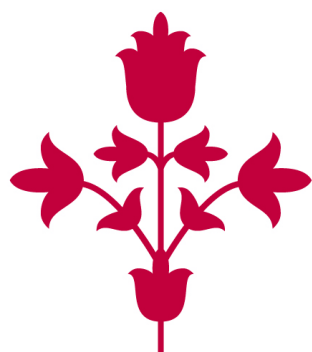




Earlscliffe



STATUTORY BOARDING STATEMENT • 2026–27

Statement of Boarding Principles and Practice

How Ambition, Connection and Excellence shape safe, inclusive and purposeful boarding.

Headteacher	Dr N Robinson
Deputy Headteacher DSL	Mr L Connolly
Effective	Sept 1, 2026

DRAFT FOR GOVERNANCE APPROVAL



Document control

Statement title	Statement of Boarding Principles and Practice
School	Earlscliffe
Statement owner	Mr L Connolly, Deputy Headteacher & DSL
Accountable leader	Dr N Robinson, Headteacher
Approval authority	Dukes, through the Governing Body
Version	2 - 2026–27 statutory and regulatory update for governance approval
Prepared	Aug 18, 2026
Effective from	Sept 1, 2026
Next formal review	Before Sept 1, 2027 - or earlier after regulatory change, inspection learning, a serious incident or material change to boarding
Applies to	All boarders and temporary boarders; boarders aged 18 or over sharing accommodation with pupils under 18; boarding, pastoral and support staff; and adults involved in boarding arrangements

STANDARD 1 PURPOSE

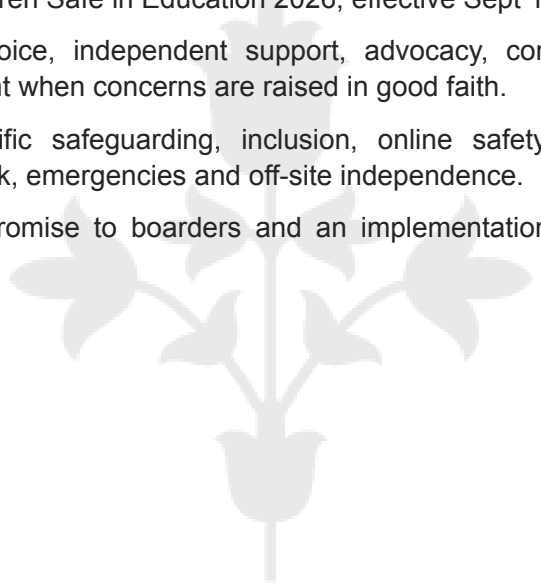
This is Earlscliffe's statement for National Minimum Standard 1. It must be available to parents, carers and staff, known to and understood by boarders, accessible to those who use English as an additional language, and demonstrably reflected in daily boarding practice.

Approval and review record

Control	Record
Approved by	Dr N Robinson - Headteacher
Approval date	01 Sept 2026
Review completed by	Mr L Connolly - Deputy Headteacher
Date of next review	Before Sept 1, 2027

Changes in this edition

- Replaces the statement reviewed in June 2025 and updates its presentation to the Earlscliffe 2026–27 policy suite.
- Replaces the former five-value framework with ACE: Ambition, Connection and Excellence.
- Aligns the statement with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools updated in May 2026 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, effective Sept 1, 2026.
- Strengthens boarder voice, independent support, advocacy, complaints, family contact and protection from detriment when concerns are raised in good faith.
- Clarifies boarding-specific safeguarding, inclusion, online safety, overnight accommodation, guardianship, health, risk, emergencies and off-site independence.
- Adds a plain-English promise to boarders and an implementation and governance assurance checklist.



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1. Status, purpose and scope

Earlscliffe is an international day and boarding school. Boarding is central to the school's identity: it provides a secure home during term time, connects academic and pastoral life, and helps young people become confident, considerate and increasingly independent.

This statement explains the outcomes Earlscliffe seeks for boarders and the principles that guide everyday practice. It is not a substitute for the detailed Safeguarding, Behaviour, Anti-Bullying, Medical, Health and Safety, Physical Intervention, Searching and Confiscation, Online Safety, Guardianship and Complaints policies. Where a procedural question arises, the relevant policy applies.

Earlscliffe normally provides full boarding during term time and half-term breaks. Boarders usually live in one of six supervised residences and return home or to agreed arrangements during end-of-term school holidays. The statement also applies to temporary boarders and to pupils aged 18 or over who share accommodation with pupils under 18.

OUR BOARDING PURPOSE

Every boarder should be safe, known, heard, appropriately challenged and supported to thrive. Independence grows through trusted relationships, clear boundaries, thoughtful risk management and opportunities to contribute.

2. Our boarding vision: ACE

The boarding experience is organised around Earlscliffe's three core values. These values are visible in routines, relationships, decisions and the way boarding quality is evaluated.

ACE value	What it means in boarding	What boarders should experience
Ambition	High expectations, healthy challenge, curiosity, self-discipline and preparation for future success.	Support to set goals, engage in learning and activities, build life skills and make increasingly responsible choices.
Connection	Belonging, trusted relationships, cultural understanding, communication and contribution to community.	Adults who know them, friendships across cultures, meaningful family contact, an effective voice and freedom to seek help.
Excellence	Consistently safe, responsive and reflective care, delivered by trained adults and improved through evidence.	Well-run houses, reliable routines, good food and health support, fair boundaries, prompt action and high-quality communication.

3. Core boarding principles

- The best interests, welfare, dignity and voice of each boarder are central to decision-making.
- Every boarder is entitled to feel safe, welcomed, respected, included and free from discrimination, abuse, bullying and humiliation.
- Every boarder should be known as an individual and have at least one trusted adult they can approach.
- Care is sensitive to age, maturity, sex, disability, SEND, health, culture, language, religion, family circumstances and other individual needs.
- Independence is developed progressively through clear routines, proportionate permissions, education about risk and accountable choices.
- Boarders' privacy, possessions, communications and personal space are respected within lawful and proportionate safeguarding arrangements.
- Boarders can express views, raise concerns or complain without disadvantage and receive feedback about what has happened as a result.
- Academic effort, rest, recreation, relationships, health and time away from structured activity are kept in healthy balance.
- Parents, carers, guardians and school staff work in transparent partnership while respecting the boarder's developing autonomy and confidentiality.
- Leaders use records, boarder experience, complaints, incidents and outcomes to improve boarding practice continually.

4. Boarding model and environment

Earlscliffe's in-town campus gives boarders access to school facilities and the local community while developing time management and self-reliance. Freedom is never automatic or one-size-fits-all: permissions, supervision and boundaries are matched to age, maturity, need, circumstances and assessed risk.

Six supervised boarding residences are managed by designated boarding leaders and House Masters/Mistresses (HMs). The HM and Senior Tutor work in partnership so residential, academic and personal information is brought together appropriately and each boarder receives coherent support.

Boarders should experience

- Welcoming, well-maintained and appropriately secure accommodation with comfortable bedrooms, suitable privacy, reliable heating, lighting, ventilation, washing facilities and access to study and social spaces.
- Nutritious meals with appropriate choice and support for medical, dietary, cultural and religious needs, plus reasonable access to drinking water and food outside main mealtimes.
- Appropriate protection for money, valuables and possessions, access to laundry and the ability to personalise their own space within house expectations.
- Safe internet access and proportionate device arrangements which support study, communication, rest and online safety.
- Clear routines for registration, curfews, permissions, visitors, travel, absence, emergencies and return to the house.

OVERNIGHT ACCOMMODATION

Sleeping accommodation is allocated in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026. A child will not share overnight accommodation with a child of the opposite biological sex. Where a child seeks different or single accommodation, safe alternatives are considered sensitively and must not compromise any child's safety, comfort, privacy or dignity.

5. Pastoral care, health and wellbeing

Pastoral care is continuous across the school day and boarding time. The Tutor is a central point of contact for a pupil's overall progress and wellbeing; the House Parent provides day-to-day residential care and oversight. They work with the Deputy Headteacher, DSL, SENDCo, School Nurse and other relevant professionals.

- A 24-hour pastoral and emergency response is available whenever boarders are in residence.
- Staff notice changes in presentation, relationships, attendance, sleep, eating, engagement or behaviour and act promptly when these may indicate need or harm.
- Boarders have access to first aid, nursing and appropriate local medical, dental, optical, counselling and specialist services; emergency care is obtained without delay.
- Medical information and medication are managed safely, confidentially and in accordance with the school's Medical and First Aid arrangements.
- Reasonable adjustments, care plans and communication support are developed for boarders with SEND, disability, medical conditions, mental health needs, trauma or other vulnerabilities.
- Routines promote sleep, nutrition, exercise, study, recreation, friendships and restorative time, recognising that boarding should not become over-programmed.
- After illness, injury, a safeguarding incident or significant distress, support and plans are reviewed before ordinary expectations simply resume.

TRUSTED ADULT TEST

Every boarder should be able to identify an adult who knows them, listens to them and will act. If a boarder cannot do so, the pastoral system has not yet worked well enough for that child.

6. Safeguarding, safety and risk

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility throughout the boarding environment. Boarding staff follow the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, with the DSL leading boarding-specific risk assessment, response and liaison with external agencies.

- Staff remain alert to the additional vulnerability created by living away from home, including child-on-child abuse, harmful sexual behaviour, coercive or exploitative relationships, initiation or hazing, prejudice, isolation and abuse that may continue beyond the school day.
- The school's approach to sexual relationships, consent, intimate images and harmful online content is communicated clearly and applied in the residential context.
- Online-safety education and proportionate device arrangements address harmful content stored before arrival and access through mobile data that may bypass school filtering and monitoring.
- Boarders know how to obtain help privately. Staff report concerns immediately, preserve confidentiality only within safeguarding limits and never promise secrecy.

- Access to boarding accommodation is controlled; visitors and adults without completed checks are appropriately supervised, and boarders do not enter private staff residential accommodation except under clearly authorised and safe arrangements.
- Risk assessments cover the boarding environment, local independence, activities, transport, fire, missing pupils, illness, emergencies and any individual need. Identified actions are completed and reviewed.
- Boarders and staff know emergency and evacuation arrangements. Fire drills take place during boarding time at least once each term, including an overnight drill at least annually unless a documented welfare assessment supports a different approach.
- Reasonable force, restraint, searching and room or property checks are governed by the relevant school policies and are never used for convenience, humiliation or routine compliance.

7. Boarder voice, rights, advocacy and complaints

Boarders are participants in their community, not passive recipients of care. Their views, wishes and feelings are sought in ways suited to age, communication and need, considered in decisions and followed by feedback.

- New boarders receive an accessible induction covering routines, safety, support, family contact, independent help, complaints, local permissions and who is responsible for travel and temporary absence arrangements.
- A boarder may approach any member of staff with a personal, academic, health or welfare concern. Staff know how to listen, record, act and escalate.
- The current independent person and at least two child-specific external support services, including Childline and the Children's Commissioner's Help at Hand service, are displayed in every boarding house and included in induction information.
- Advocacy or communication support is arranged where needed, including for a boarder with SEND, disability or English as an additional language.
- Boarders can contact parents, carers and family privately at suitable times, with time-zone differences and any lawful contact restrictions taken into account.
- House meetings, individual conversations, surveys, suggestion routes and boarder leadership provide regular opportunities to influence boarding life.
- Boarders have an accessible route to complain about boarding. Complaints are recorded, responded to within the Complaints Policy, identified as boarding-related and reviewed for patterns whether upheld, withdrawn or not upheld.
- No boarder is penalised, disadvantaged or treated less favourably for raising a view, concern or complaint in good faith.

8. Relationships, behaviour, inclusion and belonging

Earlscliffe celebrates its international character. Connection is built deliberately through respectful relationships, shared experiences and curiosity about difference. Equality is not achieved by treating every boarder identically; support and reasonable adjustments respond to individual need.

- Boarders are protected from discrimination connected with protected characteristics and from unfair treatment linked to culture, language, SEND, health, family circumstances, academic profile or sporting ability.
- Religious observance, diet, language, culture and identity are respected within safe, lawful and workable arrangements.
- Staff model calm, professional and boundaried relationships. Favouritism, humiliating treatment, sexualised conduct and inappropriate one-to-one contact are not accepted.
- The Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies apply in houses, online, in the local community and whenever pupils are in the school's charge. Boarding responses recognise that a boarder cannot simply leave a difficult peer situation at the end of the day.
- Positive conduct, repair and contribution are encouraged. Rules, rewards and consequences are clear, fair, proportionate and consistently applied with appropriate adjustment for need.
- Day pupils and boarders are encouraged to form respectful friendships within and beyond the boarding community.

9. Activities, leadership and preparation for adulthood

Boarding should broaden experience while preserving sufficient free time and rest. Boarders have access to a varied programme that supports emotional, intellectual, social, creative and physical development, including age-appropriate use of local facilities.

- Activities are inclusive, appropriately risk-assessed and offer choice, challenge and adventure without creating unreasonable demands.
- Boarders are supported to plan time, manage money and possessions, maintain living spaces, travel safely, make appointments where appropriate and take increasing responsibility for wellbeing.
- Leadership opportunities may include House Captain, Wellbeing or Mental Health Prefect, and Events and Media Prefect roles.
- Boarder leaders receive clear duties, training and staff supervision. They do not exercise unchecked disciplinary or coercive authority over other pupils.
- Achievements in academic work, personal development, service, creativity, sport, relationships and responsible independence are recognised.
- Preparation for life beyond school includes confidence in seeking help, living with others, understanding healthy relationships, navigating difference and making safe decisions.

10. Partnership with parents, carers and guardians

Open, timely communication helps the school, families and guardians understand the whole child. Routine communication celebrates progress as well as addressing concerns, while safeguarding information is shared lawfully and in the child's best interests.

- Parents and carers receive clear information about boarding expectations, contact routes, travel, absence, permissions, health, safeguarding and complaints.
- The school and family clarify responsibility for transport and collection at the beginning and end of term and during any temporary absence, including international arrangements.
- Where an educational guardian is used, responsibilities are clear. The school takes proportionate steps to assure itself that the arrangement promotes the boarder's welfare and acts immediately on concerns.
- A member of school staff is not appointed as an educational guardian for a boarder. Emergency support by staff is separately risk-assessed and authorised through senior and safeguarding arrangements.
- Parents, carers and guardians can raise questions with House staff, Senior Tutors or senior leaders and use the Complaints Policy without prejudice to the boarder.

11. Leadership, staffing and governance

Proprietor and Governing Body

- Hold legal responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children accommodated by the school and monitor the effectiveness of boarding leadership, management and delivery.
- Receive assurance on boarder welfare, voice, complaints, incidents, staffing, training, accommodation, health, guardianship, risk and outcomes; require corrective action where necessary.

Headteacher

- Is accountable for the culture, standards, resources and operational effectiveness of boarding and ensures strong links between academic and residential staff.
- Ensures serious concerns and material failures are escalated to the proprietor, governors and external agencies as required.

Deputy Headteacher & DSL

- Leads implementation and annual review of this statement, coordinates safeguarding oversight and assures the quality of boarding practice, records and staff briefing.
- Coordinates termly evaluation with boarding leaders, the SENDCo, School Nurse, Senior Tutors and other relevant colleagues.

Boarding leaders, House Parents and all staff

- Boarding leaders and HMs translate these principles into routines, supervision, individual support, induction, communication and house development.
- All staff maintain professional curiosity, understand their duties, work within competence, record accurately and report welfare or practice concerns without delay.
- Staff with boarding responsibilities receive induction, safeguarding, role-specific and ongoing professional development appropriate to their duties.

12. Indicators of boarding excellence

The statement is successful only when it is visible in boarders' lived experience. Leaders evaluate both provision and outcomes, including whether:

- Boarders say they feel safe, known, respected and able to identify trusted and independent sources of help.
- New boarders settle well and understand routines, rights, complaints, safeguarding and support.
- Boarder voice leads to visible action and feedback, with no evidence of disadvantage for raising concerns.
- Health, attendance, engagement, sleep, relationships and emotional wellbeing concerns are noticed early and supported effectively.
- Boarders with SEND, disability, medical, language, cultural or other needs experience inclusion and effective adjustment.
- Bullying, safeguarding, missing-pupil, restraint, complaint and accident records show prompt action, learning and reduced recurrence.
- Parents and carers receive clear communication and understand the boarding model and routes for support.
- Boarders participate in activities, leadership and community life while retaining sufficient rest, privacy and free time.
- Staffing, training, supervision, accommodation, food, health, risk and guardianship arrangements meet current standards.
- Ambition, Connection and Excellence are evident in boarder outcomes, relationships and the quality of daily care.

REVIEW CYCLE

The Deputy Headteacher coordinates termly boarding assurance and an annual evaluative review for the Headteacher, proprietor and Governing Body. Serious incidents, repeated concerns, inspection findings or material changes trigger immediate review rather than waiting for the annual cycle.

Appendix A - Our promise to boarders

This page is the plain-English summary of what boarding at Earlscliffe should feel like. It is explained during induction, displayed in boarding houses and made available in an accessible or translated form where needed.

AMBITION

We will encourage you to set goals, try new things, develop independence and prepare for life beyond school. We will challenge you fairly and help you when things are difficult.

CONNECTION

We will know you as an individual, help you belong and make sure you have trusted adults, meaningful contact with home and safe ways to ask for independent help.

EXCELLENCE

We will provide safe, well-run houses, clear routines, good care and adults who act when something is wrong. We will listen, learn and improve.

You can expect us to

- Treat you with dignity and respect your culture, language, beliefs, identity, privacy and individual needs.
- Keep you safe, explain boundaries and help you understand risk rather than simply restricting you.
- Support your physical health, mental health, friendships, learning, sleep and time to relax.
- Listen when you are worried, take you seriously and tell you what will happen next.
- Let you contact family privately and give you access to an independent person, Childline, Help at Hand and advocacy where needed.
- Ask for your views about boarding, respond to them and never punish you for raising a concern or complaint in good faith.
- Apply rules fairly, help repair harm and make reasonable adjustments when you need them.
- Give you opportunities to contribute, lead, explore the local community and become more independent safely.

Help us make boarding work well

Show Ambition by engaging with learning and opportunities; build Connection by treating others with care and including people; pursue Excellence by taking responsibility, following safety arrangements and speaking up when something could be better.

Appendix B - Source register and implementation assurance

Primary framework reviewed

- Children Act 1989, section 87, and the Care Standards Act 2000.
- National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools, Department for Education, updated May 2026, especially Standards 1–23 and Appendices A and B.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, effective Sept 1, 2026, especially boarding and residential safeguarding, child-on-child abuse, online safety and overnight accommodation.
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, as amended.
- Equality Act 2010; Human Rights Act 1998; Children and Families Act 2014; UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.
- Earlscliffe's June 2025 Statement of Boarding Principles and Practice, reviewed and superseded.

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Implementation sign-off

Implementation control	Sign-off record
Boarder publication, induction and accessibility	Owner: _____ Complete / due: _____
Independent person, support services and complaints	Owner: _____ Complete / due: _____
Safeguarding, room allocation and online safety	Owner: _____ Complete / due: _____
Health, fire, risk and emergency arrangements	Owner: _____ Complete / due: _____
Guardianship, transport and temporary absence	Owner: _____ Complete / due: _____
Staffing, training and supervision	Owner: _____ Complete / due: _____
Governance assurance and linked policies	Confirmed by: _____ Date: _____

Reviewed against the May 2026 National Minimum Standards, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and Earlscliffe's previous statement. Daily practice remains subject to current safeguarding judgment, individual risk assessment and proprietor oversight.