

Elstree School

Parent Handbook

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General information

This booklet is designed to give parents more information about Elstree School. We hope that you find it useful as a guide to procedures and routines. Please do read it and keep it available, as it will help you and your child to gain more from life at Elstree.

Points of Contact

If you have any concerns the first port of call should **always** be your child's **Form Tutor:** (s)he will have direct responsibility for your child. Matters that relate specifically to boarding can be easily dealt with by contacting the **Houseparents**. However, all staff have responsibilities that affect the pupils and if you are unsure who to speak to then please do ask.

The **Headmaster** and the **Senior Deputy Head** are always available and should be contacted if you feel that your concerns have not been resolved.

Academic queries are usually best answered by your child's **Form Tutor** but parents are welcome to request a meeting with the **Deputy Head, Academic** if it is felt he would be better placed to assist.

Should you wish to speak to a member of staff, many are available when you visit the school to collect your child at the end of the day. If it proves difficult to locate the person you wish to speak to, for whatever reason, then telephone contact can be made via the School Office (0118 971 3302) or by email as detailed below.

Enquiries and Communications

Letters

Letters may be hand-delivered to the School Office during office hours. At other times please use the basket in the Front Hall.

Parents contacting staff

Parents are encouraged to contact members of staff by e-mail wherever possible, or alternatively by telephone using the main school number (0118 971 3302) where a message can be taken for the teacher. The staff member will respond as soon as (s)he is free, bearing in mind their varied commitments. Please make an appointment if you wish to have an extended discussion with a member of staff. Staff email details can be found in the Call List and email addresses follow the format of:
initialsurname@elstreeschool.org.uk e.g. *eboyd@elstreeschool.org.uk*

Parents contacting children

In all but the most extreme of circumstances, it is not sensible for us to bring individual children to speak to their parents on the telephone. Every effort will be made, however to get a message to your child.

The main School number (0118 971 3302) will be answered between 8.00am and 6.00pm on school week-days and until 12.30pm on Saturdays during term-time. Calls made to the school during office hours during the school holidays will be answered either directly or via an answer machine. A reply to the message will be given as soon as possible.

Visitors

During a normal working day all visitors, including parents, should report to the School Office. Some visitors will be requested to wear a visitor's badge, depending on where or whom they are visiting in the School.

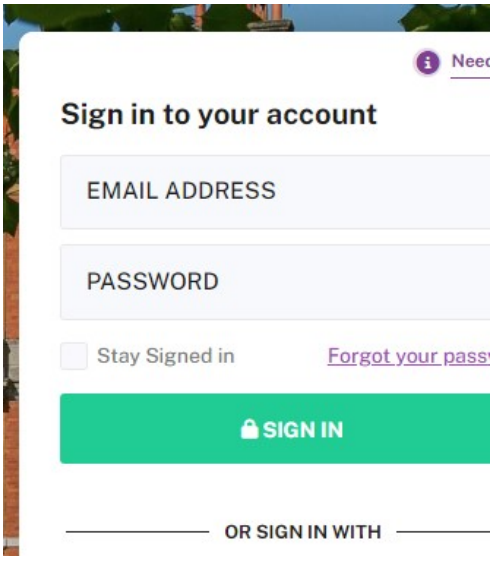
Sources of information

Up-to-date information about School events and activities is provided in the following key areas:

School Parent Portal

We use My School Portal for our Parent Portal and are keen to encourage parents to see this as their principal source of news and information. The Calendar on the Parent Portal (and also on the website) is particularly important as it is updated regularly. The Parent Portal will also give you access to your child's timetable and reports as they are published. To access the School Parent Portal, you will need to register the account allocated to you, the details will have been sent to you along with the instructions on how to register your account before your child starts at Elstree: please contact us if you have not received it by the start of term. Please be aware that these registration details can be used as many times as you need to set up separate access IDs.

Once registered, you can access the Parent Portal from the Elstree website, www.elstreeschool.org.uk, click on the Parents' Login link when the "username and password" dialogue box appears. When the Parent Portal Login page appears, enter the user name and password you registered and this will take you to the home page of the Parent Portal.



School Website and Social Media

The school posts school news and photos under 'Latest News' on the Elstree website and on social media including Instagram @Elstree School, X, Facebook, LinkedIn and Vimeo.

Newsletters, circular letters and notices

Where possible, a link to a document on the Parent Portal or the document itself is sent by email. Other mailings may be included in half or end of term envelopes for collection. A post box system also operates in the Front Porch of the School for you to leave items for other parents.

Calendar

A live version of this Calendar is available on the School Parent Portal and also on the website.

Texting

For very urgent and important messages, Elstree will also operate a text messaging service. It is important therefore that the School Office has an up-to-date, accurate mobile number for you. Please email office@elstreeschool.org.uk if any of your contact details change.

'Salvo' Magazine

The Salvo Magazine provides a full record of the events and achievements of the whole school year. It is published in the Autumn and is sent out to recent leavers. All current parents will receive a printed copy at a cost of £20, which will be added to your Autumn Term bill, unless you choose to opt-out.

Daily Routine

8.00- 8.15	Day Pupils arrive		
	For Years 3 and 4		**For Years 5 to 8**
8.15	Registration	8.15	Registration
8.25-10:30	Lessons	8.25-10:30	Lessons
10:30-11:00	Break	10:30-11:00	Break
11.00-12.30	Lessons	11.00-13:05	Lessons
12.30-13.00	Lunch	13.10-13.40	Lunch
13.00-13.30	Break	13.45-14.45	Rest / Third Break/Activities/Lessons
13.30-14.30	Games	14:30-15:30	Games
14.40-15.40	Lessons	15:30	Senior Buns
15.40	Junior Buns	16:00-18:00	Lessons/Prep/ Activities
16.00-17.00	Junior Activities		
17.00	Day Pupils depart	18:00	Day pupils depart

18.00	Supper	18:00	Supper
18.30	Boarders Clubs & Activities	18.40	Boarders Clubs & Activities
19.30	Showers	19.30	Showers
19:40	Boarders upstairs	19:50	Boarders upstairs

On a Wednesday and Saturday pick up is at 4pm or after matches.

Timings

Absences and Leaves

If your son or daughter is going to be absent from school, then please notify the School by telephone (0118 971 3302) or email office@elstreeschool.org.uk between 8.00am and 8.30am. If we have not received any communication, calls will be made from 9.00am to check if your child is coming into school. If your child is absent for more than one day, please call or email us every morning of the absence.

Requests involving the absence of any child during school time should be made in writing to the Headmaster, no less than two weeks before the event, barring unforeseen circumstances. Email requests are fine.

Daily Morning Arrival and Evening Departures for Day Pupils

Day pupils should arrive between 8.00 and 8.15am. All pupils should arrive via the Front Door. In the morning, please drop your child off in the Front Hall and let them go to their classroom on their own. The Headmaster's wife and other staff members will be on the front steps if you have any questions; registration will take place at 8.20am.

Pupils arriving early, i.e. before 8am, should make their way to the Dining Room. Departures are always through the Front Door, and during the Autumn and Lent Terms the pupils wait inside until parents collect them. Day pupils must sign out with the duty member of staff every day except match days when they must sign out with their coach / team taker (Wednesday and Saturday). Please do drive and park carefully at this time of day.

Years 3 and 4	5.00pm every day (except Wednesday - 4.00pm)
Years 5 to 8	6.00pm (except Wednesday and Saturday - 4.00pm)

Day pupils and Flexi Boarders may be collected after matches on Wednesdays and Saturdays or at 4.00pm, if not involved in a match.

It is very difficult to predict when a cricket match may end, therefore Wednesday and Saturday collection times may vary in the Summer Term. No pupils may go home before their commitments have been met.

Late arrival

Please ensure that if your child arrives after Registration has started at 8.20am, (s)he reports to the School Office so that his or her attendance can be recorded.

Saturday School

Saturday School does not take place for any pupil in the Pre-Prep Department or during Year 3 or Year 4. Saturday School is for Years 5 and above.

Term Dates and Holidays

The School Calendar contains details of the future term dates. This shows the confirmed dates for the following two terms, and provisional dates for two terms following that. The School reserves the right to alter provisional dates but will keep parents informed of any changes.

Given the generous school holidays that the pupils already enjoy, parents are strongly requested not to take their children out of school for any but the most pressing reasons.

Academic

Books and Materials

Textbooks are issued without any separate charge. Books remain the property of the School and a charge may be made for any which are lost, damaged, or defaced. Stationery requested by pupils is monitored by Form Tutors and is charged on termly bills.

Curriculum

Details of each stage of the curriculum and broad guidelines are published on the Parent Portal. The Foundation Stage is followed for the Nursery and Reception years, the National Curriculum, for the most part, for Years 1 - 6 and the Common Entrance syllabuses for Years 7 & 8.

Equipment

Please could you ensure that your child has the following items in their pencil case – all items to be named please:
2 HB pencils
30cm ruler
Pencil sharpener
Rubber
Colouring pencils
Paper Scissors and Glue stick
Headphones

Additional items for pupils in Years 5-8 are: Casio FX83 Calculator, Geometry set, Fountain pen (blue ink only please) and Ink eradicator (no correcting fluid).

It is possible to order all of the above items through the School stationery shop and purchases are charged to the pupils account. This system is monitored by the Form Tutors.

Examination Programme

The table below details the timings of examinations for all year groups over the course of the year:

Year Group	Autumn	Lent	Summer	Notes
3	●		●	Class-based assessments
4	●		●	Class based assessments
5	●		●	Core Subjects only (E, M, Sc, F)
6	●		●	Core Subjects only
7	●		●	Full Examinations in all written subjects
8	●	●	●	Full Examinations in all written subject areas; 'mock' examinations in McMullen Hall over 4 days

Examination Preparation

There are plenty of occasions when pupils will sit examinations. Here are some helpful hints to use with your children in the lead up to these important moments in their education.

- **Get organised** and obtain the necessary information for and about the examination, and that it is carefully arranged, filed and labelled; ensure you have all the right equipment for the examination.
- **Plan** revision and time allocations carefully; make detailed plans of what needs revising, where you are going to do it and for how long. Start with the areas that are known less well.
- **Set priorities** for the topic areas and **monitor** your progress, ticking off topics covered as you do them.
- **Test** yourself regularly to ensure information has stuck; if possible, work with a **study buddy**, if that works for you.
- Ask for **advice** if you are unsure: teachers are always on hand to help, and ensure you understand the **format** of the examination.

Prep and work for Home

Aims:

Prep is designed to complement work done in class and is a vital part of the learning process. It is especially important for developing organisational ability and independent thinking skills.

Equally however, it is not our aim to occupy every spare minute of your child's time at home. There is a limit to the amount of useful, independent work children can do, especially in the lower years.

Time:

As a rough guide, there is no formal prep for Years 3 and 4, with the exception of general knowledge, reading, times tables or spellings as required. It would be a great help if parents could work with their child to achieve success in these areas, without it being a chore for either party. Years 5 to 8 pupils do their prep which is timetabled within the school day.

Prep time-tables are published on their personal timetable. Pupils in Years 6-8 will be notified of their prep in their Team. Pupils in Year 5 should write details of their prep in their diaries.

Learning Development Support and EAL

This is available to all pupils for whom it is appropriate. There is a Head of Department who co-ordinates all aspects of Learning Development Support and EAL (English as a foreign language). The teaching caters for a range of specific and non-specific learning difficulties and new pupils are screened for potential difficulties in their first few weeks at the school.

Members of the Learning Development Department work closely with academic staff to help the pupils achieve their academic potential. Pupils who have been identified as requiring additional support are, in the main, taught individually as often as possible during non-academic time, and occasionally the teacher may come into the class.

Heads of Subject Departments work closely with the Learning Development Team, and close contact with parents helps develop a consistent approach and higher levels of success. This extra tuition is charged: rates are published on the Schedule of Fees.

Library

A warm welcome awaits every pupil in our popular Ward Library. The Ward Library is a well-resourced library providing a spacious, friendly and attractive place to learn to love reading, discover new information and to gain a wider understanding of the exciting world of books. We have nearly 4,000 fabulous books as well as newspapers and magazines. We also have a wide selection of audio books which can be enjoyed using the library 'Listening Station'. Children are also welcome to read eBooks on their own devices.

Each class has one English lesson a week in the library and the pupils can use the library to borrow books, to work on projects, and for quiet study as well as for reading for pleasure. The children are encouraged to develop their library skills and to become independent learners. Each term, children in Years 7 and 8 have the opportunity to become librarians. The library is always open so children have the opportunity to pop in and change books, or find information during break, in the evenings or whenever they have free time. The large, light and airy library is furnished with soft chairs, tables and beanbags.

Marking Policy

Elstree seeks to operate a coherent and comprehensive marking policy. When reviewing work in your child's books, you can expect to see the following:

Standard marking terminology

√	To register approval of content or style. Accurate work.
x	To indicate an incorrect answer.

Sp	In the margin: please notice the corrected spelling above the word.
Sp (x3)	At the end of the work: please copy this word 3 times.
the boys' pen	Circle incorrect or inappropriate punctuation. Provide correction.
ben/Girl	Circle incorrect capital letter. Provide correction.
^	Indicates a word is missing.
Target/Tip	Gives advice on how to improve a pupil's work.

In addition, individual departments will have subject specific terminology. For example,

Additional Latin terminology

Tense	The incorrect verb tense or translation has been used.
Ending	The incorrect case ending on a noun or person ending on a verb has been used.
GNC	The adjective must agree with the noun it describes in Gender, Number and Case.
Vocab.	The incorrect word has been used or translated.

Reports and Assessment

Parents receive an interim report at half term on their child's academic progress (A-E) and effort (5-1). This will also contain information on all the written subjects with a brief written comment from the Form Tutor.

A full written report covering all aspects of life at Elstree is sent to parents at the end of the Autumn and Summer Terms. At the end of the Lent Term, all Common Entrance and Scholarship candidates in Year 8 will be given a full written report. Parents' meetings during the Lent Term will provide academic progress reports for other year groups (see below).

In addition, the School undertakes to test all pupils once a year in adaptive and diagnostic tests. These tests have been designed by the Centre of Evaluation and Monitoring at the University of Durham. The tests are computer-based and help teachers to track pupils' progress within their subject and compare to pupils nationally. Being computerised, they also assist the pupil to prepare for the test procedures at many of the senior school destinations.

Parents' Meetings

During the course of a year, parents will be invited to meet their child's teachers. These consultation sessions are organised to coincide with important times of the year for your child's development. You are reminded, however, that we encourage all parents to contact staff at any stage during the year, as and when there is a concern.

Parents book times best suited to them via the schoolbooking.com portal. Notification of these dates is sent out in plenty of time, typically 4 weeks in advance, by Mr Owens and Parents should find the relevant information on the Parents' section of the Parent Portal.

Streaming and Setting

Classes in Years 3 to 7 are of mixed ability. Streaming (an A and 2 equal Bs) starts in Year 8. Mathematics is set from Year 4 onwards; Science, French and Latin are set from Year 6 onwards. Mobility between sets is possible at any time so that pupils can learn at a pace that suits their abilities. Movement from one stream to another would normally take place at the end of an academic term, though not always. The position of pupils within a stream or set is subject to a great deal of consultation and is entirely at the School's discretion.

Boarding

For pupils in Years 4 to 6, there is the opportunity to flexi and weekly board. Many children in this part of the School choose flexi boarding as it is a fantastic introduction to boarding for younger pupils. Unfortunately it is not possible to provide a bed on Friday night for children who board just 1 night per week. We also try to ensure that your child is with friends of their own age, although on very rare occasions this may not be possible. Please contact the Housemaster by jmorris@elstreeschool.org.uk or Matrons by email; matron@elstreeschool.org.uk to make any necessary arrangements.

Pupils in Years 7 and 8 may either continue as day pupils or transfer to flexi or weekly boarding, going home after commitments on a Saturday evening (returning on a Monday morning in time for lessons). By Years 7 & 8 those who board must do a minimum of 2 nights per week. Many children will become weekly boarders. 'Big Weekends' are boarding weekends for specific year groups, including day children. These are great fun and a popular addition to the boarding programme.

Please contact the Housemaster by email jmorris@elstreeschool.org.uk to discuss the boarding options for your child.

Clothing

Clothing list

All items of clothing are detailed on the clothing list. These should be **clearly named**. It is essential that parents engrave watches with your child's name, and keep a record of the make of glasses.

Blazers and ties should be worn for school outings and Church services on a Saturday.

Games kit

Boarders' games clothes (3 nights or more) are washed weekly, and, for teams, on the day before a match. Day pupils and flexi boarders should take their clothing home on a Saturday and return with it clean on a Monday. If they are in a team, it would be appreciated if they could take home the appropriate kit to be washed the night before the fixture. Please note that all children do shower at school after games.

Labels

Your child will be given a School number, also known as a Peg number, which will remain the same throughout their time at Elstree. Please ensure that this is added to all personal possessions.

It is very important that all your child's belongings are correctly identified and named. This should be done clearly and securely and will help your child to keep control of his possessions more easily.

Uniform Shop

All items of school uniform are sold in the school shop. This is run by "Direct Clothing" and is located in the Pre-Prep Old Dairy (this is signposted from the Pre-Prep car park). The shop is open Mondays and Fridays from 8.00am to 9.00am during term-time and during the holidays at specified times, and by appointment. These times are published in newsletters and the School Intranet. Please contact the Uniform Shop on uniformshop@elstreeschool.org.uk if you have any queries.

Second-hand Clothing

Some second-hand clothing is available and can be purchased from the Matrons. When a pupil leaves the school, we are grateful if you wish to donate any used uniform still in good condition to the second-hand shop; please contact the Matrons by email matron@elstreeschool.org.uk for further details.

Discipline

We try to emphasise the positive in all that we do at Elstree, but we also believe that pupils need a clear framework of rules within which to live and feel confident.

The school takes particularly seriously the incidence of **bullying**. Please refer to the Behaviour Policy available on the website or by email from office@elstreeschool.org.uk **Stealing** is also unacceptable. Both bullying and stealing are intrinsically wrong and they break down the fabric of the School community. Parents are encouraged to work closely with the School on these matters.

Guide to Good Conduct

The School has very clear guidelines that are based upon sound common sense and if a pupil is in breach of any of these (s)he can expect some form of correction or discipline. We would ask for parents' support in this, thus avoiding any difficult conflict of loyalty for the pupils. The pupils are issued with a copy of the 'Guide to Good Conduct' and Form Tutors explain these to their classes.

Rewards and Sanctions

Rewards: Pupils can gain **stars** (single, double or triple) for good work. These are totalled weekly and count towards the termly house competition. A pupil may be awarded a **Distinction** for exceptional work. This counts as five stars and they receive a reward.

Commendations: Awarded for noteworthy and unsolicited acts of kindness or helpfulness around the School. They are also worth five stars towards the House total and the pupil again receives a reward.

Sanctions: Most misdemeanors are dealt with by a verbal reprimand, a demerit, a conduct mark or a minor punishment. In more serious cases, parents are informed and involved. The School may suspend or even expel a pupil for continuous or serious infringements of its policies which have been designed to uphold the welfare of all members of the School community and its property.

Demerits, Conduct Marks, Detention and Report Cards

Demerits: These are given for minor incidents of poor behaviours and are worth -3 points for the House.

Conduct Marks: These are given for poor behaviour and the pupil will always be informed of why (s)he has received the conduct mark. The recipient has a sheet to fill in and return it to the Senior Master; they also have to explain to the Head of their House why they have received the conduct mark - this focuses the mind and will, hopefully, help prevent repetition. These are worth -5 points for the House.

Detention: If a pupil behaves very poorly or becomes a persistent offender, (s)he may have to sit a detention which typically lasts for 30 minutes. The rewriting of particularly poor work may also be done at this time. Parents are contacted and informed of any serious breaches of discipline (particularly bullying and stealing). If it coincides with a paid activity, the child will miss that and no reimbursement can be made. The times of detentions are as follows:

- Monday to Friday during 2nd Break at 10.30am for poor behavior/work only (in all terms).
- Wednesday and Saturday at 5.00pm (Headmaster's Detention in all terms) for more serious offences or a continued breach of school policy.

During Detention pupils are given work to do, if appropriate; or they may be asked to complete work that is designed to make them think about their behaviour and why it was wrong.

Report Cards: These are used if Tutors feel a child is under performing academically, or their behaviour is letting them down, during lessons. The card is signed at the end of each lesson by the teacher and acts as an aide-memoire for the pupil. Parents of Day Pupils are asked to sign the card at the end of the day. Boarders have cards signed by their Form Tutor. Report cards are removed when the pupil has achieved the goals set for them.

Code of Conduct etc

Pupils are expected to be well behaved, showing care and consideration for others. Pupils are not allowed to borrow other pupils' possessions without permission.

Respect should be shown on every occasion to other pupils, to parents and to staff. Through appropriate dress code, pupils should show respect for themselves and their appearance. Pupils are expected to look after School property and their environment.

Pupils should expect to be good ambassadors for the School at all times whether they are in School or not.

Silence is expected before Assembly, as pupils await Grace after lunch, during Prep, in Church, and after lights out in the Boarding areas.

Hair

Pupils returning to school at the start of the term should have had a recent haircut. We hope for parental co-operation in ensuring that hair is kept neat. Boys' hair should be of a reasonable length, clear of the collar but not close-cropped. Extravagant styles, including dying or bleaching, are not permitted. Girls hair should be tied back if long, with navy blue, black or brown clips or ties.

Happiness

It is the aim that all pupils are happy and fulfilled at Elstree. On the odd occasion when this may not be the case, and your child is feeling a bit down or confused about life, it is much better to encourage open dialogue with the School. If in doubt, please do mention it to us. In the first instance, you should approach your child's form tutor. Matron, Sister, Housemaster, Deputy Headmaster or the Headmaster and his wife are available, and Elstree has a School Counsellor who visits the school once a week: she is a qualified Clinical psychologist who specialises in children. We also have two ELSA trained members of staff.

Impressions Count

Pupils can impress visitors and staff by being courteous, kind and considerate, thinking of the needs of others.

The following areas will help pupils to be aware of what is expected of them:

Behaviour: Do not run indoors; avoid being overly loud inside; do not use bad language; apologise with grace – and quickly – if in the wrong. Make space for adults to pass in corridors and hold doors open; offer to help. Respond to advice or instructions quickly and first time.

Communication: Do sit up, and try to appear cheerful, with good eye contact; remove hands from pockets; remember to say 'Please' and 'Thank You'. Courtesy should be extended to all members of the community.

In Class: Arrive in good time with the right equipment, prepared before the start of the lesson. Put up a hand to answer and wait to be asked. Pupils should listen to and act on instructions and advice.

Appearance: Clothes should be smart and clean and shirts tucked in; shoes polished regularly. The right games kit for the appropriate sport should be kept safe and in its right place.

Dining: Pupils should not fiddle with cutlery before the meal, slouch on the table or lean on their elbows. Conversation should seek to include others around you, making polite conversation with adults at the table.

Policies

There are a number of very useful policies that will help you to know how the School operates and that assist you as parents. These key policies below are available on the website or on request from the School Office - please contact office@elstreeschool.org.uk to request a copy of any of the policies listed below.

Policy	Available on Website	Available on Request
Administration of Medicines		●
Anti-bullying	●	●
Admissions	●	●
Promoting Positive Behaviour	●	●
Complaints	●	●
Curriculum Policy	●	●
Educational Trips and Visits	●	●
First Aid		●
Able and Talented	●	●
Health and Safety	●	●
Pastoral Care		●
Safeguarding Children	●	●
SEN & EAL Policy	●	●

Domestic matters

Care of Property

Occasional problems with pupils' property are almost unavoidable. The School promotes the nurturing of good habits over the care of property, and hopes for active parental support in this connection. All of a pupil's belongings should be clearly named;

- Watches, calculators and pens - if practical - should be engraved; Year 8 pupils should have a watch to help prepare them for more stringent time-keeping at senior school.
- Parents are reminded that the insurance of their childs' personal property is the responsibility of the parents, not of the School.
- Pupils should not be encouraged to bring to school more items than they actually need.

All pupils will have a locker in either their classroom or their Common Room for their books; Pegs in the changing room and shoe lockers for their games kit. Pupils are expected to learn how to keep a check on their books and necessary personal belongings.

Insurance

The School cannot accept liability for loss or damage to a child's personal property. Most home insurance policies cover personal effects taken to school but it would be as well to check with your own insurance policy that you are properly insured against loss or damage to pupils' personal property. Parents are reminded that the insurance of their childs' personal property is the responsibility of the parents, not of the School

Details of other insurance schemes will be shared with you when your child starts at Elstree. If you would like any further information please do not hesitate to contact the Bursar by email: waird@elstreeschool.org.uk.

Lost property

If a pupil loses a personal item, (s)he should report the matter to his or her Form Tutor who will help to find it. Unfortunately, in a community such as ours, things are not always easy to locate! Please do talk to the Form Tutor if an item cannot be found. **Named items are much easier to return.**

Mobile Phones and Communication

It is prohibited for a day pupil to have a mobile phone in school. Any communication with parents can take place in the Matrons' Room, or through the Sister if unwell, or through the School Office. Weekly boarders may have a mobile phone (for use when travelling) but use is restricted once at school. The Housemaster undertakes to look after mobile phones, giving them out at the appropriate times.

General Knowledge

There is a weekly General Knowledge quiz for Years 3 - 7. Questions are posted on the Parent Portal the week before so that pupils have time to research and learn the answers. From Year 5 upwards, there are also some Current Affairs questions included in the test.

Pocket Money

The pupils **do not** need any pocket money in school. Boarders may buy items of stationery within school, the cost of which will be added to parents' termly accounts. Expenditure is monitored so that it does not become excessive. Birthday money should, if brought in, be handed over to the Housemaster for safe keeping.

Donations to charity on Home Clothes Day or at our weekly church services are also added to your end of term bill.

Valuables

Possessions inevitably go missing in all schools. **Please do not send your child to school with anything of great value**, just in case it is misplaced or lost. Watches, pens and so on should all be clearly marked with your child's name and/or school number. Named items are much easier to return. Whilst every effort is made to reunite a child with their possessions, the School cannot accept responsibility for any articles of value brought into the School.

Drama and Music

We pride ourselves on the quality of music and drama provided. The aim is for the broadest number of children to be involved in and enjoy their exposure to the creative arts. That principle underpins the preparation and organisation of performances and the allocation of roles to individuals.

Theatrical Productions

Drama is an important part of the activity of the School. There is a flourishing Drama Scholarship programme that prepares Years 7 and 8 pupils to win scholarships to senior schools, and opportunities to perform in the annual Edinburgh Fringe Festival. Each year there are three main school theatrical productions. In the Autumn Term, there is a Year 8 play. In the Lent Term, there is a Year 6 play, the Year 7 "*play in a day*", and in the Summer Term, a Junior play for Years 3 and 4. The plays involve all pupils so that they can experience the fun of being on stage and being part of a huge team; as a member of the cast, chorus or as backstage and lighting crew. These productions are seen as major events in the School Calendar. All parents and the wider Elstree community are, of course, more than welcome. As part of the Leavers' programme, Year 8 pupils create an evening of entertainment incorporating music and drama. Further opportunities for self-expression through drama come via form assemblies, speech competitions, LAMDA lessons, Declamations, poetry performances, debating and Musical Theatre Days (either on campus or at other schools).

Music at Elstree

There is a thriving music department with regular scholarships won to senior schools. We encourage all pupils to consider learning a musical instrument at school; more than 75% of the children in the School regularly take this opportunity to learn an instrument, with several learning more than one. Music lessons are taken once a week during the school day on a rotational basis; the many visiting music teachers are listed on the website https://www.elstreeschool.org.uk/about-us/staff-and-governors/.

Pupils can learn a wide range of instruments, including all members of the string, woodwind, brass and percussion families as well as singing. There are many ensembles which rehearse weekly and give every instrumentalist and singer the chance to play or sing with others. Details of these can be found on the Parent Portal.

Music and LAMDA Lessons

Normal arrangements provide for around ten 35 minute individual lessons each term, or 30 over the whole school year, taken once a week during the school day on a rotational basis. Details of charges are available online or from the Director of Music (Music) or LAMDA coordinator (Laura Penneycard). All charges connected with music tuition are made in advance by the teacher concerned. **A half-term's notice is required for lessons to be terminated; such notice should be given in writing to the Director of Music** and half a term's fees will be charged in lieu if it is not given. LAMDA pupils can choose to be entered for exams (exam track), or follow a skills track, which will measure progress accordingly.

Pupils are expected to practise if they are to see real achievement. The Music Practice Diary issued to every pupil is designed to help pupils, parents and teachers make suitable arrangements for adequate practice. Weekly boarders have supervised practice after breakfast. The decision of whether to take a grade examination is open for discussion between the pupil and his teacher, but it is expected that steady progression is made. Associated Board exams take place at Elstree every term.

Musical Concerts

It is current practice to put on a wide variety of concerts to give as many children as possible the opportunity to perform in public. These may include a music scholars' concert, whole school formal concerts, choral events and informal concerts for each year group that allows for the beginner to showcase his or her talents and interest. The Chapel Choir give a number of concerts for various charities in local churches. Details of these concerts are advertised in the Term's Calendar and on the Parent Portal. The Chapel Choir also leads the weekly worship and special occasional services.

Trips to Senior School events such as orchestral / choral days are organised, as well as outings to recitals by professionals. The annual House Music Competition is a highlight, as is the candlelight concert and Carol Service in Douai Abbey.

Extra Curricular

We believe that this is an important part of the school's provision and try to provide a wide range of opportunities for the pupils' enjoyment. There are activities for all tastes, interests, ages and abilities.

Bicycles, Skateboards, etc.

Boarders may bring their bicycles into school during the Summer Term and use them in free time. They must be in good working order, clearly named, and pupils must have a helmet. Although the bicycles will be stored in a locked bicycle shed, they are not covered on the school's insurance policy so it is advisable to check your own home policy.

Bikes and scooters are kept in the Bike Shed which is locked overnight. Pupils should not use another pupil's bicycle or scooter without prior and personal permission being granted by the owner.

The Elstree Award

This Award is based on the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and involves pupils from Year 6 (Bronze Award), Year 7 (Silver Award) and Year 8 (Gold Award). During the year, the pupils have to complete various tasks ranging from navigation, team building activities and charitable service. The Elstree Award is based on the ideals of challenge and service, and becomes more challenging as the pupils progress through the school. It is a fantastic opportunity to develop existing skills and learn new ones.

Enrichment through Hobbies and Activities

The School endeavours to provide a full and vibrant range of activities for the pupils to engage in during the day or during boarders' clubs in the evenings. These activities are designed to complement the academic emphasis of the classroom, to provide alternative

methods of thinking creatively, of working together in groups or individually, of being able to enter into a worthwhile activity, hobby or enriching pastime.

INDOOR activities

Art and Drama
Model making
Pottery/Ceramics
Dance
DT Club
Debating
Drama
Bridge and other card games
Board Games
Chess
Film Night
Current Affairs
Computer programming
Cookery
Scrabble
Sewing Club
Science Club
Ballet Club
Badminton
Indoor Hockey
Table Tennis

OUTDOOR activities

Assault Course
Camp Craft
Canoeing
Croquet
Eco Club
Equestrian Club
Football Academy
Laser Tag
Gardening
Golf
Mountain Biking
Clay Pigeon Shooting
Wildlife Club
Tennis
Low Ropes Course
Fishing
Short Tennis
'Spotlight'
Zipwire

Music

Flute Group
Choirs;
Senior/Middle/Junior/Chamber
Guitar & Percussion Groups
Orchestra; Senior/Junior
String Ensemble

Food and Catering

Catering at Elstree is managed by an external catering company called Holroyd Howe; they operate a 'nut free' policy. The food is excellent, varied and nutritious; pupils are encouraged to eat well, learning to try at least a small amount of each course as it is felt that this is an important part of their education. Special dietary needs are accommodated and an alternative to the main course is available every meal time, with a salad bar also available as well as soup. Meals are run on a basis of traditional 'family service' with lunch tables being headed by a member of staff and breakfast and supper tables being supervised by senior pupils. Pupils take it in turns to 'clear' their table and to ensure the dining room is left tidy.

Good manners are encouraged throughout. We expect pupils to display appropriate table manners at all meals. Looking after the needs of others, especially guests, is a top

priority. Pupils can learn the art of conversation at the meal table and visitors often remark on how chatty they are.

The Dining Room Committee, run by Olivia Inglis, the Headmaster's Wife and made up of pupils, meet regularly to put forward suggestions and new ideas for the menus. There is no guarantee that every suggestion can be implemented, but the pupils' comments are listened to and considered.

The system of 'buns', a light snack and drink, takes place twice a day during break at 10.30am and at 3.30pm for Senior pupils and 3.40pm for Juniors.

The school's food policy can be found on the Parent Portal and three week rotational menus are displayed outside the dining hall, and on the Parent Portal.

If your child has an allergy to any food items, please put this information in writing to the school Nurse with a written doctor's dietary recommendations.

Grounds

Dogs

Current parents and visitors are very welcome to walk their dogs down the track to the bottom lake and bring them to watch matches. However, it is extremely important that all visiting dogs are kept on their leads whilst within our boundaries. Waste bags are freely available in the front lobby and two designated bins provided for your use.

Health and Medical

Please refer to the Medical Information booklet which details all health and medical matters. If in any doubt, please do not hesitate to contact the School Nurse by email matron@elstreeschool.org.uk who will be only too happy to assist. You would have received a Medical Record form to complete and return – if there are any changes, please keep the school nurse informed.

Pastoral

Forms

All pupils will have a **Form Tutor** who is responsible for their general well-being, and who deals in the first instance with problems connected with work, attendance or discipline. The Form Tutor, in conjunction with the Headmaster, his wife and the Housemaster, acts in loco parentis to the pupils in his or her form while they are on School premises. Form Tutors may deal directly with parents in matters concerning their child's good behaviour and appearance.

Houses

When a pupil joins the school (s)he is placed in a House: North (blue), South (red), East (green) or West (yellow). Siblings are always in the same House. This is not a major part of the pastoral system but it does teach the pupils about belonging to a group and how

responsibility for others is engendered. House competitions take place in many areas of school, for example, sports, singing, general knowledge, and debating. Stars and conduct marks are totalled each week; all members of the winning house, which is announced in prayers, receive an edible reward if they have contributed at least one star and not received a conduct mark. There is eager competition between the houses to win the coveted trophy, the 'House Head', in each term's competition.

Assemblies and Religious Education

The Christian ethos of the School is important to life at Elstree. Our week is enriched with a simple act of church worship; a hymn, reading and prayers on a Saturday morning. All pupils and staff attend this time together. The Headmaster leads a celebration assembly on Mondays and on Wednesday morning the Prayers are led either by the School Chaplain or by a form under the guidance of the Form Tutor.

T.P.R. Lessons (Theology Philosophy and Religion) or R.S. (Religious Studies) cover the development and current beliefs of a wide range of religions and faiths.

Please feel free to discuss any faith-based concerns you may have with these arrangements with the Headmaster.

Church, Carol Services, End of Term Services

In the main, **Church Services** take place on a Saturday morning at 8.45am at our local village church, St Peter's. The Headmaster invites a visiting speaker, often but not exclusively from a senior school known to be engaging and appropriate as a communicator. Details of our invited visiting preachers and times of services are to be found in the Call List and the School Calendar. Parents are welcome to join us at these services, and come for coffee in the Long Room afterwards.

The **Carol Service** is an important event in the School Year, taking place at the end of the Autumn Term at Douai Abbey. All pupils are expected to attend.

End of Term Services: The Easter Service at the end of the Lent Term is a closed event as there is insufficient space in the local church to accommodate visitors. The **Leavers' Service,** held at Douai Abbey Church at the end of the Summer Term is an important occasion to which parents of all year groups, grandparents and other friends are invited to join us.

New Pupils' Preparation and Companions

We seek to ensure that pupils settle into Elstree as quickly as possible. Most will have visited with their parents and then attended New Pupils' Day, both of which help them to feel familiar in new surroundings. All new pupils have a Companion to help look after them in the first few weeks of term. They will be close in age and may already be known to them. This is an important part of the settling-in process, ensuring that pupils feel happy and secure as quickly as possible.

This role is equally important for those pupils who are Companions, as it gives them some responsibility and encourages them to look to the needs of others. The pupils acting as Companions meet their New Pupil on 'New Pupils' Day'.

It is important that parents ensure their child is ready to begin life at Elstree. Basic things, such as being able to tie shoe laces, knot ties, hold cutlery and so on boost confidence.

An Activity Camp is run for the pupils in Years 3-8 immediately before the start of the Autumn Term and many new pupils find this an ideal way to make friends before starting at Elstree. Details of this course will be shared in the Summer Term. Please contact sbates@elstreeschool.org.uk for more information.

Prefects

Pupils are all given responsibility in their last year and we believe that this is an important aspect of their development. All pupils in the Autumn Term of their final year will have the opportunity to take responsibility and show leadership potential, before prefects are selected at the end of that term on the basis of their overall performance, contribution and character. There is an induction procedure for prefects and their progress is closely followed. This is the responsibility of the Senior Deputy Head. Pupils cannot give sanctions, but are expected to set a good example around the school, help maintain order, help look after other pupils and perform various tasks as requested by staff.

Sport

Principles

All pupils who are medically fit are expected to take part (in proper kit) in these lessons as a normal part of their education. A pupil who is medically unable to take part in these activities should bring a note from their parents. We assume, in the absence of written instructions to the contrary, that every pupil has parental permission to use the swimming pool, under proper supervision.

With the exception of some personal items, such as mouth guards and shin pads, the school will provide the equipment required to play sports at school. If personal equipment, such as tennis rackets, hockey sticks or cricket bats, is brought into school, it is the responsibility of the individual to look after the item. All items must be clearly marked with the owner's name.

Sports offered include Football, Rugby, Netball, Hockey, Cricket, Tennis, Cross-Country, Athletics and Swimming. Additional coaching can be obtained in Fencing, and Judo. PE classes will provide opportunities in Basketball, Badminton, Gymnastics, Swimming, Trampolining and many other disciplines of balance and fitness.

Colours

Every attempt is made to recognise and reward the achievements of each individual. The awarding of Colours is a popular way of doing this. The awarding of colours will also take place for the performing arts: Music, Drama, and Art. Colours for sport are awarded for exceptional contribution to that sport. A pupil who has played in the 1st team for two years would usually qualify. Colours awards are usually given to Year 8 pupils although national or international representation at Year 7 may impact this decision. No colours

are awarded at U11 level, although a certificate may be awarded for outstanding contribution and achievement.

Extras

There is a variety of extra sports and activities available including fencing, judo, M-Tech and tennis coaching. These are organised on a termly basis, charges, where applicable, being added to end of term accounts. A form is sent to all parents via the Parent Portal prior to the start of each term, please fill this in and return as indicated**.**
If this form is returned late, we regret that this may result in your child being unable to do the activity. Please note that a half term or term's notice is often required should your child wish to discontinue an activity – please see the Extras List for further information on notice required.

Sports Teams

The School runs teams in a wide range of sporting activities, details of which appear in the term's calendar. Our aim is to give as many pupils as possible an opportunity to represent the school; indeed there are teams for all abilities and ages. All teams are seen as being important, with an emphasis being placed on how to play rather than winning at all costs.

Parental support is always appreciated, but we do ask that you support all the pupils who are playing, both Elstree **and** the opposition. It is also important to remember that the pupils are only young and are still learning the game. Please encourage but do not try to coach or criticise from the touchline; the pupils will respond best to positive words during matches, if indeed they can hear you at all!

When going to away fixtures, pupils travel together on the transport provided by the school. They may return to school with their parents but **parents must ask the team coaches and should not leave before the team bus has departed**. Friends may be taken by other pupils' parents only if consent has been given on the appropriate form.

Match tea is a very important part of the day. Pupils act as hosts and look after their opposite number. This is an excellent opportunity for pupils to forge friendships with pupils from other schools; very often they become team mates when they go to their senior school and memories of former fixtures are often remembered. If there is a valid reason why match tea cannot be attended please inform the team coach well in advance. Parents watching their child in a match on a Wednesday may like to take their child(ren) home at that point, but communication with the team coach is very important to ensure that we can monitor the whereabouts of every child.

Team selection is always considered very carefully. Coaches are happy to discuss with parents the reasons for team selection, but immediately after a match is not always the most appropriate time to raise questions. Please arrange a more suitable time for both parties.

Travel

Car Share

For the convenience of parents, environmental reasons and for reasons of safety at the front of the school, the school actively promotes car sharing. We very much hope that you will be able to arrange car sharing with your nearest Elstree school-bound neighbours.

Minibus

The School has a minibus services from Earley/Reading, Brightwalton/Chieveley and Hungerford/Highclere areas and on Monday morning from London. Details of the bus routes and times can be obtained from the School Office or via email: office@elstreeschool.org.uk Please bear in mind that there is a charge for this service.

The school will clearly endeavour to run these services whenever possible but in the lack of either bus or driver it remains the parents' responsibility to ensure that their child is able to attend school. In the unusual event that the school cannot run the transport route for the day, warning will be given to the parents.

Safety

If at any time the behaviour of any passenger is deemed to be such that the safety of the bus and other passengers is jeopardised, the school will have the right to remove the offender from the bus on either a temporary or permanent basis. No refund to the fee paid will be given in these circumstances. The wearing of seat belts by children using the school coaches is **compulsory**.

Bicycles

The roads leading to Elstree School can be busy and often lack any sort of pavement. We therefore advise pupils not to arrive either by bicycle.

Parking

Space for parking is limited so parents are asked to be considerate with their cars. Please remember that young children can be unpredictable, so caution is essential whenever driving inside the school grounds. Please do drive slowly and carefully to ensure the safety of all the pupils.

Trips

A member of staff is designated to organise trips and outings that support the curriculum and enhance the educational experiences of the pupils. During the course of the year, day trips will take place to the theatre, to senior schools to music events, museums or other local places of interest. Some residential trips that are central to the pupils' learning also occur: in Year 8, the pupils are taken to France to improve their spoken French and be involved in a wide variety of activities, and other academic departments organise bespoke residential visits or day excursions and trips. There is a Year 8 Leavers' Trip towards the end of their final term.

Full details of these trips are sent to parents well in advance. Cost implications are always considered and whilst every effort is made to reduce costs, some expenses are added to end of term accounts.

Next Steps

Choice of Senior Schools

The procedures for thinking about and gaining a place at a school at 13+ vary from school to school. Parents may discuss the procedures with the Headmaster at any time. It is a very useful and informative time for both the Headmaster and the parents as choices are settled on. Elstree prides itself on getting the right choice and our examination results reflect that success. The Headmaster will give a presentation each October to Year 5 parents to help guide them on their choice of Senior Schools.

Leaving

Elstree School offers a planned course of education right through to the end of Year 8, and it is assumed that parents, on accepting a place, agree to keep their child at the school until that moment is reached, unless there is proven and substantial cause for dissatisfaction. We believe that the pupils' best interests are served to maintain the steady progress to the top of the school to grow in maturity and involvement in the many initiatives and opportunities with which they are presented in those all-important final two years.

And finally, although the aim of this Handbook is to provide you with all the information you need about Elstree School, please be assured that you are always welcome to come and talk to us if you have any questions, should you wish to discuss any aspect of Elstree school life, or wish to raise specific issues concerning your child. We look forward to getting to know you and your family.