



RATCLIFFE  
COLLEGE

# BOARDING HANDBOOK



# PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES

Ratcliffe College is more than just a school. It is a close-knit community of students, staff and their families that work together to develop the lives of young people and enrich their futures.

As a Boarding School we fully believe that the student experience is about caring for one another, as well as developing the independence and resilience to enjoy life as part of a supportive family where each and every individual feels secure and special. Here at Ratcliffe College, Boarding is at our heart and soul.

Boarding isn't just for overseas students or those who live a long distance away – we have found an increasing number of students opting to board with us for a variety of reasons.

**1 Focus on learning:** Many students feel that the quality of their studies and application of their skills improves greatly when they live onsite. If you're looking for real depth to your School experience, this might be a good option for you.

**2 Community:** Here at Ratcliffe we are proud of the close-knit student community feel and many of our students really enjoy being surrounded by their friends most of all. Everyone feels happier and well supported when they're close to their social groups and this is another benefit of boarding.

**3 Independence:** A good number of our borders felt that staying onsite was crucial to their personal growth, becoming a little more self-sufficient and less reliant on parents at home, which in turn Prepared them for life at University."

## A Belief in Balance

We believe that balance is the key to a happy and successful education. We hope that all boarders will aspire to academic success. At the same time, they should balance their time with activities and events that enrich their mind and boost their physical and mental health. We also believe it is important for young people to socialise.

## Aims of Boarding

- To provide a secure, caring environment where each boarder receives the attention and support he/she needs
- To create an open and trusting atmosphere where each boarder learns to value truth and respect for others
- To provide a homely environment in which all boarders feel confident and comfortable
- To provide opportunities for each boarder to develop his/her intellectual talents
- To provide opportunities for each boarder to develop physically, socially, culturally, morally and spiritually
- To develop leadership, the ability to work as part of a team and self-responsibility
- To encourage boarders to integrate fully with day pupils in the life of the school
- To safeguard and promote the welfare of each boarder, providing an environment that is free from physical hazards and dangers
- To provide accommodation which is comfortable, age appropriate and suited to the needs of boarders and provides adequate levels of privacy
- To encourage links with parents in the support and development of their child as a boarder.

# BOARDING STAFF

	GIRLS	BOYS
Housemistress / Housemaster	Mrs da Costa	Mr Gilchrist
Resident Assistant Housemistress / Housemasters	Mrs Chapman	Mr Turner Mr Thorpe
Lay chaplain	Miss Hall	
Matrons	Mrs Hayley Large	Mrs Riley
Graduate Assistants	3 Females	3 Males

## The Boarders' Handbook

This Boarders' Handbook is designed to help students and parents prior to arriving at Ratcliffe College as well as in the early stages of the academic year. It is a 'live document' and that will be updated on an annual basis. All updates will be sent to parents and hard copies will be provided to students.

If parents or students have questions about anything in this document, please email the Girls' Housemistress, Mrs da Costa, [adacosta@ratcliffe.com](mailto:adacosta@ratcliffe.com) or The Boy's Housemaster, Mr Gilchrist [pgilchrist@ratcliffecollege.com](mailto:pgilchrist@ratcliffecollege.com).

# THE BOARDER'S PASSPORT

To facilitate this personal development, each student will be given a 'Passport'. This is a simple document that helps boarders balance life and take part in the full enrichment programme. It aims to record student participation in additional courses and activities and offer them a time to reflect upon their own personal growth.

Each student will be given an allotted mentor (a member of the boarding team) who will support the tracking of participation. The mentor will meet for a one-to-one basis regularly to support our boarders in completing the boarder's passport and to discuss their enjoyment of boarding life.

Boarders must aim to balance participation across the following areas:



## Physical

Sports and outdoor activities which promote physical fitness and wellbeing.



## Service

Activities which encourage active contribution to the college and wider community.



## Intellectual

Activities which promote thinking and learning. These include study sessions, guest lectures and university visits.



## Spiritual

Activities which contribute to the education of the Spirit of the Gospel.



## Cultural

Activities which include music, art, drama, film, literature and philosophy.

# PASTORAL CARE FOR BOARDERS

At Ratcliffe College, we pride ourselves on the pastoral care. Every boarder will be assigned to a house. Within the house structure, they will be placed in a tutor group with a form tutor. This member of staff should be the first point of contact for all day-to-day matters including academic progress and social concerns. A Head of Year oversees all pastoral guidance and academic provision for the students. This form tutor and Head of Year may not be a member of the boarding staff.

If you have any concerns that relates to the boarding house and its environment, you should contact the Mrs da Costa or Mr Gilchrist.

Each boarder will be assigned a Boarding Tutor. This is a member of the boarding team who will work with a small group of boarders to ensure boarders are taking all the opportunities that are available. They will oversee social events within the year group, support in the monitoring of prep and offer personal guidance in terms of student conduct around the boarding house.

# DAY TO DAY AT RATCLIFFE COLLEGE

## Weekday Morning Routines

07:15 - 08:00	<b>Breakfast</b>	All boarders <b>must</b> be in breakfast by 07:50. Years 7-11 in basic school uniform, Years 12 & 13 may be in casuals, (not nightwear). <b>All boarders must attend breakfast.</b> All boarders must leave the Refectory by 08:10. <b>Registration with staff at breakfast</b>
08:25	<b>Tutor Group Registration</b>	All boarders must go to registration, along with day students at 08:25.

All boarders must attend breakfast, we suggest that students bring an alarm clock and establish their own personal routine. After breakfast boarders have some time to clear their rooms and prepare for the school day.

Boarders should leave the boarding house by 08:20 and join the day students downstairs in school before form time begins at 08:25. This allows duty house staff to ensure the boarding areas are locked, secure and tidy before the start of the school day.

## The School Day

The Boarding House is closed between 08:25 and 16:10 for Year 7-11. Like day students, boarders should pack all their belongings for the whole school day and should not need to return to house.

Sixth Form are allowed to return to house after 09:00 to work.

All personal belongings should be locked in lockers, the phone charging stations or dorms during the school day.

## Weekday Evening Routines

16:10	<b>Tea Begins</b>	Years 7-11 must register in Tea. A drink and a snack are served in the Refectory. Separate arrangements for Year 6 and below. All Sixth Form must log on Boardingware by 16:30 to let staff know their location.																		
16:40 - 18:00	<b>Co-Curricular activities/clubs or free time in house</b>	This is the time to access the opportunities available. You should only have one session in your room per week.																		
17:45-18:30	<b>Supper time</b>	All boarders must eat supper in the Refectory																		
18:30	<b>Registration/ Evening Prayer</b>	House Meeting and Registration																		
19:00 - 19:45	<b>KS3 Prep</b>	You must register in your respective locations																		
19:00 - 20:15	<b>KS4&amp;5 Prep</b>	You must register in your respective locations																		
20:15 - 21:15	<b>Activities</b>	Monday & Wednesday (see weekend arrangements for Friday activities)																		
20:45	<b>Night Prayers</b>	A time to reflect on the day for the whole boarding community. Tuesday & Thursday																		
21:15	<b>Bedtimes begin</b>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>YEAR</th> <th>IN HOUSE</th> <th>LIGHTS OUT</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>7 &amp; 8</td> <td>21:00</td> <td>21:15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>9</td> <td>21:15</td> <td>21:30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10</td> <td>21:30</td> <td>21:45</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11</td> <td>21:30</td> <td>22:00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>12-13</td> <td>21:30</td> <td>In own rooms by 22:30</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	YEAR	IN HOUSE	LIGHTS OUT	7 & 8	21:00	21:15	9	21:15	21:30	10	21:30	21:45	11	21:30	22:00	12-13	21:30	In own rooms by 22:30
YEAR	IN HOUSE	LIGHTS OUT																		
7 & 8	21:00	21:15																		
9	21:15	21:30																		
10	21:30	21:45																		
11	21:30	22:00																		
12-13	21:30	In own rooms by 22:30																		

# DAY TO DAY AT RATCLIFFE COLLEGE

## Mobile Phones and ICT

- Electronic devices will be handed in before bedtime for Years 7-10.
- We will ask you to let us know the details of your child's electronic devices to help us with this. Please let us know if they come back with any new, or different items during the year.
- Electronic devices will be returned before the start of the school day once students are ready for school and rooms are tidied. This is at the Boarding staff discretion.
- At weekends House staff may allow boarders to have their electronic devices overnight depending on the commitments over the weekend.

## Exeats and Holidays

Weekends at Ratcliffe College are relaxed with a blend of work, rest, sport and excursions. Saturday morning are reserved for Saturday Sport and we have more relaxed activities on a Saturday afternoon. On Sundays, we tend to go on trips or excursions. Recent trips have included: Oxford University, Alton Towers, shopping in London, the Imperial War Museum, Go Karting, the Victoria and Albert Museum. We regularly take students to Leicester and Nottingham.

We offer a full weekend programme for those who stay on site. However, we also understand that some boarders live locally and choose to go home. We are flexible and work with parents and guardians to make it work on a case-by-case basis. We do ask that all school commitments must be honoured eg sports

fixtures and rehearsals. Usually, boarders are free to go home at the end of school on Friday returning between 19:00-21:00 on a Sunday evening or before 08:10 on a Monday morning. A number of boarders choose to stay on Friday night ahead of playing a sports fixture on Saturday morning, returning home after the match.

We use an electronic sign in/out system called Orah. All parents / guardians are asked to use this when requesting leave so all duty staff have access to information that is essential to keep students safe. We cannot allow a student to leave site without the appropriate leave on Orah.

## Requesting Leave

Students **MUST** have permission to leave the school site. Unless a student is going off-site for an activity or event organised by Ratcliffe College they must have parental permission.

We encourage students to join local sports teams, attend local events and see their family if they are in the area. However, students/parents must request leave (24 hours notice) and the Housemistress or Housemaster must approve this request.

Parental permission must be approved on Orah even if a parent is picking up the child.

All boarders must sign out with the duty staff when leaving school and must report to duty staff on their return. If a member of staff is not available, they must call the duty mobile phone.

## Special Occasions

On occasions, Senior students (Year 11 - 13) will be allowed to leave school site to go to a local restaurant for dinner. This must be arranged in advance (at least 24 hours) and must be granted permission by the House staff. The school will try to provide transport where possible. Junior students are allowed too but will be supervised by staff.

## Other Leave Requests

We encourage students to join local clubs and sports teams. They are allowed to attend local training sessions and fixtures. We have local football clubs, horse riding centres and sailing lakes. Some rules apply:

- Parents and Guardians must request leave on Orah every time the students leaves site (even if this is a weekly occurrence).
- Clear return times must be clearly stated on the leave request.
- The student must ensure they are able to contact duty staff.

# DAY TO DAY AT RATCLIFFE COLLEGE

## Exeat Leave

If a student is going home at the weekend, parents must request weekend leave by Wednesday 16:00 prior to the weekend. This early communication allows us to organise catering numbers and transportation for trips. Parents must give any additional information on the notes section on Orah so duty staff are fully aware of student movements.

This leave request must be completed even if the student goes home every weekend. It is the only way duty staff can be 100% sure of the whereabouts of students. This includes the end of term too.

The Boarding Administrative Team will chase this on a weekly basis so please expect emails if leave request is not completed appropriately.

## Collection and Return from Leave

Students should sign out from the school contactless points as they leave the boarding house. When parents have already input information in their leave request, this is a simple swipe or a one-button click with the House staff.

Students should return to College between the hours of 19:00-21:00 on a Sunday night or by 08:10 on Monday morning. If a student is due to return outside of these

hours, then parents must inform the duty house staff via the House Phones.

## HOUSE LOGISTICS: Belongings and Storage

We have very limited storage space in the boarding houses and therefore we ask the following please:

- Please label suitcases clearly with your child's full name.
- All belongings are taken home at the end of each term with the exception of
  - International students can keep one suitcase and a bedding bag - everything else must be taken home
  - International students can only leave bedding over the summer holiday - everything else must be taken home at this time.
- Local boarders - it would really help if you could take your child's suitcases home and then bring them in to be packed at the end of each term.
- At the end of the Year we ask students to take some belongings home to avoid a build up of clutter in the boarding houses.

# MONEY MATTERS - GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS

## Funds for Your Child

Every boarding student requires some pocket money during the term.

**Weekly Boarders**, who go home each weekend, need little money – just for items from the Boarding Snack Shack.

**Full boarders** will require more funds. It is difficult to advise exactly how much they should have, as each student will have different needs.

While the cost of all boarders' trips is included in the boarding fee, parents need to consider:

- Whether your child will need to purchase clothes or shoes during term time.
- How much they might need for optional extra food and items from the Snack Shack or Refectory Café.
- Any other items you would be happy for them to purchase during term time.

In addition, students who live outside the UK and who do not go home during half-term breaks will require extra funds for their half-term expenses.

The best advice we can offer to parents is that you should include a suitable amount of pocket money when you pay your termly School bill.

These funds can then be placed in a pocket money account for your child. They can take out amounts of money as they need.

You may also request that a sum of money is held by the School in reserve. This can be given to your child only when you give us your permission to do so.

For overseas parents, in particular, this can avoid bank charges which might arise if you have to authorise an extra payment between School bills.

**We must respectfully remind parents** that the School is generally unable to forward funds to any student, as a loan to be paid on the next School bill.

In rare cases of genuine emergencies, and at the discretion of the Bursar small sums may be loaned to students, at the request of parents.

## Pocket Money – How do you get Spending Money?

Large sums of money should not be kept in rooms. Pocket money must be handed in to boarding staff on arrival. The school office holds pocket money and boarders can collect money at any time during office hours from Reception. At weekends (Fri-Sun), pocket money is held by boarding staff and can be accessed at time stated on the weekend diary.

# TRANSPORT

## Taxis

If a taxi is needed to travel to or from school, house staff will book one with permission from parent/guardian. The cost of this will be added to your school bill. Boarders must not book a taxi themselves. If parents / guardians book taxis they will need to pay in cash and the information will need to be on Boardingware.

The school uses 'ADT' for all journeys, because we know that their drivers are safe and reliable.

## Cars

If a Sixth Form boarder is given permission to bring a car to school, it must only be for the purpose of travelling to and from home. On arrival at school, car keys must be handed to the senior member of staff on duty.

Permission to leave school will only be granted to boarders during the week in exceptional circumstances and with the specific permission of House Staff.

# PREP

All students are expected to attend prep, which runs from 19:00-19:45 for junior students and 19:00-20:15 for seniors.

Prep evenings are vitally important and therefore compulsory. Boarders are not permitted to miss these evenings.

GCSE and A-Level students are expected to complete more than the compulsory prep time in order to maintain their studies.

# LAUNDRY

## Labelling Belongings

All laundry must be clearly labelled with the boarder's name. Laundry is completed daily. Bedding is completed weekly. Students also have access to washing machines and tumble dryers which allows them to do their own laundry.

**You must make sure that all items of clothing are clearly named,** preferably with a sew-in nametape. Clothing which is unnamed is much more difficult to recover if it goes missing.

## Laundry Bags

- Boarders are provided with a laundry bag.
- These bags are named, either by a sew-in name tape provided by parents / guardians or by a label written in indelible ink and sewn on.

## Laundry Delivery Arrangements

- Boarders take washing to the laundry room before they go to school
- Bedclothes are to be taken to laundry weekly and replaced with clean ones.

## Laundry Collection Arrangements

- Laundry is washed as soon as possible after it has been delivered
- Clean laundry is stored upstairs in the Laundry, on named shelving
- You can collect clean laundry during weekday breakfast times and at weekends.

# MEDICAL STAFF AND PROTOCOL

## Medicines – What Happens to Them?

Boarders must hand in all medicines to a member of the boarding staff/medical team when boarders arrive. These will be checked by Sister where they need to be stored for safe keeping. If boarders need medicine at any time they should see the Sister on duty (08:00–19:00 weekday) or the boarding staff.

All medical issues must be declared on the medical form before you start school so that we are aware of your needs.

**It is vital that all medicines including herbal are checked by Sister upon arrival. Naturally, it's imperative to safety that our boarders do not keep any medicines in their rooms at all.**

## Medical Appointments

Medical appointment this will be arranged for boarders by staff in our medical department.

Older students may attend these appointments alone, though there will always be a member of staff who can accompany you if you wish.

## KITCHENS

Each corridor in the boarding house has a kitchen which students can use. The kitchen is open every evening, and all weekend. They are stocked daily with milk, bread, butter and jam for students to eat in the evening after dinner.

As kitchens are a social space for students, it is boarders' responsibility to ensure it is tidy and clean for others. This includes washing up, sweeping the floor and cleaning the worktop.

The kitchens with cookers in them are locked overnight for safety purposes.

## DRINKING WATER

Each boarding house has a water machine. We encourage students to bring bottles to fill rather than bringing bottles of mineral water in plastic bottles. This keeps the site tidy and is good for the environment.

# CONTACTING THE COLLEGE

## College Address

The address of the College is: Ratcliffe College, Fosse Way, Ratcliffe on the Wreake, Leicester, LE7 4SG

## Address for Boarders' Mail

Boarders' mail should be addressed to: Boarders' Name, Girls' / Boys' Boarding, Ratcliffe College, Fosse Way, Ratcliffe on the Wreake, Leicester, LE7 4SG

Students are also given their own email address which they may access on site and at home.

Students are allowed to receive parcels and letters but not food deliveries.

## Parent Communication with Houses

There are a number of modes of communications depending on purpose and time of day.

1. For general enquiries during school opening hours, please contact reception.

Reception Telephone:  
01509 817000

2. For boarding enquiries please contact  
Boys' Boarding 07850 709882  
Girls' Boarding 07850 709881

These numbers are for the morning and evenings mostly. Boarding staff are working in the day in main school so if it's an emergency please contact main reception. These phone numbers are also on Whatsapp so feel free to text us.

3. Alternatively you can email the relevant Housemaster or Housemistress:

Boys:  
pgilchrist@ratcliffecollege.com

Girls:  
adacosta@ratcliffecollege.com

Ratcliffe College does a good deal of communication via email and the Ratcliffe App as do most schools now in the 'email' age.

# WHAT TO BRING

## The School Provides:

- Laundry bag
- Duvet and pillows
- Duvet covers & pillow cases (although you may wish to bring your own—to fit a single bed)

## Essentials:

- 2 bath towels
- All required toiletries and vanity equipment, in a suitable carry bag
- Pyjamas
- Slippers - shoes / slippers / flip flops must be worn in house at all times.
- Stationery
- Alarm clock (Year 7-10 don't have their phones over night).
- Dressing Gown or robe
- Casual clothes\* and shoes for wearing outside school hours (known as mufti)
- Appropriate sporting equipment, safety items and sports clothing, including footwear and swimwear. The exact items will depend on the sports played.

\*Smart casuals are required for events at which formal school uniform is not required, but at which very casual or 'scruffy' clothing is not appropriate. Such events would include Mass at the weekend some school trips and visits, other church services and social events.

There are many acceptable options, and the following notes simply focus on what is **not** considered suitable:-

Smart casuals do **NOT** include:

- Tracksuit trousers/sports leggings
- Denim trousers or jeans that are patched, ripped or faded
- Shorts
- Skirts or dresses that are considered too short
- Shirts or blouses without a collar or sleeves
- Flip-flops or trainers
- High heels or stilettos

Students and parents are welcome to discuss any aspect of these guidelines with boarding or other staff at the school.

As with our other guidelines on uniform and appearance, we reserve the right to decide whether or not any student's clothing is acceptable as smart casual wear.

Each boarder has a limited amount of storage space (a small wardrobe and a drawers) so please pack sensibly and do not bring excessive amounts of clothing.

## Recommended

- Hand / Hair towels
- Flip flops for the shower room
- Nightlight if required.
- Anything else to make the room personal and homely.

## Electrical Items

All boarding Houses must follow Health and Safety guidelines. As electrical and electronic equipment can present Health and Safety risks, we impose the following restrictions. All items will be Portable Appliance Tested (PAT) in Term 1.

ALLOWED	NOT ALLOWED
i-Pods or any other MP3 Player/ Radios/ Alarm	Electric Fires or Heaters
Mobile Phones/Digital Cameras	Kettles, Rice Cookers, Coffee Makers, toastie makers or juicers etc...
Laptops/Tablets/PSP/DS/Kindle or other e-reader	Standard fridges
Hair Dryers and Hair Straighteners	Televisions
Fans	Non-handheld gaming system (eg Xbox / Playstation)

Boarding provide cooking appliances in the supervised kitchen. The school reserves the right to confiscate any electrical items that pose a health and safety risk.

## Possessions

- All personal belongings should be named clearly and appropriately.
- Clothes should be labelled in accordance with the laundry policy - see the laundry page.
- All electronics and bags should also be labelled. Plugs and wires should have clear labelling, too.
- Boarders are permitted to have personal stereos and electronic equipment, but should be aware that the school cannot accept liability for loss or damage, and therefore any valuable property should be privately insured.

### **Welfare Support Services to Boarder**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mr Donagan and we have a number of Deputy Safeguarding officers. First point of contact for medical advice is the College Sister in the Medical Centre.

The Children's Commissioner for England promotes and protects children's rights in England. She does this by listening to what children and young people say about what matter to them; and making sure adults in charge take their views and interests in to account. Dame Rachel de Souza is the Children's Commissioner for England. If you would like to contact Dame Rachel de Souza you can do so by

- Email: [info.request@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk](mailto:info.request@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk).
- Phone: 020 77837330
- Website: <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/>

### **The Views of Boarders**

The views of our boarders are particularly important here at Ratcliffe College. We have a Boarders' council, which is led by our Boarding Prefects. This meets at regular intervals during the term and the boarders are encouraged to have an open dialogue with the students and staff alike so that any issues can be dealt with in a timely manner.

The Boarding Prefects will also be included on the School Council to represent the views of the Boarding community. There is also a various house council which work with day students and run parallel with boarders' council.

### **Health and Safety**

The school has a Health and Safety Policy, available on the website, which guides protocols and behaviours for day and boarding students alike. Whilst there are always an appropriate number of adult staff members on duty in the evenings and weekends, they cannot be in all places at all times. Boarders are therefore expected to conduct themselves sensibly and act in a way which accords with the principles of the Policy.

### **On Site Out of Bounds**

A plan of the school site is displayed in the boarding area of both Boarding Houses for boarders to see. In summary, boarders should, when outdoors on site, remain within reasonable view of any staff member on duty.

### **Fire Procedures and Drills**

Fire drills are held regularly. On the first night of the year a walk-through is held for existing and new boarders alike. At least one "anti-social hours" drill must be held per year, and one boarding hours drill per term; these may be reduced if a false alarm is triggered accidentally and the full drill procedure is enacted. Causing a false alarm may result in a serious sanction and possible financial penalty should the school be charged for any unnecessary callout of the emergency services.

### **Intruders**

If you see an intruder, you must not approach them, but must inform a member of staff immediately.

Intruder Alarm: If this should sound, you must stay in your room until it has been deactivated by a member of staff and the all-clear has been given.



RATCLIFFE  
COLLEGE

**Mrs Alison da Costa,  
Head of Boarding**

adacosta@ratcliffecollege.com  
T: 01509 817000

**Mr Phil Gilchrist,  
Senior Housemaster**

pgilchrist@ratcliffecollege.com  
T: 07850 709882



@RatcliffeColl – Ratcliffe College  
@rcboarding – Ratcliffe Boarding



@RatcliffeCollege

[www.ratcliffecollege.com](http://www.ratcliffecollege.com)