

# **Bloxham School**

## **Parents' Handbook 2007 / 2008**

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## Introduction from the Headmaster

Parents always have questions about a school, whether their children are about to arrive or they have been pupils for some time. This *Parents' Handbook* is intended as a reference book for all parents. It will be issued to new parents whose children are about to start at Bloxham and an up-to-date copy will always be available for consultation or download from the school website.

It is in the spirit of communication that this document has been commissioned; a school tends to have quirky names, customs and practices, which members of the school community take for granted but which parents can find confusing. In this respect Bloxham is no exception and this guide is intended to de-mystify many of the common routines and names, which can seem unduly complex on first acquaintance.

The school always sends parents of new pupils joining instructions and each of the Houses and the Lower School have their own handbooks which parents of new pupils also receive; this document is intended to supplement them.

I have not included a copy of the School Rules because they are contained within much other documentation, which parents receive, not least in the termly School List and Calendar. However, within this document all the School's major policies are included for reference purposes, but in addition I hope we will have answered many of the questions, which parents pose, especially in the early years of their children's time at the School.

Now that the world is relatively advanced in terms of communications technology, much communication from the school takes place electronically. This means that the website, which will be developed further with a parents login feature in the not too distant future, will become an increasingly important communication conduit. Moreover, with our wireless network and plethora of laptops, all teachers and many others may be contacted by email and their addresses can be found in the School List and Calendar. Also it is very important that we have parents' correct up-to-date contact details; so if addresses, telephone numbers (including mobiles) and email details change, my office should be informed at once.

I hope that parents find this handbook useful and would very much value comments or suggestions on how it could be improved.

Mark Allbrook

## **Bloxham 2010 & Beyond**

### **Vision**

**To be a dynamic school where all enjoy developing their talents to the full**

### **Values**

#### **A. We focus on the achievements and well-being of the individual**

1. we develop each individual's talents and ambitions
2. we set challenging, yet realistic, targets
3. we provide a wide range of opportunities and excellent facilities
4. we encourage a healthy, balanced life
5. we recognise commitment and success

#### **B. We are a family**

1. we give each other our time and attention
2. we provide warmth and safety
3. we always support each other
4. we seek and value everybody's contribution
5. we emphasise the importance of the world beyond school

#### **C. We believe in respect and responsibility**

1. we set high standards and expect them to be met
2. we want everyone to feel responsible for the whole community
3. we aim to create self-confidence which never becomes arrogance
4. we respect the environment
5. we are proud of our school and its Christian values

## **The School's Mission Statement**

It is Bloxham's mission to be the school of first choice for parents seeking for their children an education with the features listed below; moreover, in line with its charitable status, the School seeks to make such an education available to as many children as possible.

As a Woodard school, Bloxham is committed to provide high quality education with an underpinning of clear Christian principles. Pupils are encouraged to set themselves high standards of achievement relative to their ability, and to respect other people, the community and the world in which they live. Through their experience of worship, of religious education and of life within the community, they will be encouraged to come to a greater knowledge of themselves, of others and of God.

Bloxham School is committed to remaining a small, mainly boarding school, with numbers at or around 420 and with a boarding proportion from Year 9 upwards close to or greater than two thirds if possible. To this end the quality of the boarding accommodation and provision will be maintained at the highest level. The pupil : staff ratio is about 9 : 1.

Academically, pupils of a wide range of ability are accepted, though with the proviso that, as far as we are able to judge, they are capable of coping with the Bloxham curriculum, which will enable them to complete the Sixth Form and gain entrance to University.

Bloxham is committed to providing a wide range of extra-curricular activities, which are fulfilling and stimulating, and which are properly resourced.

Bloxham is fully committed to communicating all essential information to parents of pupils to enable the three-way relationship of Pupil, Parents and School to be as fruitful as possible.

## The School's Website

We are sure that, in line with every school in the country, we are trying ever to improve the methods by which we can communicate effectively with parents and other stakeholder groups and interested parties.

Again keeping in-line means increasingly that we look on-line for many of the solutions to this perennial problem. We have enjoyed for almost 7 years a first class website that has been a window for the world to capture a glimpse of Bloxham and to make available basic information in an attractive and relevant fashion; an internal and external marketing tool of the highest value.

Our current website ([www.bloxhamschool.com](http://www.bloxhamschool.com)) fulfils all of the above and so much more. On this site you can see an **interactive calendar** that we update each week (and more if necessary) to ensure that it really is carrying the most up to the minute information on events. It shows the **postcodes of schools where matches are being played** to allow those with Sat.Nav. to travel more easily and the web addresses of those same schools so that those without Sat.Nav. can download a map of the venue. It has **news stories and photographs**, and even video streaming will be incorporated when suitable material is available to us. Downloads of **the prospectus, the GCSE and A level Courses booklets** etc., can all be found as well as **links to the Old Bloxhamist** sections of the site aimed at keeping this important constituency in the Bloxham information loop. If you haven't given it a trial yet please do so; we think that you will like it.

Even in this advanced state we are only touching the surface of what this powerful tool is capable. In the next phase we aim to take parents behind the front of the website and into password protected areas where curriculum and extra curricular postings can be viewed by relevant groups. This will include the ability to see your child's marks and orders (but no one else's!) and give far greater access to information than has previously been possible. We are working quickly towards this goal and firmly believe that it will have considerable benefit to parents and vicariously to the pupils.

We look increasingly to communicate to parents electronically and although we will continue to print and post information to parents for whom we do not hold email addresses it is becoming clear that we can never replicate the level of detail or immediacy that the website will offer. Our message is both strong and clear – please get on-line as soon as possible!

## Sportsline (01295 724370)

Sportsline is our dedicated sports fixture information hotline. It carries up to the minute information about matches – on or off, home or away, etc. Anyone who has turned up to watch a match that had been postponed earlier or where a venue had been changed at the last minute will know just how frustrating it can be. Obviously we make every effort to ensure that the information in the printed termly calendar is correct but with around 1000 fixtures each year it is inevitable that discrepancies will occur. These will be updated on the website as soon as possible but for the last minute hitch caused by the weather or other factors, Sportsline is the number. We strongly recommend that you add it to your mobile phone memory bank and use it whenever you are coming to support our teams (and we remain one of the best supported schools on the circuit for which we thank you!!)

## **School List and Calendar**

The School List and Calendar is a termly publication. It contains a list of pupils in Lower School and in Houses detailing their date of birth and tutor, useful telephone numbers and e-mail addresses, school rules and regulations, future dates and a calendar of the term's events. It will be sent to parents just prior to the start of each term except in the Michaelmas Term when it is published as a Calendar only document, because the School List is not normally finalised until well into September. Parents can always view dates and the term's calendar via the School's website.

## **Academic Matters**

### ***Assessment and reporting***

Pupils are much more likely to be successful where an effective partnership has been forged between the pupil, their teachers and parents/guardians. If you have any concern about your daughter or son's education, the initial point of contact is **the tutor**. Where the problem is more serious, the tutor may refer the matter to the pupil's housemaster/mistress. We aim to keep parents and guardians fully informed about the progress of pupils through the school using orders (interim assessment reports), written reports at the end of each term and parents' meetings.

### ***Orders***

Orders are intended as the means by which the teachers present to pupils, tutorial staff and parents interim progress reports. Orders are written twice in the Michaelmas and Lent terms, and once in the Summer term. One letter grade is given for attainment and one numerical grade for effort/attitude. Orders grades will be emailed to parents and will appear on end of term reports.

Attainment Grades - In the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Forms the attainment grade is diagnostic in terms of progress towards GCSE, AS and A2 exam grades.

In the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Forms attainment is related to progress across year groups. Grade C should be seen as the norm.

Effort/attitude Grades - Effort grades will all be on a 5 point scale:

## Orders Grades

### Attainment

Grade	6 <sup>th</sup> Form AS/A2	5 <sup>th</sup> Form GCSE	4 <sup>th</sup> Form GCSE	1 <sup>st</sup> /2 <sup>nd</sup> /3 <sup>rd</sup> Forms
A	A grade standard	A*/A grade standard	A*/A grade potential	Very good
B	B grade standard	B grade standard	B grade potential	Good
C	C grade standard	C grade standard	C grade potential	Satisfactory
D	D grade standard	Falling just short of C grade standard	Falling just short of C grade potential	Barely satisfactory
E	E grade standard	Falling well short of C grade standard	Falling well short of C grade potential	Unsatisfactory
U	Unlikely to pass			

### Effort and attitude

Grade	All years
1	Very good
2	Good
3	Satisfactory
4	Barely satisfactory
5	Unsatisfactory

## Parents' meetings

Each year group has a parents' meeting once a year at which parents can meet each of their child's teachers and discuss progress. The meetings take place in and around the Great Hall. The table below shows the timings of these meetings which are usually in the term in which a short report is written; the exact dates are published in the school calendar. A letter of invitation is sent to the respective parents/guardians about three weeks in advance of each meeting. Pupils in the Third Form and above are expected to attend with their parents or guardians.

Timetable of parents' meetings by year group

Year	Parents' meeting
U6	Early March after AS & A2 results
L6	Early March after AS results
5	Early/mid February after trial exams
4	Late May after summer exams
3	Early May
2	Late May
1	Mid/late February

## **Reports**

A report is written on every pupil at the end of each term. Two of these reports will be full reports, the other being a much more concise short report. Short reports are usually written in the term in which that year group has a parents' meeting. The Fifth and Upper Sixth Forms receive a letter from their Housemaster/mistress in place of their short reports in the summer term.

Timetable of reporting by year group

Year	Michaelmas	Lent	Summer
U6	full	full	HsM letter
L6	full	short	full
5	full	A4 exam sheet after trial exams <b>and</b> full	HsM letter
4	full	short	full
3	full	full	short
2	full	full	short
1	full	short	full

## **Prep**

All pupils are set prep to support and extend work done in lessons. Departments set prep according to the prep timetable, a copy of which is issued to pupils at the start of the academic year. All pupils are also issued with prep diaries which they are required to use for recording their prep tasks. In the Lower School prep should take pupils about one hour each evening to complete; in the Third to Fifth Form it should take two hours. In the Sixth Form prep works slightly differently as the pupils are now expected to be much more responsible and organised. They will be set about four hours work per subject per week, but will normally be given a full week to complete it.

If prep is poorly done then the teacher will require that the pupil redoes it. This will normally be in the daily **catch-up** sessions at lunchtime. Teaching staff and tutors monitor that prep is being done and work with pupils who are having difficulties.

## **The Curriculum**

### *Lower School Curriculum*

Pupils study a broad range of subjects that provide a breadth of education. All pupils study maths, English language and literature, French, biology, chemistry, physics, history, geography, religious studies, art, music, technology, Latin, physical education, and personal, social and health education (PSHE).

### *Middle School Curriculum*

Pupils in the Third Form study maths, English language and literature, French, biology, chemistry, physics, history, geography, religious studies, physical education, technology and PSHE. In addition pupils choose to study one of German, Spanish or Latin. Pupils on the dyslexia course and those requiring EFL lessons have this provision instead of languages lessons.

In the Fourth and Fifth Forms, pupils follow a compulsory curriculum that leads to GCSEs in English language, and English literature, maths, French, short course RE and either double award science or all 3 sciences separately.

The top set mathematicians take the additional maths examination at the end of the Fifth Form as well the standard GCSE maths examination. Similarly the top French set takes GCSE at the end of the Fourth Form and moves on to AS level standard work in the Fifth Form.

Alongside the compulsory curriculum, pupils can choose three other optional GCSEs from art, business studies, design & technology, electronics, geography, German, history, music, Spanish and textiles technology. The current GCSE option blocks are shown below. Please note that the option blocks are reviewed each year although normally only very minor changes are made.

### **GCSE Option Blocks**

Block 1	Block 2	Block 3
Business Studies	Art	Art
Geography	Geography	DT
History	German	Electronics
	Latin	History
	Music	Music
	Spanish	Textiles Technology

### *Sixth Form Curriculum*

For internal candidates, entry to the sixth form is subject to a positive end of school testimonial and the securing of at least three grade B's and three grade C's at GCSE. External candidates will be invited in for an interview and a reference will be requested from the candidate's current school. Pupils study four (or occasionally five) AS levels in the Lower Sixth, and three A2 levels in the Upper Sixth. Progression from AS levels to A2 is subject to the pupil securing at least a grade E in the AS level unless there are extenuating circumstances to consider. The current A level option blocks are shown below but please note that the option blocks are reviewed each year. Parents of pupils in the Fifth Form will be provided with a choices booklet containing the confirmed option blocks well before choices need to be made.

### **Sixth Form Option Blocks**

Pupils choose FOUR AS level subjects from 4 blocks. 8 periods per week per subject			
Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4
Art	Business studies	Chemistry	Art
Geography	English	DT	Biology
German	History	French	Economics
Mathematics	Physics	Geography	English
Politics	Textiles	Music Technology	ICT
Psychology		PE	RS
Spanish			
Theatre Studies			

Music can be offered in different blocks as the pattern of demand changes  
 In addition all pupils will pursue a course in ICT.

## ***The Vallance library***

The Vallance library fulfils the roles of a traditional library and an on-line information and work centre for pupils in all years in the school. It is open from 9.00 a.m. until 9.00 p.m. each day. Class teachers will occasionally take pupils into the library during lesson times but all pupils are expected to make use of the library in their free time (break, lunchtime, after school). In addition pupils may sign out of their houses during prep in the evening to work in the library.

The library contains

- a reference library
- a fiction and non-fiction lending library
- daily newspaper and a wide selection of magazines and periodicals
- 40 spaces at which to work
- computer workstations linked to the intranet and internet

The Library plays an important role as a learning resource centre for all students, and its regular use is strongly encouraged. It provides opportunities to develop independent learning and research skills using a range of media, both traditional and technological. It also contains a large number of books suitable for leisure-time reading.

## ***Internal merit awards***

Once pupils have joined the School there are opportunities for them to win or enhance merit awards at the transition points. These merit awards will usually bring with them a fee reduction. Second Form pupils may win an academic award on the strength of their performance in the Second Form exams in the Lent term and awards may be made for music, art, D & T and sport in the light of current performance and appropriate tests; this will happen automatically and will not require any action from parents.

Academic awards for the Sixth Form may be made on the strength of GCSE results and ongoing assessment in music, art, D & T and sport. Parents need not take any action but may contact the Headmaster for clarification if needs be.

Merit awards are not made other than at the transition points from Lower to Middle School and Middle to Upper.

## ***Stars and Headmaster's Stars.***

Teachers prefer to use the carrot rather than the stick at Bloxham and this is best seen in the award of Stars. A pupil may be awarded a Star for a piece of work which is better than would normally be expected of that pupil. Stars are added up over a pupil's time at Bloxham and book token prizes awarded as landmarks are passed. Moreover, each term every Star won is entered into a House year group competition.

Teachers may also award Headmaster's Stars which are worth three normal Stars. There are a number of ways in which a pupil can win Headmaster's Stars. Truly outstanding pieces of work for the pupil concerned may earn them. If a pupil's Order carries an average effort grade of 1.5 or less, a

Headmaster's Star will automatically be awarded by the Tutor. Really good work over an extended period and excellent exam results may also win Headmaster's Stars.

If a pupil is awarded a Headmaster's Star, it must be countersigned by the Head of Department and then brought to the Headmaster within two weeks. He will then briefly discuss the work with the pupil and register it which automatically enters it into an end-of-term-draw. There will be three draws each term: one for the Sixth Form, one for the Middle School and one for the Lower School. The prize for each draw is £60 worth of vouchers at an appropriate store. Every Headmaster's Star is entered into the draw; therefore, the more Headmaster's Stars a pupil wins, the better the chance of winning the prize!

## **Pastoral Care**

Bloxham School is very proud of its tradition of offering appropriate and sensitive pastoral care to all members of the community. Any member of the school has a range of individuals and services to which they may turn if they need any form of help. These include:

*The Housemaster/mistress:* The HsM is responsible for ensuring that each member of the house is happy and well cared for. He or she may well be the first person a pupil meets when they arrive at the school. The HsM is often the first person to whom a pupil or parent may turn if they have a problem. All pupils will meet their HsM several times a day and have ample opportunity for formal and informal discussions. HsMs encourage parents to play a full part in the education of their children and wish to work with parents to ensure that the welfare and progress of their children is always given the highest priority. HsMs are responsible for discipline in their house and each house tries to ensure that fair and consistent standards of discipline are applied. Each house also has a resident assistant housemaster/mistress, who is often available when the HsM is off duty.

*Tutor:* Each pupil is assigned a tutor. Tutors will generally care for their tutees throughout their time at the school. Many tutors remain in contact with former tutees long after they have left school and become good friends. Tutors offer their charges advice on academic matters, careers and university choices. Any concern which a parent may have about such matters should be addressed to the tutor rather than the HsM. Tutors will see their tutees once or twice a week when they are on duty in the house. They will have discussions about Orders and will contact parents if any important issues arise. As well as monitoring academic progress and setting appropriate targets, tutors will check that their charges are engaging in a full and varied programme of extracurricular activities. They will tend to offer support to their tutees in a variety of ways and will hope to share in the interests of their pupils. Where possible they will try to watch their tutees perform in sports teams, musical events and plays.

*Other house tutors:* Houses generally have a team of about five tutors. Each will be on duty in the house for one or two evenings a week. They will ensure that prep is conducted in an orderly fashion and will be on hand to offer academic or pastoral advice as necessary. Each house has a weekly house assembly on Monday evening. This is attended by all members of the tutor team and the whole house.

*Matron:* Each house has a matron. She is responsible for ensuring that all domestic arrangements in the house run smoothly. She is in charge of a team consisting of a locker room assistant (LRA) and several

cleaners. Many cleaners have been attached to houses for long periods of time and show considerable loyalty and concern for individual members of their houses. The Locker Room is an important point of social contact in any house. Pupils frequently drop in for a chat with matron or her LRA and may share their concerns over a drink or a snack.

*House Captain and other members of the house prefect team:* These attend regular meetings with the housemaster/mistress. They are trained to look out for any pupil showing signs of unhappiness and will aim to offer help and friendly advice. They assist HsMs and tutors in carrying out their duties and ensuring that all members of the house are safe, happy and able to enjoy a full range of academic and extracurricular activities.

*Buddies:* Some houses operate a formal buddy scheme to assist the integration of new pupils. All houses will use older pupils in some way to help new members of the house become integrated into the normal life of the house as quickly as possible.

Outside the house there are many points of contact for a pupil in need of help or advice. These include:

Chaplain  
School counsellor:  
School doctor and Palmer staff  
Peer listeners\*  
Child protection officer  
Mr Colin Stewart (formal complaints)  
School captains and members of school prefect team

### ***\*The Peer Listening Team***

If pupils have a problem which is troubling them they can talk to a fellow pupil about it. Peer listeners are selected from the Lower Sixth Form in the Michaelmas Term so the team consists of Lower and Upper Sixth Formers. These will have followed a three-day training course provided by Relate. They lend a sympathetic ear and may suggest possible sources of help, but they are not counsellors. They are available for informal consultation at any time, for example in Houses, but operate a listening service twice a week in a designated room. Peer Listeners wear a badge to enable them to be recognised and a notice-board displays photographs and details of times when they are available. This information is also to be found in the School List and Calendar.

### **Worship at the School**

As a Woodard School worship, spiritual exploration and Christian ethical standards stand at the heart of our school life. Led by The Reverend Michael Price, the School Chaplain, the main acts of worship and prayer are:

1. **Chapel Services** are the central plank of our worship. Every pupil comes to one service of Holy Communion each week. The 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> forms come at 5.15pm on a Thursday evening and the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> forms come at 5.15pm on a Friday evening. The service usually takes about 40 minutes. We try to value our traditions whilst at the same time allowing for variation and experimentation in our services. Therefore services may use traditional organ music or a chapel band, with many other possibilities in between. Similarly sermons may be traditional talks, or they may utilise our large screen, and video/DVD/computer/internet options. We also vary the settings for our services: whilst chapel is our usual venue, we regularly use the Parish Church for services and occasionally worship outside, both on the school lawns and in the garden of the Headmaster's House.

2. **Other voluntary services** offer the chance to worship in a more intimate manner. Each House has regular House Communion Services which offer the opportunity to focus on the concerns of specific houses or concerns in the news at that time. At the other end of the spectrum we also have services such as the ancient rite of Compline which Christians have been using since the 4<sup>th</sup> century.

3. **Pause for Thought** is another important element of our spiritual life at Bloxham. Each member of the Lower and Middle Schools attends a 10 minute period of reflection on one lunchtime, each week. This may be an opportunity for guided prayer or meditation, or for learning about the many faiths of the world, or perhaps delving into the spiritual aspects of the various subjects and activities that are part of daily life at Bloxham.

All these help to foster and maintain the Christian ethos on which our school is founded and through which we aim to help pupils develop a respect for all creation and a willingness to explore their own spiritual development.

The Chaplain shares in the teaching of Religious Education lessons, and in addition is available to listen, to help with personal problems and offer friendship to pupils at any time and in complete confidence. Similarly he is happy for parents to contact him if he can be of any assistance. In the Michaelmas Term the Chaplain offers preparation to pupils for Confirmation.

## **Contacting the School**

The initial point of contact between parents and the School will usually be the **Housemaster/mistress or Head of the Lower School** who will continue to be the usual source and recipient of information. For example requests for changes to the normal routine, such as absence or overnight stays for day boarders, should, in the first place, be directed to them.

Over time it is to be hoped that you will get to know your son's or daughter's **tutor** and you may well find that you will want to discuss relevant issues with them.

House Matrons can also be contacted directly by phone between 9.00 a.m. & 5.00 p.m. on weekdays

Telephone numbers and email addresses are available in the School Calendar.

Information with regard to **sports fixtures** (e.g. location or postponement) can be found on the School "Sportsline" on 01295 724370

The School now has in place a plan to deal with crisis or disaster; as far as parents are concerned the only really important piece of information needed is the 24 hour emergency number **01295 720441**. This is actually the number of the School Hospital and should only be called in a dire emergency, when further contact details and other information will be available.

### **Pupils' possessions**

All clothing and personal possessions should be clearly marked with the pupil's name including shoes, bags, pens and books.

Larger items, such as music equipment, should also be marked and a note taken of any identification numbers.

### **School Shops**

#### ***Clothing***

The School Shop and Second-hand shop is sited in the Bursary and is run by **Mrs Butler** on an appointment basis. Her telephone number is **01295 724335**. Please leave a message on the answer-phone if she is not available. She is able to supply all the items on the clothing list, and certain items must be purchased from the School Shop. Personal sports equipment can also be purchased through the School shop.

#### ***Stationery***

The School Stationery shop (in the main building) is open most lunch-times and can provide all the items a pupil is likely to need. The costs will be added to the pupil's account.

#### ***Paperblox***

The School paperback bookshop is situated in the Vallance library. Books can be purchased and billed on the pupils' invoices to a limit specified by parents.

#### ***School Sister***

School sister keeps a small quantity of basic toiletries which pupils can buy if they run out or forget to bring things to School.

### **Local Facilities**

There are a number of shops in the High Street just across the main road from the School.

- Post Office - providing newspapers etc., sweets and stationery
- Co-op – a good grocery store which sells a wide range of foods and toiletries and also has a hot food counter.
- Homecraft – a DIY shop which amongst other things sells batteries & electrical equipment
- Cash-point – there is a cash point in the village centre by the co-op

## **Sixth Form**

- Sixth Form centre – all members of the Sixth Form are charged a termly fee of £20 which helps cover the costs of the 6<sup>th</sup> form centre. This is a facility exclusively for the Sixth Form providing a relaxed atmosphere where boys and girls can mix freely. It also has a pool table, sky TV and DVD player plus a hot drinks machine.
- Junior Common Room (“Jock”) – a soft drinks bar operated by the pupils which opens between 9.00 p.m. and 10.00 p.m. each evening for members of the 6<sup>th</sup> form. It has a music centre and the JCR committee periodically organises events such as band or disco sessions. It does have a drinks licence and may sometimes organise events where alcohol is served with a meal.
- Sixth Form Forum – a committee of Sixth Formers organises activities for the Sixth Form on event weekends and other weekends when there are no major School activities. These include discos, barn-dances, barbecues and formal dinner-dances.

## **The Lower School**

Situated in the former village pub called The White Lion (now enlarged), the Lower School is for pupils joining Bloxham at 11+, normally after their primary education ends. Hence there are two National Curriculum Year Groups (Years 7 and 8), which are known as the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Forms at Bloxham. Mr Georg Stindt is Head of the Lower School and he is assisted by a team of tutors; essentially he is the Housemaster of the Lower School, though there is a small boarding house for Lower School pupils run by Nick and Nuala Irvine; the house is called Park Close and lies a little way from the main campus. Lower School pupils are encouraged to try boarding at Park Close.

Much of this parents’ guide is relevant to parents of Lower School pupils, but there are some important differences from the Middle and Upper Schools as follows: the Lower School week ends on Friday after Chapel. For this reason the weekly programme is rather different; essentially each day ends at 6.00 p.m. with prep having been completed. All sports and activities are incorporated into the week except for occasional matches on Saturdays.

Pupils in the Lower School are taught by all the teachers of the School and Lower School pupils have access to all the School’s facilities. Upon arrival the Headmaster allocates new Lower School pupils to senior houses to which they will move after two years.

Mr Stindt runs a full induction process to the Lower School and will give parents more detailed information at the appropriate time.

## **Registration**

Registration occurs in Boarding Houses/Lower School twice a day: at 8.30 a.m. for all and at 1.45 p.m. for all day pupils. Registration of day pupils at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions is a legal requirement. There is in addition an attendance check at the beginning of prep in Houses and after 10.00 p.m. for all boarders.

If parents know that their child will be absent from school, they should inform the Housemaster/Mistress/Head of Lower School by phone or email as soon as possible, preferably between 8.00 and 8.30 a.m.

When pupils are absent from registration they should report to Mrs M Hill in the Headmaster's office as soon as they arrive at school. Mrs Hill will telephone parents if a pupil has not arrived at school and no information has been received.

Pupils taken ill at school will be sent to Palmer, the School's medical centre, and will be in the care of the medical sister. Sister will contact parents as necessary.

## **Absences from School**

The Headmaster's permission is needed to authorise pupil absences from school; our terms are short and it is important that pupils attend all lessons if possible. Parents should contact the Headmaster directly to request such absence, and requests should be given as far in advance as possible.

If a pupil is ill at home, parents should contact the Housemaster/mistress or Head of the Lower School, or the main school switchboard if they are not available.

There are some occasions when the Headmaster will not authorise absence from School; pupils will not be allowed out of school to go to rock/pop concerts on weekday evenings. Moreover, although the Headmaster will normally give permission for pupils to go out for a meal with their parents to celebrate birthdays, other pupils will not be allowed to accompany them. Eighteenth birthday parties should be celebrated in the holidays or on weekends in term time that are **not** Event Weekends.

If a pupil unavoidably needs to be late back to school at the start of term or leave early, the Headmaster and Housemaster/mistress or Head of Lower School should be informed.

## **Guidance on Dress for Parents**

There are relatively few occasions when parents need to wear anything other than casual clothes. However, the more formal occasions are Parents' Meetings, Founderstide, the Carol Service, the New Parents' Reception, the Headmaster's Garden Party, and the Confirmation.

## **How Parents can help**

There are many ways in which parents can help; in the first instance we need to know if anything happens at home which might have a bearing on a pupil's life at school; for example, a family bereavement or serious illness. In such instances the Housemaster/mistress or Head of the Lower School should be informed and the information will be treated sensitively.

By the same token if a pupil is unhappy (for whatever reason) at school, then we really do need to know. Pupils can be very adept at concealing their feelings from their teachers but will often offload to their parents. It is particularly important that we know if they are having difficulties with relationships with other pupils; on the whole they get on very well together, but in the busy existences they lead, living in close proximity with one another, frictions can arise, but they must not be allowed to escalate into serious problems, which can easily happen if they are not confronted. Hence, it is very important that parents contact Housemasters/mistresses or the Head of the Lower School to share any concerns they may have. Once again the information will be treated tactfully and a resolution will be reached.

With regard to discipline, the School has clearly set out rules and regulations which parents are asked to support and help to enforce. If parents and the School are singing from the same song sheet, pupils will usually fall into line. This applies as much to minor matters, such as appearance, as to the more serious areas of school discipline.

Finally, please do let us know if you are not happy with what the School is doing for your children; if you don't then, nothing can be done about it. Conversely, if you are happy with Bloxham's provision, please do tell your friends!

## **ICT**

Bloxham has always aimed to be at the cutting edge when it comes to the world of computers. In recent years the School has rationalised its ICT provision and earmarked significant funds for its delivery.

The whole campus is now wireless networked and 'voice over IP' means that computers and telephones use the same infrastructure. All members of the teaching staff have been given a laptop computer for use in their teaching and general administration.

As far as pupils are concerned the big change came in 2004 when the Governors decided to provide every member of the Fourth Form with a laptop. Although these laptops remain the property of the School while the pupils are at Bloxham, they make take possession of them upon leaving at the end of their Upper Sixth year after taking their A levels. If a pupil leaves before this time then the laptop must be returned to the School.

Our aim is to give pupils some responsibility for their own learning at a time in their careers when computers will be most useful to them and when they will be most likely to look after them. Hence they are given a laptop at the start of their GCSE courses. Once the laptop scheme is in full swing, all members of the top four years in the School will be in possession of a school laptop, pre-loaded with all the software, which the academic departments require, in addition to Microsoft Office. Our secondary

aim is, of course, to prepare the pupils for a world in which computers and their associated skills are indispensable. To this end all members of the Third Form take an online qualification in ICT which will give them all the skills necessary to make the best use of a school laptop the following year; this course, administered by London Learning has been especially created for schools and is a bit like the ECDL (European Computer Driving Licence). They will also learn to touch-type.

## **Mobile Phones**

It is recognised that the possession of a mobile phone by pupils provides a useful means of communication with parents and others. However the misuse of phones must be avoided. Lower School pupils must hand their mobile phone in to their Tutor on arrival at School and collect it at the end of the School day.

Phones must not be used in such a way as to cause disturbance to others.

They must be switched off during lessons and prep., in chapel, the library, assemblies and the dining hall and queue, and between 8.45 a.m. and 10.40 a.m., 11.10 and 13.05 p.m., 2.00 p.m. and 3.30 p.m. on days when there are lessons, and after bedtime until 8.00 a.m.

Misuse of phones will result in their confiscation. This includes the sending of text messages or photos which cause offence.

Pupils are responsible for the security of any mobile phone they bring into the school. Each phone should be protected by a PIN number. Pupils need to have their own separate insurance for their phone.

Pupils are required to give the details of their mobile phones, including the number, to their housemaster/housemistress or the Head of Lower School.

## **The Bloxham Year**

Bloxham's Academic Year broadly follows the pattern of other schools but with several important differences. Our terms tend to be somewhat shorter than the local state schools', largely because we have school on Saturdays. That said, our holidays and half terms always coincide with those of the Oxfordshire LEA.

**Michaelmas Term** - The academic year normally begins in the first week in September and there is a period of ten days or so when all boarders in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Form and above are expected to remain in school to allow the routine to develop and the pupils to settle. The first half of the Michaelmas Term is 6 or 7 weeks long and is followed by a fortnight's half term, when the School closes; this half term always begins at 4.00pm on a Saturday after sports fixtures.

The term restarts at the end of October and then runs on for another 6 or 7 weeks. All Saints' Tide is normally celebrated on the first weekend back; the School is in fact All Saints' School and on this occasion alumni (known as Old Bloxhamists) are invited back. There is always an exeat or long weekend

in late November which starts on a Thursday; the School closes for duration of the exeat; this break allows the pupils to recharge their batteries for the final push towards Christmas.

The School Play is normally performed at this time and the final act of the term is always the Carol Service held in the Parish Church to which all parents are warmly invited.

The Christmas Holiday lasts for 3 weeks.

**Lent Term** – In the early days of January the Lent term begins; this tends to be the shortest term of the year and lasts for 10 weeks. The first half of term, which includes GCSE trial exams for the Fifth Form and AS level exams for some of the Sixth Form, normally lasts for 6 weeks and is followed by a week's half term. The second half of term is only 4 weeks long and comes to an end in late March. The Confirmation takes place towards the end of term.

The Easter Holiday lasts for 3 weeks and will normally include the Easter weekend, though occasionally Easter may fall in term time, in which case the pupils will be given the whole weekend, including the Bank Holidays, off.

**The Summer Term** begins in late April and on the May Bank Holiday weekend Founderstide is celebrated. This is the occasion on which the Founder's beneficence is commemorated; it is essentially the School's internal open day to which all parents are warmly welcomed. The Saturday begins with a Special Service in the Parish Church and before lunch the Headmaster and often a guest of honour address the parents. Lunch is taken by all in Houses and throughout the day there are exhibitions around the school. The centre-piece is a cricket match between the 1<sup>st</sup> XI and the Old Bloxhamists. In the evenings the Founderstide Ball takes place; parents and members of the Sixth Form attend this occasion, which is in many ways the social highlight of the year.

Half term in the summer falls late in May and lasts a week. The bulk of the public exams for the Fifth and Sixth forms are taken in a 3 week period which falls either side of half term.

Term normally ends at the end of June as the public exams finish. The Headmaster hosts a Garden Party at his house, Woollen Hale, every year on a Sunday in June; the date appears in the Calendar and parents always receive an invitation. This convivial occasion gives an opportunity to meet other parents, staff and friends of the School. The Summer holidays last throughout July and August.

## The Bloxham Week

<b>Times</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>
0830	Registration	Registration/Assembly	Registration
0845-0920	Period 1	Period 1	Period 1
0925-1000	Period 2	Period 2	Period 2
1005-1040	Period 3	Period 3	Period 3
1040-1110	Break	Break	Break
1110-1145	Period 4	Period 4	Period 4
1150-1225	Period 5	Period 5	Period 5
1230-1305	Period 6	Period 6	Period 6
1305-1400	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
1345	Registration	Registration	Registration
1400-1435	P7 (LS Games)	Games (LS P7)	Matches/games (LS P7)
1440-1515	P8 (LS Games)	Games (LS P8)	Matches/games (LS P8)
1520-1555	LS Games	Games (LS P9)	Matches/games (LS P9)
1530-1630	Team practices		Matches/games
1630-1715	HsMs/APG		
1630-1700	Orch/Drama/Activities	Choir/Drama/Activities	
1700-1730	Orch/Drama/Activities	Choir/Drama/Activities	Activities/Bands
1715-1800			Activities/Bands
1745-1800	House Assemblies		
1800-1845	Supper	Supper	Supper
1900-2000	Work in Houses	Work in Houses	Work in Houses
2000-2100	Work/Enrichment	Work/Concerts	Work/Enrichment
2100-2200	Social time	Social time	Social time

<b>Times</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>
0830	Registration	Registration	Registration
0845-0920	Period 1	Period 1	Period 1
0925-1000	Period 2	Period 2	Period 2
1005-1040	Period 3	Period 3	Period 3
1040-1110	Break	Break	Break
1110-1145	Period 4	Period 4	Period 4
1150-1225	Period 5	Period 5	Period 5
1230-1305	Period 6	Period 6	Lunch
1305-1400	Lunch	Lunch	
1345	Registration	Registration	
1400-1435	P7 (LS Games)	Period 7 all	Matches/Games
1440-1515	P8 (LS Games)	Period 8 all	Matches/Games
1520-1555	(LS Games)	LS Period 9	Matches/Games
1530-1630	Activities	Team practices	
1630-1715	Activities		
1630-1700	Activities		
1715-1800	Senior Chapel/	Junior Chapel/	
1715-1745	Junior Quiet time	Senior Lectures	
1800-1845	Supper	Supper	Supper
1900-2000	Work in Houses	Work in Houses	
2000-2100	Work/Enrichment	Work/Enrichment	
2100-2200	Social time	Social time	

## **Events at Bloxham**

There are a number of events occurring regularly at the School, which parents are welcome, indeed encouraged to attend. Some teenage pupils will try and deter parental attendance but please come anyway! The Carol Service, The Confirmation and Founderstide have been mentioned in the section on the Bloxham Year, but there are plenty of other occasions which will interest parents.

## **Sports fixtures**

Matches against other schools take place on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons throughout the year. Details can be found in the School List and Calendar, but by far the best two ways to check for details are *the website* and *Sportsline*. Times, venues and even dates of fixtures often have to be changed, but the Calendar on the website will always be up to date; directions to away fixtures are usually available on the website too. Moreover, we have a dedicated Sportsline (**01295 724370**), which is always updated on match days. Nick Irvine, our Director of Marketing, manages both the website and Sportsline and would be pleased to hear any suggestions for improvement which parents may have. Parents often come to watch matches and, while it is very important that they support the teams, it is equally important that they set the right tone; for example, it is not appropriate for referees'/umpires' decisions to be questioned.

## ***Drama***

Over the course of the academic year many productions are staged at Bloxham. Typically these include: the School Play in November, two House plays, a Lower School production, a Middle School play and performances by the Sixth Form Theatre Studies Groups. Two venues are used: the Great Hall for major productions and the Wesley Theatre for shorter plays when audiences are likely to be smaller. Parents are always welcome to attend.

## ***Music***

The Music Department is always a hive of activity and there is a separate section in the handbook about individual music tuition. Based in the Sam Kahn Music School, the School's musicians put on a number of concerts and recitals each term. Occasionally there is a full blown musical, but most of the time the Musicians perform varied concerts throughout the year. The Lower School musicians usually perform separately. The Choir rehearses each week and sings in Chapel. The pupils take their grade exams at school. Parents are very welcome to musical events and should check with the Director of Music for timings and venues.

## ***House Dances***

Each of the six senior Houses holds an annual house dance. These traditionally take place during the Michaelmas and Lent terms. Staff and pupils work very hard to ensure that their house dance is a successful event which is enjoyable for all those who attend the event. House dances are closely supervised by members of the respective tutor teams. Other members of the teaching and support staff are also invited to attend house dances, as are parents and younger siblings. Most houses also invite pupils from other houses so that a healthy social mix is ensured.

Most dances have a theme and fancy dress is often a feature of the evening. Pupils also endeavour to decorate the venue appropriately and often devote considerable thought, skill and time towards the preparation of the area where the dance takes place. House dances usually take place in the Great Hall, where there is a disco or live band. Adjacent classrooms are used for the provision of refreshments and food for pupils, parents and staff. During a house dance, parents will be offered a buffet supper and a few drinks and many appreciate the chance to meet other parents as well as the tutors and matron.

Although house dances provide an important point of contact between parents, pupils and staff, they are primarily social events and not parents' evenings.

Parents should not be put off attending the party by their children, who may fear that their ancient relatives will embarrass them on the dance floor. Most parents prefer the quiet of the parents' dining area and rarely attempt to dance 'the twist'! If they do, they usually keep at a discreet distance from their sensitive offspring!

All members of the house organising the dance are expected to attend the event. The cost of the ticket, which covers members of the family, guardians and other guests, goes on the end-of-term bill. Many parents traditionally offer to bring in a pudding or bowl of salad in order to make a practical contribution to the success of the event and this can further enliven what is invariably a delightful evening for all concerned.

Parents wishing to take their children home at the end of the party are respectfully requested to allow their children to complete any tidying up they may have to do after the event.

Bloxham has a great tradition of providing successful and well-supervised house dances. It is hoped that this will continue.

### **Bursar's Matters**

The Bursar, together with his team of staff, is responsible for all aspects of finance, estates, personnel, security, health and safety and non-academic administration. The Bursary office is located on the opposite side of the High Street from the main School and remains open throughout the year.

### **School Fees Account**

The published termly fees detailed below cover tuition, accommodation costs and meals as appropriate. Extras are included as separate items on the invoice.

<b>Boarders</b>	Michaelmas Term	£7910
	Lent Term	£8105
	Summer Term	£8105
<b>Dayboarders</b>	Michaelmas Term	£6110
	Lent Term	£6265
	Summer Term	£6265 (inclusive of all meals, except breakfast)
<b>Lower School</b>		
<b>Weekly Boarders</b>	Michaelmas Term	£5235
	Lent Term	£5495
	Summer Term	£5495
<b>Day</b>	Michaelmas Term	£4095
	Lent Term	£4195
	Summer Term	£4195 (inclusive of all meals, except breakfast)

If you require clarification on anything to do with your School Fees Account, please do not hesitate to telephone or e-mail the Finance Bursar, Mrs Marion Wassell [marion@bloxhamschool.co.uk](mailto:marion@bloxhamschool.co.uk). Outside office hours, you will be able to leave a message and someone will call you back as soon as possible.

At least seven days before the beginning of term, please do remember to pay your account and return to the Bursar's office together with all of the various forms which will accompany it. It is a condition of entry that School fees are paid in advance and that accounts sent out in the holidays are settled no later than one week before the first day of term. Please note that a late payment charge of 2% per month or part month is levied on all overdue accounts.

## ***Ways to Pay***

### ***Direct Debits – Reduced charges for monthly payment***

Our usual method of payment is by Direct Debit. We are able to offer the choice of making a single payment on the due date, or, for an administrative charge of 2.6% of each bill, spreading the cost of each invoice over four months. In the latter case, payments are collected on the 1st of each month, thereby enabling fee-payers to spread the load of school fees along with other household bills.

A Direct Debit Mandate will be sent to you with your first invoice.

## **General Information**

Should you not wish to pay by Direct Debit, you will need to send your cheque to the Bursary with the tear-off slip from your invoice.

If you have any query regarding your invoice, in order to avoid a late payment charge, it is important that you send a cheque to the School for the amount that is not being queried, at least seven days before the beginning of term.

## **Lump Sum Deposits**

Depositing a lump sum makes considerable savings. The School is now able to offer a most attractive discounted rate, equivalent to bank base-rate, currently 5.75% (equivalent to 9.58% gross to a 40% tax payer) for the advance payment of fees. Often, grandparents find this scheme attractive because, as well as offering a very high return on funds, it presents potential inheritance tax advantages. If you would like a quotation, please contact the Bursary.

## ***Insurances***

The School operates various optional insurances and you will be able to indicate on the *Options Form* whether you wish to participate in these schemes. Full details of the schemes are available from the Finance Bursar and include:

**Fees Refund Scheme** to provide cover for absence from school through sickness

**BUPA** (private medical cover)

**Pupils' Personal Effects Scheme** to cover for loss or damage of personal possessions, excluding mobile phones

**Denplan** to cover for dental emergencies and accident

**Pupils' Personal Accident Scheme** to cover for permanent disability or death

### **Extras**

The following, whilst not comprehensive, are intended to explain the basis for certain of the charges which will appear on invoices:

**Additional Tuition** - Private tuition and Language conversation classes are charged according to the number of pupils who are taught together (from 1 to 4) and the charges will be published each year.

**Breakages** (other than accidental) will be charged on a cost basis.

**Combined Cadet Force (CCF)** cost will be published each year.

**Careers Advice** a contribution to the cost of ISCO careers advice will be charged.

**Dancing** cost will be invoiced

**Dyslexia Course** charges will be billed each term for full membership, and any other pupils who require regular ongoing support will be billed on an individual basis.

**Educational Visits/Field Trips** – a charge will be made for tickets and transport/accommodation, when such visits are arranged.

**EFL Course** – the membership charge of the EFL course for pupils for whom English is not their first language cover five to six EFL (English as a Foreign Language) lessons per week. Some pupils may not require full membership to an EFL course, and the extent and nature of the teaching required will be determined and charged on an individual basis.

**Examination Charges** are levied for 'A' level, GCSE and other external examinations.

**House Funds** – a small charge is made each term to cover items such as books, magazines and newspapers for the individual houses.

**Internet access and secure email service** – a nominal charge is made per term for pupils in the 4<sup>th</sup> form and above.

**Laundry, Dry Cleaning and Sewing** – there is no charge for items washed in the School Laundry, but dry cleaning and general sewing repairs will be invoiced on a cost basis.

**Materials used** in Art, Design and Technology, Electronics and Textiles courses will be charged on a cost basis.

**Medical Appointments** – if a pupil needs transporting to a Doctor or dentist, the cost of providing a car and driver is charged on the school bill.

**Music Department** - Thirty Music Lessons will be given over the course of the academic year, split up according to the differing lengths of each term, but the cost will be spread equally over the three terms.

If a pupil intends to cease lessons then at least a half a term's notice must be given in writing to the Director of Music, or the tuition fee for the following half term will normally be charged.

Items such as sheet music will be invoiced.

**Occasional overnight accommodation for Day Boarders** - Day Boarders will be charged for overnight stays, except when a stopover is required as a result of a School activity. The current charges are £35 per night for 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> form pupils and £25 in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Form and Lower School for bed and breakfast. If a Day Boarder changes to Boarding, the previous term's charges for occasional overnight stays will be refunded.

**Old Bloxhamists' Society** - All pupils are invited to join the Society and the membership fee is levied during the first six terms of school attendance. Members will receive a copy of the Bloxhamist magazine each year for life, and the opportunity to attend at least three events at School per year free of charge.

**Paperblox** – Paperback books can be bought at this shop, run by the Head of English, which is located off the entrance foyer of the Vallance Library. Purchases are billed on pupils' invoices, up to a limit agreed with parents in advance.

### **School Clothing and Sports' Equipment**

Details of required items will be found on the School Clothing list. Parents are asked to make an appointment with Mrs Butler, the Shop Manager, during the school holiday prior to the pupil's first term, and to pay in the shop for items purchased. Any purchases made by a pupil during term-time will be invoiced.

Any new pupil who collects his or her uniform from the School Shop at the start of term will be charged £50 for the naming of these items. In addition, any item subsequently named at School will be charged at 25p per item. (£1 minimum charge.)

The cost of personal sports equipment, e.g. hockey sticks, purchased from the School Shop will be added to the bill.

### ***Schools' Partnership Worldwide***

Information is enclosed with your first invoice. A voluntary payment of £3.00 will appear on your invoice; please indicate on the Options Form if you do not wish to take part.

### ***Sixth Form***

All members of the Sixth Form are charged a termly fee of £20.00. to cover the various costs associated with using this facility, including Sixth Form social events which take place elsewhere.

### ***Social and Entertainment Charges***

Social excursions and entertainments (e.g. House and School dances, dinners, meals out) are charged at cost.

### ***Sports Charges***

Charges are made for some sports, such as clay pigeon shooting, golf lessons, judo, sailing, shooting, climbing, kayaking and polo.

### ***Stationery***

Stationery can be purchased from the School Shop, and added to the pupil's account.

### ***Textbook Charges***

Heads of Departments issue textbooks as part of the syllabus as and when they are needed. In order to avoid a high charge on the first term's bill, parents are offered a scheme whereby books are hired, rather than purchased.

The current scale of charges is: £38 per term in the 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> Form and £45 per term in the Sixth Form. Pupils will be charged for any textbooks not returned.

### ***Transport***

The Bloxham School Minibus service was set up in September 1999, to provide a safe and reliable means of getting pupils to and from school from outlying areas. The service is open to all day pupils who may wish to use the minibus in the mornings and/or evenings when the buses leave School at approximately 6.00 p.m. Monday to Friday.

Charges for the minibus service are invoiced each term. If pupils wish to use the minibus service in just the mornings or evenings, i.e. only one journey per day, rather than two journeys, two thirds the rate is charged.

All the minibuses are equipped with mobile phones, full safety belt systems, DVD players and are driven by fully qualified uniformed drivers, who have to resit a periodic driving test and medical examinations.

5 routes operate Monday to Friday, divided into different zones. The routes are dictated by requests from parents, and each spring prospective parents, and existing parents receive a form to complete and replies are co-ordinated during the summer by the Bursar's P.A., in conjunction with the Transport Manager. The Transport Manager will then work out a route and exact timings and notify all parents. The Minibus drivers will have driven their particular route prior to the start of the Michaelmas Term. Places are restricted and seats are offered on a first come, first served basis, with Lower School Pupils receiving priority.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Bursar's P.A. by telephoning 01295 724303 if you need any further information regarding this service.

There is a free minibus service from Heathrow Airport at the beginning and end of each term.

## **Medical Services**

### **Medical Arrangements**

Medical care at Bloxham School is provided by the Medical Officer and two Nursing Sisters. There is a school medical centre for in-patient care if required. The Sisters hold surgeries three times a day and are available at all other times. The Medical Officer holds surgeries in the school twice a week. The Medical Officer is based at a large Group Practice in Banbury and a female GP is available for consultation if required.

The health services of the school cover acute health requirements, preventive services and health education.

### **Registration**

**Boarders:** The School prefer all boarders to register with the School Medical Officer and, to that end, we request that the pupils' medical cards be sent with the completed Medical Questionnaire to Sister.

**Dates of vaccinations are essential.**

**Day Pupils:** It is assumed that day pupils will be living in the immediate area and that therefore they will remain registered with their local general practitioner. Although emergency treatment will always be provided for any day pupil at the School, it is expected that routine medical matters will be dealt with by the pupil's own doctor, including primary and booster immunisations. A completed medical questionnaire should be returned to Sister before start of term. **Dates of vaccinations are essential.**

### **Specialist referrals**

A specialist consultant opinion is sometimes required and we like to discuss this with parents, where appropriate, before the referral is made. The local District General Hospital is the Horton General Hospital in Banbury and other specialist services are available in Oxford and neighbouring towns.

### ***Absence/Illness/Hospitalisation***

If your son or daughter is absent from School because of an illness, please ring the Housemaster/mistress before morning registration, or the main school office if they are unavailable.

If your son or daughter contracts a significant illness, or requires hospitalisation whilst at School, the Medical Staff will let you know.

If any ongoing medical or dental treatment has been organised for your son or daughter, either before School entry or during School holidays, please let Sister know.

Routine dental check-ups and orthodontic work should be done during the holidays. Emergency dental work may be arranged by the School Sister.

### ***Confidentiality***

In providing medical care for the pupil, the Medical Team will often need to liaise with parents/guardians/Housemaster and Housemistresses. Medical confidentiality will always be respected, although there may be very rare occasions when, either in the pupil's best interests, or for the protection of the School community, it becomes necessary to reveal confidential information. This would never be done without first informing the pupil.

### ***Counselling Service***

A counsellor visits the School one afternoon a week and is available to all pupils, free of charge.

### ***Immunisation***

It is National and School policy that all pupils be immunised against the following diseases: Diphtheria: Tetanus: Pertussis: Poliomyelitis: Measles: Mumps: German Measles (Rubella) (MMR), TB where indicated (***BCG is not given routinely in Oxfordshire***)

We wish to ensure that the immunisation status of all pupils is kept up to date, both by primary courses where indicated and by booster doses. ***You will receive a consent form to sign and return to Sister. Immunisation will be done only on receipt of the signed consent form – Boarders only.***

Pupils travelling abroad, either on School trips, or to return home during School holidays, will be offered advice and treatment from a specialist Travel Medicine Clinic which operates from the Medical Officer's Surgery in Banbury. Unfortunately, some of the treatments are no longer funded by the National Health Service (in particular, anti-malarial prophylaxis and yellow fever) and will be liable to a private charge. Advice, however, is still available and we would expect pupils to follow that advice.

### ***Medication & First Aid Treatment***

On receipt of the signed consent form for administrations and unless advised to the contrary, over-the-counter medication such as Paracetamol, simple linctus, de-congestant and anti-histamine tablets may be given routinely if required. Medication requiring a prescription is obtained through the School Medical Officer for pupils registered with the School Doctor. Please state in writing if you do not wish your child to be given treatment/medication.

### ***Lower School Pupils***

A consent letter from home allowing over-the-counter medication to be given should be received by Sister Ashton before the start of term.

## ***Health & Safety of Pupils***

***Fire Safety*** – all new pupils receive an induction programme on fire safety and at least once a term, a full evacuation of each boarding house takes place. All procedures and processes are carried out to meet the very stringent requirements of the Oxfordshire fire service and the DfES.

### ***Sports Safety***

***Cricket*** – all pupils must wear a cricket helmet and other protective clothing as appropriate. Details will be given by the cricket coach taking the session.

***Squash*** – it is now a requirement that squash goggles must be worn at all times on the court. Whilst the School has a supply of goggles which pupils can borrow, it is suggested that pupils who play regularly have their own pair.

***Rugby/Hockey*** – Gumshields are mandatory and must be worn for all practices as well as matches. In accordance with guidelines recently set down by the major sporting bodies, including the Rugby Football Union and English Hockey Association, together with clear directives from the British Dental Association, we strongly recommend that a custom mouthguard is far preferable to the DIY variety. It can protect against concussion and soft tissue injuries.

The School arranges for Claridge Mouthguard Laboratories to send a dentist at the beginning of each academic year to take impressions for those pupils wanting custom fitting mouthguards to be made.

## Glossary of Terms

Orders – internal assessments (page 7)

Upper School – the Sixth Form (NC years 12 and 13)

Middle School – 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Forms (NC years 9, 10 and 11)

Lower School – 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Forms (NC years 7 and 8)

Woodard Schools – group of Christian schools of which Bloxham is one.

Provosts – clergy within Woodard who give spiritual guidance to schools.

Egerton – the founder of the school after whom a house and the first library were named.

Dewey – the Sports Hall named after KT Dewey, a former headmaster.

Vallance – the Library named after MW Vallance, a former headmaster.

Wesley – the studio theatre, formally a Wesleyan Chapel.

Palmer – school hospital.

RTC – the Raymond Technology Centre.

SKMS – the Sam Kahn Music School.

White Lion – the Lower School.

Park Close – the Lower School boarding house.

Woollen Hale – the Headmaster's house.

Pigsty – small rugby pitch on Second Field.

House Shout – the inter-house song competition.

Day boarder – day pupil.

Founderstide – Bloxham's main internal open day (speech day) (page 22-23).

HsM – abbreviation for Housemaster/mistress.

Boys' sports teams:

- Colts (under 16, 5<sup>th</sup> Form)
- Junior Colts (under 15, 4<sup>th</sup> Form)
- Yearlings (under 14, 3<sup>rd</sup> Form)
- Zebras (under 13, Lower School)

## **School Policies**

### ***Policy on behaviour towards other people***

This policy includes equality of opportunity, sex and racial discrimination and bullying, since all are aspects of unacceptable behaviour by members of the school community towards other people.

As a Christian foundation the School seeks to promote good relationships between individuals and proper behaviour of one person towards another.

### **Equal Opportunity**

The school seeks to provide equal opportunities for all its pupils and staff regardless of culture, gender, disability, ethnic origin or class.

Staff and pupils are expected to treat each other with respect as individuals, and racist and sexist remarks will not be tolerated. The school seeks to dispel the development of stereotype images of other groups, faiths and cultures.

### **Bullying**

By "bullying" is understood the deliberate causing of pain, discomfort or unpleasantness, physically or verbally, to other people. Staff and pupils are expected not to engage in bullying behaviour, to resist bullying behaviour when witnessed in others, and to make it clear that bullying is not tolerated within the school. Such behaviour will include physical bullying, any remarks or other forms of intolerance based upon anyone's race, gender, appearance, disability or other personal characteristic, and unreasonable refusal to communicate with other people. Such behaviour will be dealt with immediately and with appropriate severity.

### ***Policy Against Bullying***

#### ***Education***

Education about bullying is part of the School's Personal, Social and Health Education programme, as well as being reinforced in Headmaster's assemblies and Chapel.

#### ***Discipline***

Actions which are hurtful to others are bullying and are regarded as serious misconduct. A pupil who is involved in a serious bullying incident or who persists in lower level bullying will be suspended and he or she and the parents will be informed that a repetition will probably mean that he or she is required to leave the School. Those involved in bullying will receive on-going guidance on appropriate behaviour.

## ***The Bloxham Ethos***

Bloxham is a community built upon mutual respect and care for one another, where we try to avoid all forms of inappropriate behaviour. This is the atmosphere in which young people can best develop their academic, social, moral and physical abilities.

- We believe that all members of the school community should be respected.
- We aim to create an environment in which all people can do their best.
- We believe that all members of the school community should be valued.
- We aim to create an environment in which all people feel safe.
- We believe that our individual characters should be celebrated.

## ***The Bloxham Policy Against Bullying***

### ***What is bullying?***

Bullying is the deliberate causing of pain, discomfort or unpleasantness to others. It usually involves misuse of power over other people.

Bullying behaviour typically involves the following:

- using hurtful, sexist, homophobic or racist names, or any names designed to upset someone.
- physical attacks such as kicking, hitting, punching, pushing etc, or threatening such.
- taunting, mocking or belittling other people, including by means of text messages, emails and websites
- spreading rumours about other people.
- avoiding, excluding, ignoring or ganging up on someone and encouraging others to do the same.
- taking or damaging someone else's property.

### ***What to do if you are bullied***

1. Tell the bully to stop. Let the bully know that you don't like it and this will often stop it. Say clearly that the behaviour is unwelcome and offensive.
2. Seek help. Report the matter to a member of staff or a prefect. Father Michael (tel: 720626) and Mrs Summers take responsibility for Child Protection Issues at school.
3. Feel confident that the community will stand with you to eliminate bullying.

### ***What to do if someone else is being bullied?***

1. Be caring and courageous enough to do something about it.
2. Do something immediately. It is important to stop the problem before it grows.
3. Ask for help. Report the matter to a member of staff or a prefect.

## ***Sexual Contact***

Sexual contact between pupils at school is not appropriate and is forbidden; pupils involved in sexual contact may be asked to leave the school. Public displays of affection between pupils are also forbidden. The School seeks to educate pupils about relationships through the PSHE programme, lectures, assemblies and so on.

## ***Drugs Policy***

### ***Purpose***

The supply or possession of certain drugs - the controlled drugs - is illegal. It is also illegal for the School knowingly to allow its premises to be used for the consumption of such prohibited substances. The purpose of this policy is to seek to prevent pupils from using illegal drugs at any time.

It recognises that drugs are widely available and widely used by some teenagers and that this is a problem, which must be confronted by society as a whole both at school and at home. This policy is intended to act as a positive, effective deterrent.

### ***Statement of Policy***

It is the policy of Bloxham School actively to discourage the use of illegal drugs, and to treat cases of use by pupils as serious misconduct. At the very least the school itself should be a drugs free zone.

### ***Implementation of the policy***

The policy will be implemented as follows:

#### ***Prevention through Education***

Priority will be given to a continuing programme of education about drugs at all levels of the School. Pupils and staff will be regularly updated on developments in drug misuse to ensure that sensible discussions and decisions can be made about the misuse of drugs.

Help will be provided for anyone genuinely seeking it within the School's programme. Anyone with a drugs problem will receive this help but will go onto a programme of regular testing (see below).

### ***Suspicion of misuse***

If a member of staff has reason to suspect that a pupil is misusing drugs, they must report the situation, through the pupil's Housemaster or Housemistress, to the Headmaster or Deputy Head, who will decide if further investigation or a drug test is warranted.

#### ***Suspicion of misuse may arise from:***

Behavioural signs, such as a deterioration in a pupil's well being and/or performance; other signs or evidence, such as the finding of certain items of equipment, behaviour on a particular occasion, or other information that has been gathered.

### ***Investigation into possible misuse***

Once he has confirmed that there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that a pupil may have been misusing illegal drugs, the Headmaster or the Deputy Head will be responsible for any further investigations; he will make every effort to ensure that they are conducted fairly and with as much openness towards the affected pupil as the circumstances may reasonably allow. The Headmaster or the Deputy Head may decide that a pupil will take a urine test.

Wherever possible, the School will contact the pupil's parents at the time to let them know of the decision to test at an early stage.

Urine sampling and testing will be carried out in accordance with a strict procedure, details of which are available from the School. This procedure will be updated from time to time as experience and/or scientific advance indicate.

It is a requirement that dual samples be collected in the School hospital under circumstances of the strictest hygiene and care; while every effort will be made to maintain the dignity of the pupil, an adult will be present to ensure that there is no attempt to falsify or tamper with the sample. Initial testing will be carried out on the spot by the Head, Deputy Head or other senior member of staff using an appropriate dip test; should this test prove to be positive the sample will be tested again by an independent laboratory and the same laboratory will properly maintain the second sample for a period of six months, which on request will be available for retesting by another laboratory if required by parents. Complete chain of custody records for the samples will be kept. It is intended that the procedures be fully in accordance with the standards required to satisfy any legal challenge.

### ***Authority to perform testing***

A testing consent form signed by parents, and also by pupils who are in the fifth form or above will be required.

It is a condition of acceptance of a new pupil into the School that a signed consent form is returned to the School.

A pupil will be asked to sign a consent form on entering the fifth form.

If a pupil refuses to take a test, he or she will almost certainly be required to leave the School.

### ***Discipline following misuse***

If the only evidence that a pupil has been taking illegal drugs is a positive urine test, the pupil may be allowed to remain at the School and will then be given further guidance and support. The pupil will also be under an obligation to submit to further tests during the rest of the pupil's career at the School. Any further positive test, regardless of the time and place of consumption, will lead to the pupil's expulsion.

If the only evidence that a pupil has been taking illegal drugs is the pupil's own admission, the pupil may be allowed to remain at the School and will then be given further guidance and support. The pupil will also be under an obligation to submit to further tests during the rest of the pupil's career at the School. Any further positive test, regardless of the time and place of consumption, will lead to the pupil's expulsion.

Any pupil found supplying or inciting the use of illegal drugs, or being in possession of them with intent to supply, will be expelled.

Any pupil found in possession of, or using illegal drugs, which he or she has otherwise than for supply, or intending to use them, will be expelled, except in the most extenuating circumstances.  
Any pupil discovered attempting to tamper with or falsify a sample will be expelled.

### ***Testing following a first positive test.***

If a pupil is allowed to remain at the School following a positive test, he or she will be liable to random testing thereafter. The decision to require a test in these circumstances need not be based on suspicion, and parents will not necessarily be contacted when the decision to test is taken. They will be informed of the result of any test.

### ***Confidentiality***

The records of testing will not be used for any other purpose and they will be destroyed when the pupil concerned leaves the School.

### ***Alcohol Policy***

#### ***Statement of Policy***

***Reflecting the concerns of society at large over binge drinking, it is the policy of the School actively to discourage younger pupils from drinking alcohol and to encourage older pupils either to abstain from drinking alcohol or to learn to drink it within safe limits. It treats misuse of alcohol by pupils as misconduct.***

#### ***School Rules and Guidelines***

The possession of alcohol by any pupil while under School discipline is forbidden.  
The use of alcohol by pupils while under School discipline is permitted only under the following circumstances:

With the Housemaster's permission, a pupil who is 18 years old or over may visit a Public House (but not in Bloxham).

On suitable occasions, for example team or play celebrations, prefect meetings etc., members of staff may give alcohol to pupils. The nature of the alcohol that can be provided is as follows:

Sixth Form	Beer, wine, cider
Fifth Form	Shandy (or beer with food)
Fourth Form and below	No alcohol

Spirits and alcopops are not permitted.

The provision of alcohol to pupils must always be closely supervised by staff.

## **Education**

Education about alcohol is part of the School's Personal, Social and Health Education programme. Help will be provided, by the medical authorities and those providing the School's pastoral care, for anyone genuinely seeking it.

## **Discipline**

Bringing alcohol into the school is regarded as serious misconduct on the grounds of safety, and will probably lead to the pupil's suspension.

Illegal drinking is on occasions associated with other forms of misconduct, often including causing damage, and in dealing with a drinking incident all the circumstances are taken into account.

Any consumption of spirits is regarded more seriously, and will probably lead to the pupil's suspension.

Other cases of drinking where there are no other factors involved are dealt with by a week's gate and thereafter a graduated response. A pupil who persists in this behaviour will be suspended and he or she and the parents will be informed that a repetition will probably mean that he or she is required to leave the School.

## **Behaviour at home**

Behaviour at home is not normally the concern of the School, except where a breach of the law of the land is involved. However, what boys and girls do or are allowed to do at home can influence the way that they wish to behave at School. Parents are thus strongly encouraged to ensure that the patterns of behaviour that they establish at home are in sympathy with what is expected at School so as to prevent unnecessary pressure on their sons and daughters.

## **Tobacco Policy**

### **Statement of Policy**

**Reflecting the concerns of society at large over smoking in public, it is the policy of the School actively to discourage smoking tobacco, and to treat cases of use by pupils as misconduct. Smoking in or near buildings is treated as serious misconduct, in view of the dangers to life and property caused by this practice.**

### **School Rules and Guidelines**

The use or possession of tobacco by any pupil while under School discipline is forbidden.

## **Education**

Education about tobacco is part of the School's Personal, Social and Health Education programme.

Help will be provided, by the medical authorities and those providing the School's pastoral care, for anyone genuinely seeking it.

## ***Discipline***

Smoking in or near to buildings is regarded as serious misconduct on the grounds of safety, and will probably lead to the pupil's suspension.

Other cases of smoking are dealt with by a week's gate and thereafter a graduated response. A pupil who persists in this behaviour will be suspended and he or she and the parents will be informed that a repetition will probably mean that he or she is required to leave the School.

## ***Behaviour at home***

Behaviour at home is not normally the concern of the School, except where a breach of the law of the land is involved. However, what boys and girls do or are allowed to do at home can influence the way that they wish to behave at School. Thus a pupil who is allowed to smoke at home may find it very difficult to stop on return to School. Parents are thus strongly encouraged to ensure that the patterns of behaviour that they establish at home are in sympathy with what is expected at School so as to prevent unnecessary pressure on their sons and daughters.

## ***Special Educational Needs Policy***

- 1 Admission to Bloxham School is principally on the basis of academic ability. We endeavour to ensure that a pupil with the ability to gain a place at the School will not be disadvantaged by other learning difficulties, provided that our accommodation of these difficulties does not impede the education of all our pupils.
- 2 Our provision for special educational needs is mainly for dyslexic pupils, but in addition we have pupils whose dyspraxia is recognised and taken into consideration, and pupils with a range of other needs can do well at our school if they have the learning ability.
- 3 The most important resource for our pupils with special educational needs is the quality of teaching we offer in the classroom. We are therefore committed to ensuring that all our teaching staff understand how to make learning accessible to those in their classes with such needs. All teaching staff are issued with comprehensive guidance on each pupil with special educational needs, guidance which is updated annually for the start of the Michaelmas Term. This is contained in a confidential Yellow Folder. In addition new members of staff are given an induction session to explain what dyslexia is, how it is dealt with in the School and how the range of other special educational needs of our pupils can be addressed. Maintaining the Yellow Folder and inducting new staff in special needs are the responsibility of the Head of Learning Support Mr H. J. Alexander.
- 4 In considering whether to offer a place to a pupil with an identified special educational need, the Headmaster will seek the advice of the Head of Learning Support. Parents who are looking at the School are expected to inform us of such needs and to provide copies of relevant assessments. It is helpful for them to discuss their children's needs in the first place with Mr Alexander so as to ensure that we would be a suitable school.

- 5 It is the responsibility of the Head of Learning Support in collaboration with all staff to monitor the progress through school of all pupils with special educational needs. Where pupils are stated by their local authorities he will arrange and chair their annual statement reviews.
- 6 For public examinations some special arrangements such as extra time may be arranged in accordance with the regulations of the examination boards. Extra time is not arranged for internal examinations, and parents should be aware that it is of limited value to most pupils. In accordance with the regulations, we will award extra time where it is specifically recommended by a qualified educational psychologist after a pupil has reached secondary schooling, and in occasional cases where testing by the Head of Learning Support reveals a need for such provision.
- 7 The School runs a specialist Dyslexia Course for up to six pupils a year in the Third, Fourth and Fifth Forms. This takes the place of modern foreign languages on their timetables and concentrates on improving their reading speed and accuracy, their spelling and their study skills. The course is taught by Mr Alexander. For admission to the Course we would expect the pupil to have a combined WISC or BAS intelligence score of at least 120. An additional termly fee is charged for this course.
- 8 For pupils in the Lower School and those not on the Dyslexia Course, additional tuition for special needs is available after school in groups of up to three pupils. These groups are taught by Mrs Alison McLellan. An additional fee per session is charged for this tuition.
- 9 The School has a Disability Policy Review Committee comprising the Bursar, Deputy Head, SEN Co-ordinator, School Sister, Director of Sport and PE and the Head of Biology. Other members are co-opted where necessary. The Committee's terms of reference are
- i) To review the School's policies, procedures and facilities, as they are likely to affect pupils, prospective pupils and parents who are disabled.
  - ii) To make recommendations to improve the accessibility of its education for those affected, by making reasonable adjustments and planning for the future.
  - iii) To review the School's Disability Policy.
  - iv) To review the School's Accessibility Plan.

There are limitations on the adaptations which could be made to the school buildings to accommodate pupils of impaired mobility because of the layout of the school and the historic nature of many of its buildings, some listed, but the school would consider such adaptation on an individual basis should the need arise. New buildings and adaptation projects take such needs into account.

Among issues the Committee has considered are that:

Some parking spaces will be reserved for disabled visitors to the Main Car area.

Access ramps have been provided when seen to be appropriate, e.g. Lower School has this facility.

Automatic doors have been installed to ease entrance to the Main School building, Vallance Library and dining facilities.

There are ground floor bedrooms available in Crake House, for boys, and they will be introduced to Raymond and Wilberforce Houses for girls. It is not easy to provide access to upper floors of other boarding facilities except by stairs. The School's hospital has downstairs accommodation.

The Raymond Technology Centre and Vallance Library have a lift for disabled users, allowing full access to the first floor and including a suitable lavatory. Some of the classrooms and other teaching areas are on the ground floor and are accessible, but other floors are not, except by stairs. The School is considering alternative forms for those with visual or hearing impairment, including fitting hearing loops.

The Sports Centre and playing fields are accessible, but School minibuses have not been adapted for disabled pupils. The next to be replaced will be adapted.

### ***POLICY ON GUARDIANS***

The School requires that for all pupils whose parents live abroad a Guardian must be appointed to act as the parents' representative in this country during the pupil's time at Bloxham.

It is not the responsibility of the School to find or appoint the Guardian, and it is not now considered good practice for schools to do so, since the responsibility of the Guardian is to the pupil and his or her parents rather than to the School.

#### **The rôle of the Guardian.**

The Guardian must be willing to act as a parent would and therefore must

- be able to be contacted by the School at any time of day or night during term time in case of emergency;
- be responsible for the pupil at all times when his or her parents are out of the country;
- be responsible for making suitable arrangements for the pupil during exeats and holidays whenever the pupil is unable to return home, and should inform the Housemaster or Housemistress of these arrangements well beforehand (such exeats include Half Term each term and an additional long weekend towards the end of November);
- be willing to receive the pupil at home if he or she is too unwell, or is suspended or required to leave the School.

It is highly desirable for the Guardian to be willing to

- attend a parents' evening and take or communicate decisions with regard to the pupil's education, pastoral care and other needs;
- attend a pupil's special days: Founderstide, prize giving, matches, concerts etc.
- be willing to look after the pupil for the occasional weekend away from School in addition to half terms etc.

#### **Who the Guardian might be.**

Guardians can either be

- Relatives living in this country
- Friends of the family who are willing to take on the responsibility

- A guardianship agency: we are not permitted to make recommendations about these, but can provide names and addresses of agencies that are known to us.

### **School support for the Guardian**

The School seeks to support the Guardian fully in the same way that we would support a parent. In particular, the Guardian

- is free to contact the pupil's Housemaster or Housemistress at all times concerning the pupil's progress and regarding arrangements;
- will receive a School Calendar of events at the beginning of term and notification of all School announcements and holidays;
- will receive copies of School reports in the event of the pupil being unable to return home in the holidays and in addition to parents if that is what parents wish;
- will be very welcome at all School functions to which parents are invited;
- will at all times be encouraged to take an interest in the pupil's progress and welfare.

### **Exceptions to the need to have a Guardian**

In some cases when the pupil is a Sixth Former and the family is in Europe and within easy and quick reach of the UK by air, the School may be willing to waive the need for a Guardian. However, parents need to be aware of the responsibilities that they will be accepting. Among these are:

- the need to make arrangements for the pupil during the Half Term exeat each term and the extra long weekend in late November; it may be that the family of a school friend will invite the pupil to their home for such an occasion, but this cannot be guaranteed and the School cannot undertake to make alternative arrangements;
- the need to make arrangements at once for the pupil to return home or be otherwise looked after away from School if he or she is too unwell, or is suspended or required to leave the School

Parents who wish to take advantage of this concession should confirm with the School that the need for a Guardian has been waived.

## Complaints

### Parental Complaints Procedure

#### Introduction

Bloxham School has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with this Procedure.

#### Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

- It is hoped that any complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.
- If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their son/daughter's Housemaster or Housemistress. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Housemaster or Housemistress cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult the Headmaster.
- Complaints made directly to a Head of Department or Head/Deputy Head will usually be referred to the relevant Housemaster or Housemistress unless the Head of Department or Head/Deputy Head deem it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.
- The Housemaster/Housemistress will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved within 14 days or in the event that the Housemaster/Housemistress and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with stage 2 of this Procedure.

#### Stage 2 – Formal Resolution

- If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Headmaster. The Headmaster will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- In most cases, the Headmaster will speak with the parents concerned, normally within five days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- It may be necessary for the Headmaster to carry out further investigations.
- The Headmaster will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

- Once the Headmaster is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in writing. The Headmaster will also give reasons for his decision.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this Procedure.

### Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

- If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to the Chair of the Governors' Executive Committee, which has been appointed by the Governors to call hearings of the Complaints Panel.
- The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration, The Panel will consist of at least three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the school. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Board of Governors, The Chair of the Governors' Executive Committee, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 14 days.
- If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than 3 days prior to the hearing.
- The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person; this may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.
- If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.
- Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out. After due consideration of all relevant facts, the Panel will reach a decision within 10 days of the Hearing. The Panel will write to the Parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The decision of the Panel will be final. The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing to the parents, the Head, the Governors and, where relevant, the person complained of.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except in so far as is required of the school by paragraph 6(2) (j) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2003; where disclosure is required in the course of the school's inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

The Chairman of the School Council of Governors is Mr. Barrie Hurst and letters to him may be sent to the School.

## **Problems or Complaints – advice issued to pupils**

*This advice is intended to help you in times of difficulty. Keep it somewhere safe, in case you need to refer to it.*

### **Who can you talk to?**

There are many people who will be happy to talk with you. A list of some of them is given below.

- Your own parents or family
- Your Housemaster/Housemistress or your Tutor
- The Chaplain or Medical Staff (in confidence)
- The School Counsellor (you can also talk to her in confidence; she is here every Tuesday afternoon, and can be contacted via Sister)
- Any member of staff of your choice
- Peer Listeners

### **Telephone Help Lines**

In Oxfordshire      01865 842111      (a Helpline provided by the Boarding Schools Inspectorate of Oxfordshire County Council)

Nationally            0800 1111            (A free telephone call to CHILDLINE)

Clare Davies        01865 397750      From the Commission for Social Care Inspection  
or you can write to

Childline FREEPOST 1111, London N1 OBR

### ***Making a Complaint***

It may be that you are seriously worried or concerned about the way in which you, or other pupils, are being treated. Or, perhaps you have talked to one of the above, and you are not satisfied. Then, you may want to make a formal complaint.

### ***Formal Complaints***

Mr Stewart is the senior staff member responsible for receiving formal complaints, and for monitoring responses to them.

Most every-day problems are resolved informally, of course, but if you wish to make a formal complaint, you have a right to do so.

You may make a formal complaint either verbally or in writing to Mr Stewart. (In any case, he will make a written note of what you say). You may also refer a formal complaint to any member of the staff whom you trust, who will then pass on to Mr Stewart a written note of your complaint. He will acknowledge it within two days. He will then ask you to see him to discuss your complaint, and you may be accompanied by any member of staff of your choice, or by another pupil. You will receive a response to your complaint

certainly within 28 days but usually very much sooner. If you wish, Clare Davies from the Commission for Social Care Inspection (which is independent of the School) can be involved in considering your complaint. If you think that your complaint is not being considered properly, you can telephone one of the numbers given earlier.

**Remember:**

- There are people at Bloxham who are willing and ready to listen to you.
- There are outside independent sources of help available to you.
- If you want to make a formal complaint, you have a right to do so. You can have a friend or teacher with you, and you cannot be “in trouble” simply for making a complaint.
- You do not need to tell staff or anyone else that you are complaining about them.

**Statement of Boarding Principles and Practice**

Bloxham has four boys’ houses, two girls’ houses and a Lower School boarding house. The six senior houses are situated on campus whilst the Lower School boarding house is about a five minute walk away. Each house has a housemaster/ housemistress and are supported by an assistant and usually three tutors. Each house has a matron who is responsible for domestic matters. There are variations in the resident staff in each house largely due to the physical nature of the accommodation. In Crake and Wilson for example the Housemaster lives off site leaving the assistant resident in the boarding house.

In the senior houses tutors support the HsMs with evening duties and the Asst.HsM and HsM will divide up the weekend duties throughout the term. Each house has a house captain who leads a prefect team who support the HsMs. Their duties may include supervising younger members of the house during prep time, organising duty rotas and acting as a voice for the girls or boys in the house, reporting to HsM as needed.

Each house is run on the same routine, prep time and bedtimes are standard throughout and the accommodation and care is based upon the National Boarding Standards. Each house has a handbook which includes practical information regarding day to day arrangements.

**Boarding Aims:**

- To provide a warm and friendly environment where the pupils feel secure and happy
- To provide an environment that enables the pupils to develop their talents to the full.
- To encourage pupils to have respect for one another, for each other’s property and for the community in which they live – house, school and beyond
- To offer advice and support throughout each pupil’s time in the house through the tutorial system and by encouraging good communication between adults, senior and junior pupils.
- To develop and operate a system of rules and regulations so that the pupils are aware of their responsibilities both to themselves and to others within the house and wider community
- To encourage links between the parents and the house particularly concerning a pupil’s progress and welfare
- To develop smart, confident, caring and sociable young adults.