year. The house-specific booklets include more detailed information, such as naming the staff team and advising students on what to bring with them.



I joined the Sevenoaks boarding community in 2000 and have held several boarding roles since then, including 12 years as a housemistress. From the first day I was struck by the warmth and sense of family; the strength of community in our boarding houses is outstanding. During their Sevenoaks careers, your children will learn a variety of skills, not just from the academic staff they meet, but also from their peers and the house matrons. Students learn organisation, tolerance, and perhaps most importantly, just how much benefit hard work can bring. As they get older they become gradually more independent, but there is always the support of staff to help them navigate school life and the higher education choices that will follow.

During their time here, and at reunions after they have left, our students repeatedly tell us how much they enjoyed their years of boarding at Sevenoaks School. Staff feel the same way. Working with such enthusiastic and engaging young people is a wonderful experience.



Nichola Haworth
Deputy Head Boarding
Email: njh@sevenoaksschool.org

“It’s hard to find a more progressive and culturally diverse boarding school in the UK. In Sevenoaks you feel respected and admired for who you are. I am delighted to be part of the boarding community here at school that can call Sevenoaks their second home.
Upper Sixth student”

Sevenoaks School offers modern boarding for 450 students arranged into eight single-sex houses. Our boarding community is the size of many whole boarding schools, and our boarders are at the very heart of all aspects of school life.

Six boarding houses cater for pupils from ages 13 to 18: School House, Johnsons and Aisher House for boys, Park Grange, Sennocke House and New House for girls. The IC and GIH welcome only Sixth Form students.

Boarding at Sevenoaks is fun, comfortable and busy. Families are welcome to visit, and pupils may go home on Saturday once sporting commitments are finished. Typically around 60 per cent of our boarders stay in school for the weekend.

Our boarding housemasters and housemistresses share with their team of staff the duties and responsibilities of caring for boarders. Boarding can provide an excellent transition from home to independence and maturity; Sixth Form boarding, in particular, enables students to enjoy the benefits of boarding at an important stage in their school careers, and to prepare for life at university.

It should be noted that we are a full boarding school; we do not have a flexi-boarding option. Our boarders are expected to be in residence from Monday to Friday every week and occasional Sundays, taking part in activities together and learning the skills of teamwork, empathy, resilience and independence.



Life in Sevenoaks



Sevenoaks is one of Kent's most interesting towns. Surrounded by countryside and picturesque villages, and close to some of England's finest heritage and garden attractions, the historic town has a vibrant community and boasts a theatre, a library, a leisure centre and a variety of social activities.

Sevenoaks School is situated at the top of the bustling High Street, within walking distance of an array of shops, coffee bars and restaurants. Behind the school is Knole, one of England's largest country houses, set within a thousand-acre deer park and managed by the National Trust. The park is open to the public for walking, running and recreation, and is accessible from the school grounds.

An advantage of Sevenoaks is its transport links. The town is located not far from the A21 and M25, and is only 30 minutes from Central London by train, with excellent rail links to London Charing Cross, Waterloo and London Bridge. Gatwick Airport and the Channel Tunnel are both within a 45-minute journey by car, making travel to and from the school very easy. Sevenoaks is also less than an hour away from the magnificent Kent coastline, the Dover cliffs, and the popular towns of Rye, Hastings and Eastbourne.

Sevenoaks is a very attractive town and its safe and friendly environment makes it an ideal place for students to live, grow up, develop some independence and contribute to the community.



Sixty Middle and Upper School boys (age 13 to 18 years) from across the globe find an unassuming, relaxed and happy second home in Aisher, forging lifelong friendships.

Aisher House is situated in the Park Grange estate, alongside Park Grange, New House and the IC. Completed in 2019, Aisher is well located, close to the academic and co-curricular facilities but also tucked away from the immediate hustle and bustle of the busy school.

Study bedrooms are clustered around their own social and communal hubs, linking up to provide all year groups with light, modern facilities. Single and double bedrooms are en-suite, with boarders in the younger years sharing larger rooms. The north lawn provides a great site for recreational sports while the sunny terrace outside the kitchen is the perfect collective locale.

Each boarding house is a close-knit community committed to supporting a student's development and instilling a respectful confidence, and every member of Aisher House should feel that they have something special to offer.

“ In my time at Sevenoaks, I don't think I could imagine being in any other house but Aisher. Although I love the facilities, in my opinion the best part of Aisher is the atmosphere.
Year 10 student ”

The team

The Housemaster, Mr Tom Danby, formerly Assistant Housemaster of School House, is also a Geography teacher. He lives in the house with his wife, their two daughters and two spaniels.



The GIH is a Sixth Form house which opened in 1977 as the school's first boarding house for girls. As the name suggests, the house has a great tradition of internationalism. Our entire Lower Sixth intake consists of students new to Sevenoaks School. Roughly one quarter of the boarders are British, although at any one time over 25 different nationalities can be represented. This international perspective is something that GIH is very proud of. The boarders very much enjoy living together as a community and the kitchens, common rooms and garden are always alive with enthusiasm.

The distinctive building was originally a number of adjoining private residences on the High Street. These houses vary in style, with parts dating back to the reign of Queen Anne.

As is appropriate for a Sixth Form house the students have a large say in how the GIH is run. They are represented by the Head of House and the House Council. This body makes many important day-to-day decisions about the house.

“What I really like about Sevenoaks is its warm and friendly atmosphere. Everyone here is so helpful, and the teachers and boarding house staff especially are very accommodating to all my needs. Sevenoaks is definitely a second home.”

Lower Sixth student

The team

The Housemistress, Ms Emma Delpach, is a practising artist and Art teacher. She lives in the house with her son, who recently completed the IB at Sevenoaks.



The International Centre, or IC, is a Sixth Form boarding house (boys' entry). It was founded in 1962 and moved to its present site in 1997. The comfortable, purpose-built accommodation enjoys excellent facilities and is set in pleasant surroundings, with views over the sports pitches, a short walk from the main school campus.

The IC draws boarders from all over the world to study the International Baccalaureate. Some 25 nationalities are typically represented, with a substantial complement of British students. The experience of sharing with such a diverse population leads to tolerance and understanding of a great range of cultures and forges friendships for life.

As with GIH, the students' opinions on the running of the house are greatly valued and the elected chairman and committee preside over a weekly meeting also attended by the Housemaster and his assistants.

“Joining Sevenoaks in the Sixth Form, I was surprised by how welcoming the school community was to us from the IC. Alongside the academic support I received, despite being new, I have also made friends with day students and other boarders whom I look forward to staying in touch with for the years to come.”

Upper Sixth student

The team

The Housemaster, Dr Steve Owen, was formerly Head of Chemistry and has taught at Sevenoaks for many years. He lives in the house with his wife Christa, who is also part-time matron, and their two daughters.



Johnsons has been a boarding house since 1927. Originally a family home, it was presented to Sevenoaks School by Charles Plumtre Johnson, a great friend and kind benefactor to the school. It is now home to over 50 boarders and staff who are very proud of the oak-panelled building and beautiful gardens.

The boarders are aged 13 to 18, and approximately 50 per cent come from outside the UK, some from as far afield as the USA, India and Hong Kong, as well as many from Western Europe. With around ten boys in each year group, the atmosphere in the house is homely and caring, and everyone respects one another. Johnsonians are very proactive in organising formal and informal events for both boarders and day pupils.

“ One great thing about being a boarder is socialising with the other houses. I think we are more than just classmates; we are a very tight community. I would say that coming to Sevenoaks has been the best decision of my life.
Year 9 student ”

The team

The Housemaster, Mr Ian Fletcher, teaches Chemistry. During his time at Sevenoaks he has also spent many years as the Director of Service. He lives in the house with his wife Georgina and their two children.



New House accommodates 60 boarders in Year 9 and older (girls' entry). It is situated not far from Park Grange, Aisher House and the International Centre, on the site of Lambardes, the Lower School house which closed in 2018.

Designed to blend in with its natural environment, the house enjoys a leafy private setting. Surrounded by native yew, lime and holm oak trees, with a planting scheme planned to enhance the site's ecological value, it offers a calm retreat from busy school life. With no corridors, the bedrooms are grouped around landings to create inviting social spaces and a homely atmosphere.

This exciting new building continues the development of our boarding provision, giving Sevenoaks School eight wonderfully distinctive boarding houses.

The New House building is due to be completed by Easter 2024.

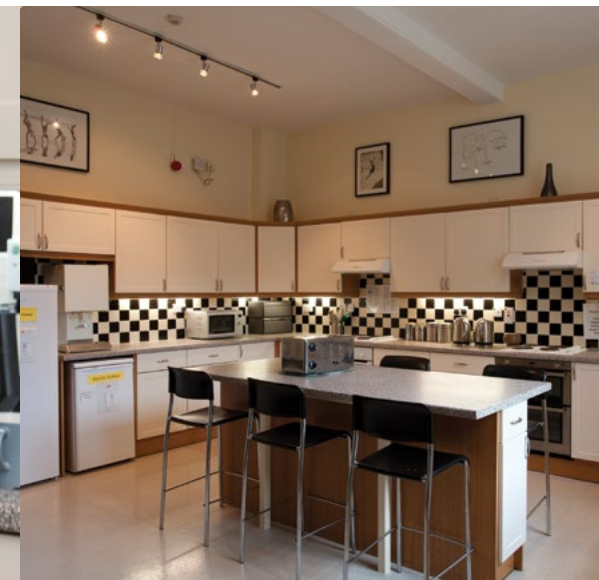
Images and design by Tim Ronalds Architects.

“New House is set to be a calming, content home in which friendships are formed and lifelong memories are made. With the majority of boarders being new to the school, it is an exciting time to be joining New House. We look forward to embedding into the wider community and fostering an ethos of kindness, respect and strength.

Tara Edwards, Housemistress

The team

The Housemistress, Mrs Tara Edwards (Chemistry), lives in the house with her husband, Dr Matt Edwards (Head of Sixth Form). She was formerly Housemistress of Sennocke House.



A beautiful, elegant, ragstone house, Park Grange was built in 1869 as part of an estate for George Berkley, who later became a governor of Sevenoaks School. The house was bequeathed to the school in 1938, was a boys' boarding house from 1948, and became a girls' boarding house in 1988.

Today, Park Grange provides accommodation for boarders aged 13 to 18. The house is in a wonderful position, in close proximity to the main school campus, with views across Knoke Park, the rooftops of Sevenoaks and the school's own grounds. The main house retains many of its original features and is full of character, combining the friendly atmosphere of a family home with excellent facilities. There is also an attractive, purpose-built Sixth Form wing set around a peaceful courtyard. The superb central kitchen, complete with the old cast iron stove, provides a focal point for different age groups and nationalities to meet and socialise.

The team

The Housemistress, Mrs Astria Trigger, teaches PE at the school, and lives in the house with her husband and two children.



Sevenoaks is one of the friendliest places I know. I don't think it's possible to laugh more and learn faster than I have in the last two years.

Year 11 student





School House is our original boarding house, dating back several centuries. It was formerly housed in Old School but is now located on a beautiful Victorian estate not far from the main campus.

The house is home to boarders aged 13 to 18, with around ten in each year group. There is a tremendous spirit of respect and cooperation within School House, which provides a comfortable, friendly and supportive environment, with good facilities and a low ratio of boys to a room. House unity is encouraged through engagement in a wide range of common activities, including a house ball, trips and charity work.

The House Committee meets regularly and comprises a team of Sixth Form house officials including the house captain, two vice-captains, house secretary and year group representatives.



Boarding is really enjoyable. The social spirit within the community of the houses, coupled with the ambitions to succeed, creates a great atmosphere and allows you to make friends easily. I would recommend boarding to someone who was unsure whether it's for them or not. The opportunities socially are enormous and, after all, it's a once in a lifetime experience!

Year 11 student



The team

The Housemaster, Dr Tom Findley, teaches Chemistry and works with the Learning Support team. He lives at School House with his wife and children.



Sennocke House was built in 1986 as a modern boarding house, and provides light, airy, comfortable rooms for girls aged 13 to 18.

Sennocke overlooks an extensive garden and is situated on the main campus, within easy reach of school facilities and with views of Knole Park. Life within the house sees a friendly mixing of year groups as the Sixth Form supports the younger members of the house and organises house activities. Sennocke is also a diverse house, in that over half the boarders either live abroad or are foreign nationals.

We are fortunate to have two family kitchens where the boarders enjoy baking and cooking at weekends. There is a very large common room, providing enough space for the whole house to gather to socialise or for house events. Sennocke is a lively and stimulating place in which to live and learn, where students feel happy, secure and confident.

The team

The Housemistress, Mrs Charlotte Smith (Physical Education and Games), lives in the house with her husband, Mr David Smith (Head of Cricket) and her young daughter, Amelie.



I love the routine, waking up every morning to people I respect and just knowing that in that day something I've been taught or who I sit with at lunch will help me grow in some way.

Lower Sixth student



SEVENOAKS SCHOOL

Key Buildings

Almshouses (Sevenoaks Place)	16
CCF	34
Classics	7
Cottage Block	14
Estates Office	35
The Flat	21
Global Study Centre	22
Health Centre (Old Head's House)	13
Johnson Library	19
L Block	8
Little Theatre	5
Lower School Common Room	6
Modern Languages/Dining Hall/Art	20
Old School	15
Sackville Theatre	26
Sans Block	11
Science & Technology Centre	23
SEC	18
Stable Block	12
The Space	24
St Nicholas Church	47
Swanzy	17
Talbot House	4
Temple House and Annexe	1

Reception, car parks and entrances

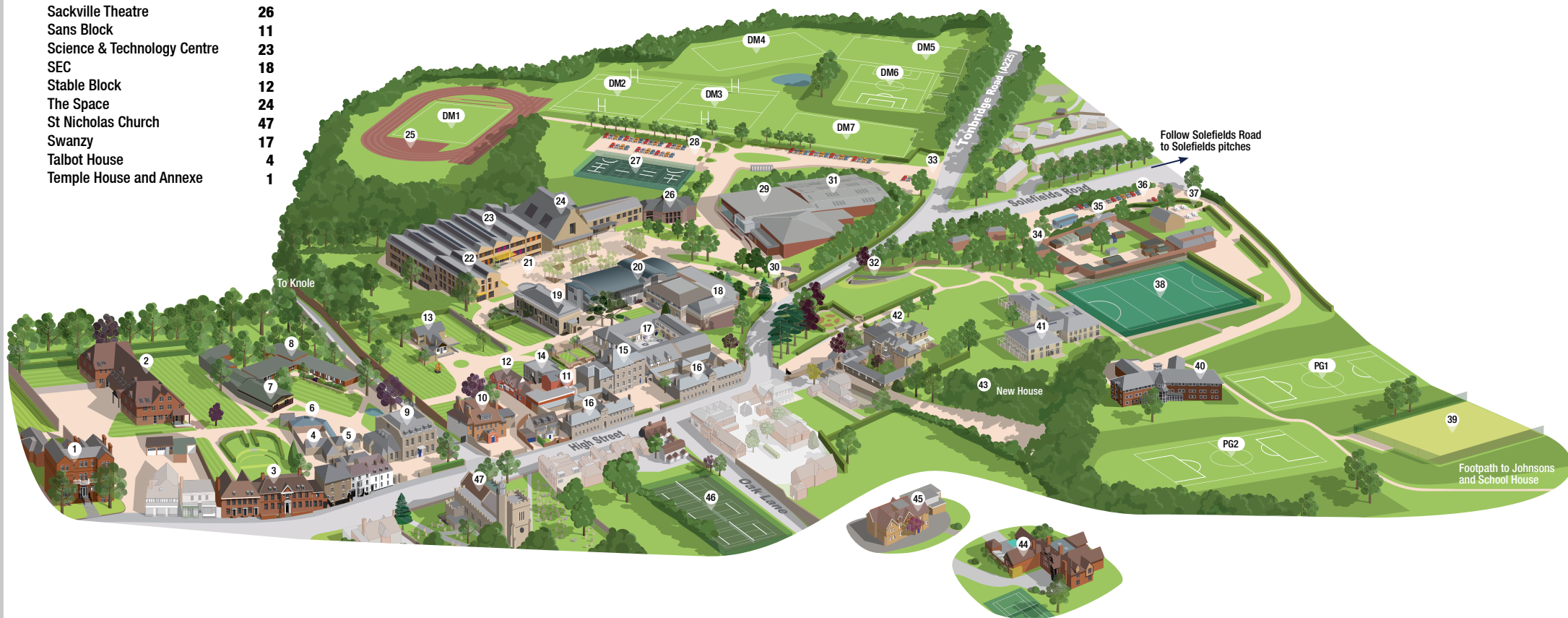
Claridge House	10
Manor House: Reception	9
Froy Gates	30
Pedestrian underpass	32
Duke's Meadow car park	28
Duke's Meadow entrance	33
Solefields Road car park	36

Sports facilities

Athletics track	25
Bailey Tennis Centre	31
Duke's Meadow courts	27
Duke's Meadow pitches	DM1-7
Lower Astro pitch	39
Park Grange pitches	PG1-2
Post Office tennis courts	46
Sailing compound	37
Sennocke Centre	29
Top Astro pitch (Plumtre pitch)	38

Boarding Houses

Aisher House	41
Girls' International House	3
International Centre	40
Johnsons (along Oak Lane)	44
New House	43
Park Grange	42
School House (along Oak Lane)	45
Sennocke House	2



Boarding Facilities

In the house

We aim to make boarding houses as homely as possible. While there are minor differences between individual houses, all have access to a variety of indoor and outdoor leisure activities. Gardens are extensive, and the house kitchens are always popular. These are stocked with a wide range of food from the school's Catering department, including milk, bread and fresh fruit daily. Each house has wifi and a computer suite as well as a small library.

On campus

The school Library is open until 20:30 every weekday night and 08:00-16:00 on Saturdays. It contains a large collection of books, DVDs, CDs, audiobooks and journals complemented by access to online research and other digital resources. It is fully equipped for private study with wifi, desks and computers.

In The Space performing arts centre, music practice rooms are available for use every morning and evening and at weekends. Sixth Form boarders have some access to the Art rooms in the evenings and at weekends.

The Sennocke Centre is available for use by boarders in the evenings. The facilities include a swimming pool, sports hall, fitness suite, dance studio and indoor squash and tennis courts. Various supervised activities take place before and after school. The school's running track is popular in the Summer term.

A wide range of co-curricular activities is available to boarders, and many after-school clubs. As they are living on site, boarders are ideally situated to make the most of the facilities on offer.

The Health Centre

The Health Centre is situated within the school grounds to provide healthcare to all students and employees of Sevenoaks School. Its aim is to contribute to the health promotion and safe working environment of the school. This is achieved through holistic care both within the school and with the help of community resources. It is staffed 24/7 during term time and includes a small number of beds where boarders can be looked after overnight.

Students are free to come at the appropriate time to the Health Centre for advice or treatment. Nurses are fully trained in many specialised areas. Students are encouraged to discuss medical matters with the nurse before seeing the doctor as treatment for many minor illnesses can often be completed without the doctor's intervention.

The Health Centre team also includes trained counsellors who are able to support pupils.

All boarding pupils register with one of the school's doctors at the Amherst Medical Centre, a General Practice in Sevenoaks. A doctor visits the school Health Centre each weekday. This includes regular attendance by both a male and female GP.

Housekeeping

All boarding houses have their own team of cleaners led by a housekeeper. There is also a houseperson attached to every house, who completes day-to-day maintenance and repairs. Bedrooms are cleaned every weekday and thoroughly spring-cleaned every term. Students are expected to keep their rooms tidy and their beds made.

Included in the school's termly bill is the weekly laundering of uniform and bedding. The timings for the collection of this laundry is clearly displayed in every house. Any dry cleaning will be added to the bill at the end of each term. Every house has its own laundry, equipped with washing machines and tumble dryers. Depending on the age of the student, the rest of the weekly laundry is completed by either the student or the housekeeper.

“Boarding provision is good everywhere...This school understands about sofas, carpets and big TVs. Huge dining room with vast choice of truly tempting food.

Good Schools Guide



Catering

Resident students are provided with a good quality catering service, using fresh and, where possible, locally produced ingredients. The Boarders' Committee works with the Deputy Head Boarding and the Catering department to ensure that the views of all boarders are represented.

We provide three meal services per day:

07:30-08:15 Breakfast

A selection of breakfast cereals.
Crumpets, fruit muffins, Danish pastries or chocolate croissants.
A varied selection of cooked breakfast items.
Home-baked hot rolls and toast.
A choice of three fruit juices, tea, coffee, hot chocolate.
Seasonal cut fresh fruit bar and a self-help yoghurt bar.

13:05-14:00 Lunch

A home-made fresh soup served and fresh bread.
A choice of three or four hot main dishes, including a vegetarian/vegan option.
A salad bar with a range of salad options.
A choice of desserts, including fresh fruit and yogurt.

17:45-18:15 Supper

A choice of three hot main dishes, including a vegetarian/vegan option.
A choice of desserts, including fresh fruit and yogurt.

House Stores

In addition to this, boarding houses are supplied daily with milk and bread, and weekly with a house stores allowance. Items available include spreads and preserves, biscuits, eggs, a variety of breakfast cereals, a selection of fresh fruits, tea and coffee.

Dietary Requirements

We can cater for pupils with individual dietary requirements, including those of a medical nature. Vegetarian and vegan options are always available, and menus reflect the diversity of our student intake.



Common Questions

What happens at weekends?

Once school commitments are complete (including sports), students are able to return to the house to relax. From Monday morning to Friday lunchtime school meals are compulsory, but at the weekends there is an element of choice. Depending on their year group students can choose whether to eat in the Dining Hall, cook for themselves or go to a restaurant in town. Many students choose to visit other boarding houses at this time.

In a busy six-day week, boarders tell us that they want the freedom to have a relaxed Sunday. Breakfast is replaced with brunch at 10:30, and boarders are able to make use of school facilities (the sports centre and performing arts centre) or those in the town (Knole Park, coffee shops, cinema). With parental permission, Sixth Form boarders may visit London. We run at least one Sunday trip each half term, eg Thorpe Park, paintballing, ice skating.

We ask students to stay in for the first weekend of the academic year as we run a number of induction activities to begin integrating the whole community. At other weekends, provided all the relevant permissions have been sought, boarders may go home or stay at friends' houses, returning by 21:00 on Sunday evening. However, we strongly recommend that boarders stay in their houses some weekends, perhaps to take part in a particular trip, or to catch up with friends and packing on the last weekend of a term. It is part of allowing children the space and time to develop friendships and enjoy their boarding community.

What are Exeat weekends?

There are five weekends a year where there is no Saturday school. Houses close at 18:00 on Friday and boarders go home to parents or guardians on the Friday night to get a well-earned break. Houses reopen at 18:00 on Sunday.

What are Sevenoaks boarders like?

Our aim is to produce sociable, mature, courteous and active students who enjoy being part of the community. While there is no particular type of student that we are looking for (in fact variety of personality is one of the great strengths of the boarding experience), we would expect them to be keen to contribute to school life and make the most of this opportunity.

What ICT access is provided, and how is it monitored?

Each of the houses has a computer room and wifi. Boarders can connect to the school network in order to access the internet from their rooms. Naturally the school blocks unsuitable websites, and restricts access to gaming and social websites during the school day and the allocated homework time in the evening. The school is proactive in addressing the opinions of the students to see if their needs can be accommodated. Younger students hand in their phones and laptops overnight.

How is work supervised?

Each house has allocated evening prep time, where students work at their desks. (Younger pupils will be supervised in a common area at first to help establish good routines.) Members of the teaching staff are on duty in the evening and visit each student, offering help with any difficulties and ensuring an appropriately studious atmosphere.

What is an Education Guardian?

Sevenoaks School Governors require that all boarders have an education guardian who can look after students in the event of an emergency, unless at least one parent or legal guardian is permanently resident in the UK. If you live overseas, or regularly travel overseas, your child will therefore need an education guardian who can act in an emergency. That might be a close relative, such as a grandparent, aunt or uncle, or a good family friend who can take this on, or you might want to employ the services of a professional guardian. The guardian must be at least 25 years of age and live close enough to the school to carry out their responsibilities, including hosting the boarder if they are unwell, or if the school is closed. The school writes to all guardians setting out their responsibilities and asks them to confirm in writing that they accept the arrangements. If you choose a professional guardian, please ensure that they are accredited, so you know your child will be safe. You can find an accredited guardian by searching the [AEGIS website](#) or the [BSA certification scheme](#).

Schools cannot recommend guardians or arrange for guardians to be appointed. Parents are therefore responsible for the welfare of their children while staying with the guardians concerned. We can let you know of agencies that currently look after a number of students at Sevenoaks School. Please contact the Deputy Head Boarding if you have further questions about this important area.

The Sevenoaks Boarding Ethos

Communication

Good communication between school and home is one of the keys to successful boarding. Before the first term starts you will have a chance to meet house staff online so we can start to build those relationships, and once your child has arrived we encourage you to stay in touch with your child's house staff in person, by phone or by email. However, boarders need space to focus on school and friendships, so do not be surprised if you hear from them a little less often than expected during term! Learning how to manage their time well, making friends and grabbing opportunities is why you and they have chosen boarding, and we look forward to helping them.



The school aims to provide its pupils with a happy and secure learning environment. Sevenoaks hopes to furnish its boarders with a structured, relaxed, consistent and friendly home in which to develop into young adults, full of self-esteem, with a developed sense of responsibility and a deeply held academic rigour. It is our belief that young people thrive on high expectations and plenty of justified praise. Our many boarding staff are genuinely conscientious, committed, caring and approachable.

We expect our pupils to:

- be courteous
- be respectful of others and their environment
- be supportive of others
- be tolerant
- show a commitment to all that they do
- play an active part in the school community

Communication is the key. We encourage our pupils to speak up about anything that is of concern to them. They are made aware of the channels of communication open to them at the beginning of the academic year. Parents must feel free to contact house staff at any time about any matter.

“ The most rewarding part of my role as Matron is being with and caring for such a fantastic group of students. Their energy and enthusiasm for life is infectious, their ideas stimulating. They are just great fun to be with. There's never a dull moment in boarding at Sevenoaks; what more could a Matron wish for every day!
Matron, GIH ”

A Boarder's Day

Wake up call	07:00-07:30
Breakfast	07:30-08:15
Registration/Assembly	08:30-09:00
Lessons begin	09:00
Morning break	10:50-11:15
Lunch break	13:05-14:20
Lessons end	16:10
Co-curricular activities	16:15-17:45
Supper	17:45-18:15
Homework time	19:00-21:00 *
Free time	21:00-bedtime
* Boarding houses may have slight variations on these timings.	
Bedtimes are as follows:	
Year 9	22:00
Year 10	22:15
Year 11	22:30
Sixth Form	23:00





Further information about boarding at Sevenoaks School

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