

WELCOME TO WOOLWICH HOUSE

NEW STUDENT
HANDBOOK
2024





WELCOME TO WOOLWICH:

We are delighted to offer you a warm welcome to Woolwich House, where you will start your exciting journey at Gordon's and possibly be experiencing boarding for the first time. We look forward to getting to know you in September and want to make your arrival as easy as possible so have put together some useful bits of information to guide you through your early stages at Gordon's.

Our aim is to provide a home from home in which students feel safe and comfortable to be themselves and Woolwich is the perfect family house to allow you to ease your way into the boarding lifestyle. This is an exciting time in your life where you will have so many opportunities to try new things, forge friendships which may last a lifetime and become part of a caring and vibrant community. The Woolwich team is here to support and encourage you to achieve your full potential.

Mr and Mrs Cooper



AEROSOLS:

Aerosols are not allowed in the school as they can set off the fire alarms and can cause respiratory issues when used in closed environments.

BED CHANGE:

Students will change their bed linens every other week on a Thursday to keep beds clean and smelling fresh! Please bring in two sets of bed linens, all clearly named in large letters!

BLUES:

These are the ceremonial uniforms that you will wear for Parade. They are issued by the school shop and will be your responsibility. They need to be cared for properly and treated with a sense of pride by hanging them up properly after each Parade. Boys will need to wear black socks with their Blues and girls should buy the correct green socks – everything else will be provided by the school.

BREAK TIME:

Students are welcome to return to the house during break times and can use the communal areas to relax and recharge between lessons. Access to the dorms may be granted by the duty staff if an item has been forgotten and needs to be retrieved.

BOOT ROOM:

Each student will have an allocated locker in the boot room for keeping all PE kit and equipment. Lockers should be kept in order and the area tidy. During wet weather students should change out of their dirty PE kit in the boot rooms to keep dorms clean. For safeguarding reasons technology must not be used in the boot rooms.



BROMCOM:

Students will be issued with a Firefly account each term which should be checked regularly throughout the day. This is used to organise homework and for teachers, Houseparents and parents to write any important comments and issue rewards.

DAILY ROUTINE:

Weekdays:		Saturday:	
Wake up	7.00am	Wake up	8.15am
Breakfast	7.30 - 7.45am	Breakfast	9.00am
Leave for lessons	8.15am	Saturday school	10.00am - 12.00pm
Break	10.30 - 11.00am	Lunch	12.30pm
Lunch	11.55am - 12.50pm	Dinner	5.30pm
End of period 6	3.35pm		
Break	3.35 - 3.55pm	Sunday	
Period 7	4.00 - 5.00pm	Breakfast	9.00am
Dinner	5.00 - 6.15pm	Brunch	10.00am - 12.30pm
Prep	6.15 - 7.00pm	Dinner	5.30pm
Free Time in House	7.00 - 8.30pm		
Roll Call	8.30pm		
In Bed Reading	8.45pm		
Lights Out	9.00pm		

DUTIES:

When in Woolwich you become part of a team which takes collective responsibility for keeping the house tidy. We will produce a duty rota which everyone will be involved in to encourage students to take pride in their surroundings. Duties should be completed before evening roll call. Sunday nights is our big clean up where we take an hour to get everything in order to set us up for the week ahead. Once we are done it's time for hot chocolate!

ELECTRICAL ITEMS:

Students may bring their own electrical appliance e.g. hairdryers, radios, clocks etc. Each item will be PAT tested in school. Students from abroad must have an adaptor for their electrical items. For safety reasons heaters, kettles and cooking devices are not permitted.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY:

Woolwich is a house where equality, diversity and respect are extremely important. Everyone in the house should feel comfortable to be who they are and understand that not everybody is the same. Friendships and relationships are important, as is the language that we use within the house. We believe that boarders, staff and visitors have a responsibility to create and protect an environment of understanding and respect.

FIRE:

If you see a fire or the fire alarm sounds you must get out of the house immediately in silence, use the nearest emergency exit and raise the alarm. Woolwich students should line up on the front field at the designated area where a house parent will take roll call. Do not re-enter the buildings until the alarms have stopped and the fire safety officer has given you permission to do so.

GAMES EQUIPMENT:

Students can keep their sports equipment in the boot room and not in rooms where there is limited space. There is a wide range of games equipment on offer that can be used in the garden.



HOUSE MEETINGS:

There will be a weekly house meeting for important information and presentations.

ILLNESS:

If you are feeling unwell at any point throughout the day there are plenty of people on hand to help you. If you are in the house speak to a member of house staff who can either issue in-house medication for small ailments or will take you over to the medical centre. If you are feeling unwell during the night you can contact the Houseparent or Graduate Assistant via the doorbell to their apartment at any point.

WOOLWICH WORLD CUP:

Along with the whole school Inter-House competitions, we also run a fiercely competitive Woolwich World Cup competition where students will have lots of opportunities to win points for their house team within Woolwich! Competitions can range from seasonal challenges, battles of intellect, performances and more. They will run throughout the year and offer everyone an opportunity to compete.

LAUNDRY:

There is a laundry basket for each dorm. Before lights out students should take the laundry down to the office and put them in the orange bags provided. Each student will need a zipped net bag for smalls. Net bags and sports kit are laundered in House and returned the next day. Uniform and casuals are laundered in the school laundry and returned later in the week to laundry boxes.

LEAVE:

Full boarders are allowed weekend leave after lunch according to Houseparents' permission. Students must sign in and out.

Year 7 students may visit the local shop only during the Summer Term. Students must always be in groups of 3 or more and have a fully charged mobile phone with the house phone number on them.

Weekend overnight stays must have written consent from parent / guardian and the host.

MEDICINES:

All medicines, including vitamins, should be handed in on arrival so that they can be stored in a lockable cabinet in the Houseparent's office. A record is kept in house to ensure that all medicines are administered under staff supervision. No students should be administering their own medicine without school's knowledge.

MOBILE PHONES:

For the benefit of students, mobile phones can be brought in after the first exeat weekend. Students need to hand their phone into the Houseparent which will be kept in a locker with a charger. After the first exeat students may access their phone on selected weeknights after prep.

Students are able to speak to parents using the house phone and we feel this system will allow all students to settle in successfully.

Mobile phones are not permitted throughout the academic day. iPads and personal laptops are not required in boarding.

MORNING AND EVENING ROUTINE:

We will come round to wake students up at 7.00am and there will be a morning roll call 5 minutes before our allocated breakfast time. Dorms should be tidied during this time and belongings sorted for the day ahead. Students will all leave the house at 8.15am for their first lesson.

In the evening, prep finishes at 7.00pm after which time you will have free time in the house with lots evening activities on offer. Evening roll call will be at 8.30pm. Students are expected to be in bed reading at 8.45pm with lights out at 9.00pm. Weekend timings may vary.

NAMING THINGS

When living among 31 other students it is very easy for belongings to get mixed up! To help us all, items of clothing, equipment and belongings must be named clearly. It is the responsibility of the student to name their belongings and take care of them, especially important belongings which can be locked away. Try not to use iron- on labels as these come off in the laundry. Sewn on or written name labels are preferred. When labelling shirts or tops please try to label in the neck to make it easier for us to spot!

OUT OF BOUNDS

Woolwich is a mixed boarding house and therefore students are not permitted in the dorms of the opposite sex or in staff residential apartments unless accompanied by a member of staff. Any students found to be out of bounds will face a sanction. Areas of campus are also out of bounds for safety and privacy which will be pointed out to you on arrival.





PARADE

Parade is an important part of the school's traditions. Attendance at parade should be a priority to all Gordon's students. Only in exceptional circumstances may students request absence from parade from the Headmaster in writing. Marching unites us and is an important part of being a Gordon's student.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

All boarders are provided with a lockable space in their rooms. Any valuable or important belongings should be kept locked away. All members of the house are expected to look after their own belongings. We recommend that students do not lend or borrow kit.

PERSONAL HYGIENE

The boarding house has plenty of showers and washrooms for everyone to keep clean! All boarders are expected to shower at least once a day. If you have been exercising you are also expected to have a shower before changing. We expect hands and nails to be kept clean to limit the spread of any diseases.

POCKET MONEY

A certain amount of pocket money is needed for incidental expenses. We recommend between £5 -£10 per week. The house will run a banking service for pocket money and all money must be handed in to be kept in the safe in the house office. Students must not lend or borrow money.

POST

Students always like to receive letters and packages from home and these can be collected from the Houseparent office. Packages must be opened in front of duty staff.

PREP

Students have 45 minutes of allocated prep time each day to complete any prep due or to read quietly if they have completed everything. Prep times are 6.15 - 7.00pm and will take place in a designated classroom. During prep students are expected to work in silence and may not listen to music.

PRIVACY

Living communally comes with certain expectations and your privacy and that of others should be respected at all times, particularly in communal bathrooms and changing areas. Before entering someone else's room you should knock and wait to be let in. Staff will knock and await students to confirm they are decent before entering rooms.

ROOM INSPECTIONS/STANDARDS

We run a termly dorm tidiness competition to encourage everyone to keep their dorms neat and tidy. Each week students will have an opportunity to win tuck tokens for dorm of the week in addition to a termly takeaway treat for dorm of the term!

Beds must be neatly made. Clean clothes must be unpacked and folded neatly in wardrobes. Floors must be clear and hoovered regularly. Surfaces should be clean and tidy. Laundry should be deposited in laundry baskets provided. There is a 10-point guide to a clean room. Teamwork makes the dream work!

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Your safety is our primary concern. You should tell any member of staff immediately if you feel unsafe at any time. **Reportit@gordons.school**.

We all have a responsibility for security. The main doors to the boarding house will be locked from 9.00pm until 7.00am. The main doors should be kept shut at all other times and security codes should not be shared with anyone outside Woolwich House.

SIGNING IN / OUT

Students wishing to leave the house after prep must sign out in reception stating where they intend to go e.g. house, field so that we know where everyone is in case of a fire or other emergency. Students must sign out in pairs for the first half term and be back in house for roll call at 8.30pm. Failure to do so may result in a loss of this privilege.

All visitors to the house must sign in when entering the house and introduce themselves to the member of staff on duty. If you have been off site or have missed a roll call you must make sure that you sign in and report to the member of staff on duty that you are back in the house.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

There will be many opportunities to socialise communally within the house and we hope that all students will get involved and help us plan and organise fun events for everyone to enjoy. We encourage all students to sign up for weekend activities in the first term.

TUCK

A hugely exciting part of boarding is tuck! But we also want to encourage healthy eating habits so the tuck shop is available at certain break times and students will be given a shoe-box sized tuck box to keep their own tuck in, which is stored in the tuck cupboard. In an effort to encourage healthy eating, we ask both students and parents not to bring in quantities of tuck that exceed this storage space. Students are not permitted to bring in fizzy drinks. To keep rooms clean and hygienic no food should be kept in rooms.

UNIFORM

Please refer to the school handbook for a comprehensive guide to acceptable uniform and appearance. We have high expectations of all students with regards to their appearance. We recommend ensuring that students have two sets of certain things such as PE tops to ensure they can be cleaned regularly in the school laundry. Again, we highly recommend uniform is not lent or borrowed.

WHO TO TURN TO?

Boarding for the first time can come with its challenges and the whole team here in Woolwich are here to support you in whatever way they can. Fellow students may also have experienced the same feelings and needed to talk to someone.

If you have a worry, concern or feel like you need support and advice for any reason, please speak to one of the following people:

- Houseparent - Mr or Mrs Cooper
- House Assistant – Mrs Masterson
- Graduate Assistant
- Your tutor
- Your assigned Y8 buddy
- Senior House Representatives from Augusta, Balmoral, Sandringham or Windsor
- School Counsellor
- Student Representatives – Anti-bullying Ambassadors
- **Reportit@gordons.school**.

YOU BREAK IT (NO PROBLEM), YOU FIX IT!

Accidents and breakages are part of everyday life. In Woolwich, we encourage you to try to solve problems for yourself. We have a basic tool kit available to students who can attempt to fix anything around that house that may break, under supervision of course. It's amazing just how many things can be fixed with a screwdriver, duct tape and a cup of tea!

NB This booklet is as complete as it can be at this time but will be updated regularly. If you feel that anything of importance has been left out please draw it to our attention and we will include it in later editions.

AND FINALLY.....

Some words of wisdom from current students about starting at Gordon's:

- Be nice.
- Don't be shy to put your name forward for Inter House competitions.
- Do your prep on the day it's set.
- Learn independence.
- Don't leave things to the last minute.
- Do what teachers ask and do your duties.
- Take all opportunities available to you, don't just stick to what you're comfy with.
- Don't be afraid to be heard.
- Get outside and have fun!
- Mix with other Houses.
- Get your books and bags ready for school the night before.
- Stay in bed after lights out.
- Ask people for help. If you need to borrow things like PE kit ask rather than get punished for not having it. Don't get stressed!!
- You need your sleep.
- Try your hardest.
- Don't be shy to share your ideas.
- Don't disrespect other people.
- There's always someone to talk to.
- Be kind to your Houseparents.
- Be happy with who YOU are and be yourself.
- Make friends for who you are and not what others want you to be.
- Make sure your uniform is acceptable.
- Treat others how you would like to be treated.





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