

WELCOME TO GRAVESEND HOUSE

NEW STUDENT
HANDBOOK
2025





WELCOME TO GRAVESEND HOUSE:

I am really pleased that you are joining Gravesend House in September and I am looking forward to getting to know you. During your time in the House I am sure that you will make some great friendships – some that may last a lifetime. Whilst you are in the House, I want you to treat it as your home at school – it is a place where you can feel safe but it is important that we all show kindness and respect for each other.

I have included lots of information in this booklet that I think you will find helpful in understanding how the House works. I want you to feel relaxed and at home as quickly as possible. Our school day here at Gordon's is a busy one but Gravesend is your daytime home, a place where you can spend time with friends, chat to staff or just play table tennis.

I hope you find this booklet useful and I look forward to welcoming you into the House in September.

Mr Knight (Head of House)



HOUSE STAFF:

The main two members of staff that you will see on a daily will be Mr Knight, who is the Head of House and Mrs Lovell, who is our Assistant Head of House. We also have a number of House Tutors who will be in Gravesend during break times. We are here to help you and we are looking forward to getting to know you when we are on duty in the House. There will be plenty of opportunities for you to try and beat us at table tennis and pool!

JUNIOR PREFECTS:

We have four Junior Prefects from Year 10/11 who you will get to know quite quickly. They run the Tuck Shop and some Intra-House activities. There will also be an opportunity for you to meet with them each term to talk about how you are getting on in the House. We also have a Student Head of House, a Student Governor and Inter-House Captains for Sport and Creative Arts. These roles are held by students in the Sixth Form.

BUDDIES:

At the start of term in September you will be allocated a buddy. This will be a Year 8 student who will certainly remember what it was like to be a 'new' boy. He will be friendly and helpful and should be able to answer most of the questions you may have.

FACILITIES:

There are lots of things to keep everyone busy in Gravesend. We have a selection of game consoles, as well as table tennis, air hockey, table football and pool. We have TVs in the Common Rooms with sofas where you can relax and enjoy your free time. In the kitchen we have a water machine where you are able to refill your water bottle. We also have a piano and several sets of speakers to play music through.

When you arrive you will be allocated a locker for your books and a cage for your PE bag. You are responsible for your belongings at all times and you must keep your locker and cage locked.

You will need to come to school with two padlocks, one for the cage and one for the locker. Spare keys can be kept in the House Office. It is also very important that ALL of your belongings (particularly your PE kit) are clearly named before you start in September.





VISITING OTHER HOUSES:

Students are allowed into the respective Day House Common Rooms of other Houses during break and mealtimes. All students entering another House must make themselves known to a member of staff.

HOUSE BADGES AND WATER BOTTLES:

At the beginning of the year, you will be issued with a Gravesend House Badge, which is worn on the left lapel and a water bottle. If you require a replacement bottle during the year, this will cost £3.

BROMCOM:

This electronic platform is used for accessing a range of information including a student's timetable, prep, attendance and behaviour profiles.

Students must ensure they have a charged tablet at all times to access this information.

DAILY ROUTINE:

Weekdays:	
07.45am	Day Houses open
08.20am	Chapel / Assembly / House Meeting / Tutor Meeting
08.40am	Period 1
09.35am	Period 2
10.30am	Break
11.00am	Period 3
11.55am	Period 4a / Lunch for Years 7 to 10
12.50pm	Period 4b / Lunch for Years 11 to 13
1.45pm	Period 5
2.40pm	Period 6
3.35pm	Break
4.00pm	Period 7
5.00pm	Tea
6.15pm	Prep
7.30pm	End of the School Day

PREP:

Prep for students is held from **6.15pm until 7.30pm** from Monday to Thursday. There will be an opportunity for students to leave to go home at 7pm, but there will not be a break for the remaining students. For those that stay for Prep on a Friday, Prep is from **6pm until 7pm**. It is recommended that all students stay to Prep - you will be expected to work in silence. You should take everything you need with you to the Prep room to be able to complete your Prep as you will not be able to return to your locker during this time.

MEALS:

Students go to lunch and dinner together in the Dining Room. Mealtimes change slightly every week, but you can always find the time on the board outside the House Office. You will find that there is a wide variety of food available for you to choose from. You will be given fruit or a sweet snack during the afternoon break and water is available from the water machine in the kitchen. We also have a tuck shop which is open twice a week (Tuesday and Thursday) during morning break. It is run by the older boys and all proceeds from the sales go to our House charity. There is a maximum spend of £1.

CEREMONIAL:

The ceremonial side of Gordon's is very important. During your first term you will learn how to march, and our House Captain, House Sergeant and Drill Sergeant will help you to understand the importance of Parades. There is Drill Practice for the whole school on Friday afternoons. There are six Parades each year and you are expected to attend all of these. If you do need to miss a Parade you must seek permission from the Head Teacher. The dates for all Parades can be found on the school website.

PHONES:

Students in Years 7 to 11 are not permitted to have their phone during the school day. We would recommend that you leave your phone at home. If you do need to bring your phone in to school with you, you must hand it in at the House Office as soon as you arrive in school. It will then be returned to you when you go home. Any student can request to use the House Office phone at any time or request access to their phone to call home if necessary.

BEHAVIOUR

At Gordon's School we expect high standards in terms of attitude and behaviour. There are a range of sanctions that teachers may give to students if their behaviour falls short of this; these include a bad comment, a lunchtime detention, a school detention or an internal exclusion. Hopefully, you will avoid receiving any of these!

'FAMILIES' – INTRA-HOUSE EVENTS:

Every student in Gravesend is placed in a 'Family' team. Each team contains students from across the whole House to encourage the students to mix and will compete during the year in different competitions.

PERIOD 7 ACTIVITIES:

Each term you will take part in a range of activities that you will do during Period 7 from 4.00pm until 5.00pm each week. These will include a variety of sports, creative arts and academic pursuits which will appeal to all students.

SATURDAY MORNING SCHOOL:

Sporting activities take place on a Saturday morning and all students must attend. Students are expected to fulfil all school commitments before taking part in any external weekend activities or playing for any external clubs. House hoodies may only be worn for Inter-House events and for Saturday morning school with tracksuit bottoms or sports kit.

INTER-HOUSE COMPETITIONS:

Inter-House competitions are held throughout the year and include activities such as rugby, football, baking, art, music, drama, debating, chess and orienteering, to name a few. These competitions build great team spirit and camaraderie amongst the boys in the House. There really is something for everyone and they are an important and fun part of school life. At the end of the year, the Headmaster's Cup is the prize awarded for the winning boys' House at Sport, the Arts Cup is awarded to the best House overall in Public Speaking, Music, Pipes and Drums, Art, Drama and Cooking and the Academic Cup is awarded to the best House overall in the Debating, Quiz, Maths, Creative Writing and Chess events. The Longmore Cup Drill Competition takes place each year and judges each House on the quality of their marching and appearance on Parade. This year, Gravesend House was awarded the Talbot Cup for being the best Boys' House overall.

MEDICAL ISSUES:

If you need to take **prescribed** medication at school it will be kept at the Medical Centre, which is staffed by fully qualified nurses. Your parents will need to inform the Medical Centre about this. The only exception to this are asthma inhalers and auto-injector pens, which students must carry with them at all times. If you feel unwell during the school day, you should report to the School Office. If necessary, your parents will be contacted so that they can collect you to take you home.

APPEARANCE:

Boys' hair must not be too long (below the collar) or excessively short (beyond a grade 2 as a guide), or unnaturally coloured. The back and sides must be blended with the top, to avoid an extreme 'step' or contrast.

Gordon's School has an outstanding reputation for high standards and expectations. This also applies to school uniform. Students are expected to adhere to these standards. The top button of the shirt must be fastened at all times. Shirts must be tucked in. In hot weather, long shirt sleeves may be folded neatly at the elbow. Short sleeved shirts are permitted. In cold weather, students may wear a dark colour coat, without any prominent logos.

BULLYING:

At Gordon's we believe that the starting point for combating bullying is to create a culture where bullying is unacceptable. Every student has a right not to be bullied, to be safe and happy at school and to be protected when they are feeling vulnerable.

Students are encouraged to talk to a member of staff in the House at the earliest opportunity if they have any concerns about bullying. Gravesend House also has three appointed Anti-bullying Ambassadors whom students can turn to for advice if they are being bullied or if they are aware of any bullying.

COMMENTS FROM STUDENTS:

"Gravesend is a welcoming and relaxing place for everyone" Caleb

"Gravesend is a great House and always make you feel welcome. If you're feeling down, the teachers are always there to help you." Henry

"There is always something to do, and there is an abundance of games and activities" Alex

"Gravesend is great House for all, because of its games and clean environment to relax in" Thomas

"I love being in Gravesend House because all of the boys and staff are so friendly and it's a nice environment to be in" James

"As Gravesend, we support each other to achieve the best!" Ammar

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