



# Wennington Hall School

## 14. Statement of the Schools Boarding Principles and Practice

Wennington Hall School is located in North Lancashire, between the market town of Kirkby Lonsdale and the City of Lancaster, and sits within a rural site of 17 acres.

The school is registered to provide education for up to 80 boys aged between 11 and 16 years who have social, emotional and mental health difficulties and has 20 residential placements.

The School provides a safe and consistent framework for all of our young people, and is committed to creating and maintaining an educational and caring environment, which nurtures and stimulates personal development and wellbeing. Residential and Day pupils follow the educational timetable and curriculum appropriate to their age.

Wennington Hall School strives to provide the highest quality of residential care within a relaxed environment, integrating education and care staff for a supportive yet structured setting.

Staff encourage the young people to have a good attitude to their education and develop confidence and the ability to reflect and 'own' their behaviour.

The school specialises in helping each young person to reach their full potential, academically, socially, and emotionally. By means of an extensive system of support, care and education the young people are encouraged to live fulfilling and productive lives within a caring and respectful community. We specialise in working with young people with SEMH, moderate learning difficulties and some communication difficulties. All of the pupils who attend Wennington Hall School have an EHCP (Educational Health Care Plan). We are an inclusive learning community that is forward thinking, innovative and confident and committed to ensuring that all pupils are happy, enthusiastic and purposeful learners.

At Wennington Hall School our Principles of Boarding, which apply equally to our day pupils as well, aim to:

- Safeguard and promote the welfare of each pupil, providing an environment that is, as far as possible, free from physical hazards and dangers of any sort.
- Develop the whole person, and instil a desire for truth and a respect for others in a caring and happy atmosphere.
- Produce an open and trusting ethos in which each pupil can feel that they are able to approach any other member of the community, whether that be staff or pupils, confident in the knowledge that he will be treated and respected as an individual.
- Create an atmosphere of tolerance, openness and trust in which teasing/banter, harassment and bullying would find great difficulty in developing.
- Encourage and support pupils to develop their intellectual needs through participation in activities and in an atmosphere that values effort.
- Offer a range of activities, hobbies and pastimes that will assist in the personal, social and cultural development of each pupil.
- Provide accommodation that is comfortable and suited to the needs of the pupils, and that offers adequate levels of privacy.
- Encourage all pupils to respect themselves, others and the environment.
- Promote leadership qualities and pupil ability to work as part of a team.
- Develop and support self-confidence and resilience in all pupils.

## **Boarding Provision**

Wennington Hall School provides residential boarding places for boys aged 11 – 16 years currently up to four nights a week, 38 weeks of the year. There are currently five residential houses containing up to four beds. The school has a fully operational kitchen and dining room from which hot and cold meals are provided. Breakfast is eaten on house, lunch is served in the dining room, as are the evening meals. On Wednesday evenings the senior houses source and prepare their own meals which are eaten on house.

## **Accommodation**

The boarders who reside at the school each have their own bedroom and are encouraged and supported to personalise their rooms and bed spaces. Each bedroom is furnished with a wardrobe, lockable storage unit, bed, television and a work station. All residential houses have a communal lounge area, toilet, bathing and showering facilities and a kitchen/dining area. The senior houses have fully equipped kitchens and individual laundry facilities separate to the school laundry.

The Head of Residential Care has overall responsibility for Wennington Hall School residential provision. The Headteacher continues to take full responsibility for the school.

All houses are staffed by a team of Residential Educational Support and Welfare Officers (RESWs) entrusted to support, advise, build relationships/friendships and develop the young people's social skills and independence before going onto further education and adult life. The boarding staff are on hand around the clock, providing a happy home like environment.

Each team has a Team Leader who helps to co-ordinate staff and students throughout the educational day, and who also runs the residential shifts of an evening, ultimately becoming the senior on call.

Between the hours of 22.30 pm and 08.00 am, three staff sleep in, (including the senior staff member) in designated staff bedrooms and are available for support to deal with issues or any emergencies that may arise.

Each house has a Waking Watch who are on house between the hours of 21.00 pm and 08.00 am; they are there to support and to safeguard the young people throughout the evening.

## **Keyworker and Tutor Teams**

Every young person at Wennington Hall School has a '**Keyworker**' who is specifically selected in line with existing relationships, nature of need and compatibility.

A Keyworker is a designated member of staff who will advocate for a young person and be the first port of call for their affairs throughout their school life. Being a Keyworker is a vital part of gaining knowledge about a young person, through building and developing positive relationships whereby creating a positive attachment with them. The relationship between Keyworker and Key Child should be built upon mutual respect, trust and understanding, whilst demonstrating a commitment to the needs of the individual. On establishing all of these factors, the young person can then feel safe within school and understand that they have a critical friend with whom they can turn to for support, advice and guidance at all times. These relationships will inevitably help

to positively encourage young people to make positive choices within school and beyond, so that they can attain positive outcomes within their lives.

Keyworkers work collaboratively with key education staff to discuss all aspects of school life and implement targets and strategies to help attain positive outcomes specific to the best interests and individual needs of the child. Tutor teams usually consist of, form tutor, designated teaching assistant and keyworker. These teams are timetabled to meet weekly to discuss progress. The outcomes of these meetings then inform the individual plans and working documents which then form the pathway to attaining social development positive outcomes.

### **Parental Involvement**

Contact with parents/carers is essential and we ensure they are encouraged to be involved in their child's stay at Wennington Hall School. Key staff contact parents at least weekly to ensure they are kept up to date with their child's progress, and are kept informed of behaviour whether this may be positive or negative.

All of the young people at Wennington Hall School can, and do, contact parents/carers by telephone when they want.

Key staff that consistently work alongside the young people strive to maintain positive relationships with parents, carers and other agencies. These are essential to ensure an effective provision with the best possible outcomes for children.

### **Activities**

When children transition to Wennington Hall School, they are encouraged to continue with any interests or activities which they may have previously enjoyed as well as being encouraged to try new and different activities.

All boarders have access to a comprehensive list of activities which provide an enjoyable and stimulating environment and experience.

Day pupils frequently stay at school beyond the educational day to participate in the activity programme, and this can also serve to promote positive relationships between staff and residential boys.

We believe that participation in community based activities can help to raise children's self-esteem, self-confidence and self-awareness and promote a sense of belonging in their new environment. Above all else respect for themselves and others is paramount.

Within a short drive the school is able to visit local shops, cinemas, ten pin bowling, play parks and clubs in the wider community, to ensure young people boarding can access a wide range of evening activities and social events.

### **Cultural/Religious Needs**

It is anticipated that some of our young people will come from a tradition of religious knowledge or observance in their homes. It is therefore our aim to provide an appreciation of the religious views of other peoples and cultures. As far as is practicable to do so, the young people are

supported in attending religious services and enabled to observe any requirement (such as dress, diet or otherwise) to meet their spiritual needs. Where practicable, all young people are provided with access to religious studies within the education curriculum. Cultural and religious festivals are celebrated within the extended curriculum within the individual residential areas. Menu planning and food preparation take into consideration any religious, cultural or diversity needs with meal times within the individual residential areas allowing for multiple alternatives to be catered for.

### **Complaints and Compliments**

The school ensures that copies of the complaints procedure are available for all young people which is explained to young people on their first day at the school. Young people have plenty of opportunities to voice their views and discuss anything they are unhappy with not only in meetings, but also during keyworker sessions, meetings with the Headteacher or Head of Care and on debriefs following incidents. They also have opportunities to speak privately with relevant visitors to the school such as their social worker, IRO, an Independent advocate, standard 20 inspectors or school Governors. This allows ample opportunity for young people to voice any concerns and gives staff opportunities to resolve any issues as soon as they arise. Important phone numbers are also displayed detailing who they can talk to if they have a problem of any kind. Complaints can arise through simple misunderstanding or genuine dissatisfaction. Usually, discussing the matter determines its cause, and a satisfactory solution for everyone can then be found. Across the day we use a restorative approach to problem solving and resolving disagreements.

If a child is unhappy in any way at all, they are encouraged to let staff know straight away. In the event that complaints are received they are dealt with immediately and in line with statutory requirements and school policy. The correct people are notified and the party making the complaint is kept informed throughout the investigation until its conclusion. Documentation is completed from when the complaint is received and any complaints made are reviewed both internally and externally.

Placing authorities, Parents, members of the public and other key stake holders can request a copy of the complaints policy (available on the school website) or make a complaint though the following contacts:

**Headteacher – Marc Peart**  
**Head of Care – Jon Close**  
**Pastoral Manager – Liz Adams**

On Friday afternoons the Headteacher holds a whole school assembly to celebrate positive behaviour and achievements throughout the week. This is also an opportunity for the young people to thank staff for anything they deem necessary, this may be reflective of activities, individual support, reward trips or lessons that they may have enjoyed and would like to be recognised. To help and facilitate this there is a 'Commendation book' in the staff room that the young people have access to. The commendation book records any 'thanks' or 'compliments' that the young people want to be recognised and this informs the celebratory assembly's.

## **Views, wishes and feelings**

Regarding policy and approach to consulting children about the quality of their care, the children's views, wishes and feelings are paramount and are always listened to and acted on where appropriate. Children are invited to join weekly house meetings with their respective house staff to discuss any problems, provision requests, menus, activities and such like.

The 'Boys Council' which is made up of both residential and day boys, meet every half term to discuss and share ideas and requests to improve provision and wellbeing.

'Student voice' is encouraged throughout school in a wide variety of ways. House meetings, Keyworker sessions, Form time, Boys Council and a Suggestion box that is based in the school library allows for anonymous suggestions. The individual working documents that support young people and chart progress i.e. IECPs (Individual Educational Care Plans) and IPSPs (Individual Positive Support Plans) also encourage the views and opinions of the boys.

Children receive a debrief following significant incidents or use of a restrictive physical intervention where their feelings are explored. This enables staff to complete restorative work with the children to in turn create a reduction in their behaviours.

The Headteacher, Head of Care and Pastoral Manager operate an open door policy for young people to chat openly with them in private whether that is socially or more formally.

Young people are encouraged to participate in the schools events and activities building on their social skills. In addition to this the young people are expected to contribute to the residential provision by helping each other and staff to keep the houses clean, tidy and looking good. They are asked to take ownership of the houses contributing to decoration ideas both in their bedrooms and social spaces.

All children have access to a telephone to call important people to them, whether this be parents, social workers or if they are wanting to make a more formal phone call to Child line, for example. Anti-discriminatory practice in respect of children and their families and promoting equal opportunities will be achieved by:

- Providing culturally specific care and support for young people, which meets their cultural, religious, racial, gender and linguistic needs
- Empowering young people to have knowledge of, access to, and respect for their community
- Supporting self-identity by recognising that a young person's ethnicity, religion, culture, sexuality and language are crucial to his/her self-image and self-esteem
- Providing education and information about culture, religion, race and sexuality to the children
- Ensuring anti-discriminatory practice during the recruitment process of staff working in the school.

## **Independent Visitor**

Wennington Hall School has access to an Independent Visitor, who is very experienced in working with children and young people, and who visits school frequently. The independent visitor can be contacted directly by the children on the mobile number provided if they wish to do so. This person

is also accessible to the children who do not reside and posters with details of who the Independent Visitor is and how to contact them are in each house and in the school.

### **Independent Monitoring Visits/RSS NMS 20 visits**

In order to meet the requirements of the National Minimum Standards, Wennington Hall School employs NYAS to perform independent and impartial monitoring visits six times per academic year.

The purpose of these visits is to ensure that the day-to-day care provided is of a satisfactory standard as specified in RSS NMS 20 (2) of the Residential Special schools NMS (England) 2015. This is achieved through the RSS NMS 20 Visitor's;

Interviews, with their consent and in private, such of the children Accommodated there (and, as such, NYAS will endeavour to ensure the timings of the visits maximise children's availability for these interviews), their parents, relatives, professionals and stakeholders and persons working at the school as appears necessary in order to form an opinion of the standard of care provided in the school;

Inspection of the premises of the residential special school, its records of any complaints; and Preparation of a written report on the conduct of the school.

Together these provide an overall view of the way the school operates on a daily basis, and how appropriate care and control is provided to the children and young people. NYAS will appoint a qualified person to carry out the RSS NMS 20 visits.

### **Policies**

Policies and Procedures are in place to meet the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools.

The purpose of the Safeguarding Policy is to ensure every child who is a registered pupil at our school is safe and protected from harm. This means we will always work to:

Protect children and young people at our school from maltreatment;

- Prevent impairment of our children's and young people's health or development;
- Ensure that children and young people at our school grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- Undertake that role so as to enable children at our school to have the best outcomes.

The Safeguarding Policy will give clear direction to staff, volunteers, visitors and parents about expectations and our legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children at our school.

Our school fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children from harm and to support and promote the welfare of all children who are registered pupils at our school.

The safeguarding policy applies to all pupils, staff, parents, governors, volunteers and visitors,

and should be read in conjunction with the School's Safeguarding Policies..

We have sound procedures for Safeguarding - investigations, recording and disclosure ensuring effective handling of any matters of concern and specifically any allegations of physical, emotional and sexual abuse. Our designated members of staff for Safeguarding are;

**Liz Adams** – Lead DSL – Pastoral Manager

**Heidi Kitchen** – Deputy DSL – Pastoral Officer

**Jon Close** – Deputy DSL - Head of Care

### **Access to Safeguarding, Child Protection and Behaviour Management Policies**

The school has written policies regarding, Safeguarding, Child protection and Behaviour Management. Copies of these policies can be requested by contacting the school directly, Headteacher or accessed on the school website. The purpose of the Behaviour Management Policy is to ensure that children and young people with challenging behaviour are cared for in ways which are sensitive to their needs and to provide safeguards for staff charged with this responsibility.

**Statement reviewed annually**

**Last Review date November 2020**