



Pastoral Care – The boarding and day experience

St John's is a boarding and day school where the community is defined by very strong pastoral care. Pastoral care, the well-being of each boy and girl, is based upon a house system. There are six boys' houses, two boarding and four day, and three girls' houses, one boarding, one day/boarding and one day. Each house has up to 70 pupils with approximately 14 pupils per year group. The House provides the base for pupils during the school day, each having a place in their house where they can keep their belongings. Upper sixth formers can use their studies during private study lessons.

Each house is run by a housemaster or housemistress with a team of tutors who are allocated to the five year groups. Sixth formers are routinely given the opportunity to help and support younger pupils through the prefect system or through running teams for house competitions. The housemaster or housemistress leads and manages the house and he or she is a first point of contact for parents for any advice or guidance. The tutor sees the boys and girls at the beginning of each day for registration, and again at the end of the day. The relationship between tutor and tutee is vital and the keystone of effective tutoring; the tutor really gets to know the pupil and champions his or her cause when needed.

The tutor will also go through their reports with tutees in order to help them fulfil their potential in their academic work. Tutors are also there for support and advice on a whole range of issues, from subject choices to more personal matters. Upper sixth form tutors also fulfil an important role in helping tutees with the university application process.

The strength of the house system is through establishing a very clear identity, a physical place in which the boys and girls feel a sense of belonging and are valued. Throughout their time at the School they will be supported and encouraged within this environment without condition. The house is a place in which the values of the School are communicated and reinforced. The boys and girls represent their houses in a variety of activities such as sport, drama, debating, music and many others. The house is a place in which the support they receive is an extension of that they might experience at home.

The boarding houses offer a high standard of facilities and residential care in a school which possesses all the advantages of a boarding and day school on the same site. The majority of boarders at St John's are flexi-boarders, boarding for one or two nights a week; others are weekly boarders, returning home on a Friday evening, but there is also the opportunity for all pupils to flexi-board on an ad-hoc basis. This means that they are able to benefit from a very full educational experience while sharing their lives with their parents at the weekend. The boarders are able to take advantage of a close knit and vibrant community in which there are many activities and facilities available after the formal school day ends.

Boarding enhances the educational experience for all pupils, both day and boarding, in a number of ways. The School strongly believes in a values-based education and boarding reinforces a number of the key values which St John's regards as important preparation for a pupil's life beyond school.

The strength of the house system is evident not just in the care which is offered to each pupil, but as a place where each pupil is valued as an individual. Beyond St John's the friendships made in each house endure for many years, if not for life.

