Woodhouse Grove School

Agents Handbook

Welcome to Boarding at the Grove

Woodhouse Grove first opened its doors with just nine boys in 1812, as a boarding school for the sons of Methodist Ministers. Over the last 200 years the diversity of our pupils has changed but the school's growth, decisions and values have always been made based on its fundamental reason for being here, in that we are a "home" for our pupils.

As the mix of day pupils to boarders has changed, our vision and purpose remains the same; to provide a home from home experience to every one of our boarding pupils and provide all the ingredients to encourage our boarders to be individuals and to ensure we provide an environment where all their contributions are valued.

All our boarders are encouraged to be as active as possible in promoting positive attitudes from academic work to extra-curricular activities. All international students are encouraged to integrate into the Grove life smoothly, using our buddy scheme and with the support of our ESOL department.

Support is given both academically and socially through a team of highly experienced boarding staff across our houses, providing pupils with academic guidance when needed, friendly conversations when needed and perhaps most importantly fun when needed! The progress of each pupil is monitored by heads of year in school and by a house tutor in the boarding house where regular meetings take place to support, advise and encourage. During the week we offer an extensive evening programme of activities to our boarders and a fun filled weekend programme with numerous trip opportunities on Sundays.

Having been a boarder and worked in boarding schools for all of my career I know more than most about life as a boarder, the advantages gained from boarding, what makes a boarder happy and most importantly what makes a boarding school feel like a home. Those visiting the school often comment on our friendly welcoming feel, one that has remained throughout our history. We value that and hope that you will too.

Simon Vernon
Head of Boarding

Why choose Woodhouse Grove?

Location

Some believe a school is best located in the countryside, others that it should be close to a town. Woodhouse Grove has the best of both worlds. Despite being located less than five miles from the centre of Leeds and Bradford and only five minutes from Leeds/Bradford airport, neither is visible - or audible. Screened by woods, the school's 70 acre campus sits in the broad Aire Valley and enjoys a lovely rural setting which belies its convenient urban situation.

- Leeds/Bradford airport is within 3 miles
- Manchester Airport within a 1 hour drive
- Apperley Bridge has its own railway station just across the road from school.

All transport to the school on arrival in the UK is coordinated by our Boarding Transport administrator, Mrs Heather Garner. We can also support with booking flights home in the holidays. This provides parents with complete peace of mind that their child's journey from door to door is as smooth as possible.

Our idyllic location not only offers our pupils the convenience and accessibility of on the doorstep transport links, we are also blessed by being based in a stunning countryside location within close proximity of all the culture, entertainment and shopping that the city of Leeds can provide.

Environment

The aim of the pastoral system in our boarding houses is to provide each individual pupil with the stable environment within which they can develop academically, socially and physically.

The pupils are split by gender into separate boarding houses and each house offers an array of amenities to make its occupants feel at home. Each house has a social area where pupils can relax and unwind: these areas also include access to computer facilities for completing homework or writing emails home. The boarding houses are all wifi enabled. Each house also has a kitchen area where pupils can make breakfast at the weekend or prepare snacks etc. The houses also contain a games room where pupils can play pool or unwind on the latest computer game systems.

All bedrooms are allocated based on age, so friendships can be formed easily and many of the sixth form accommodation is in single rooms to provide privacy. Year 13 students have the opportunity to experience "apartment style living" in preparation for university.

All boarding pupils are split into houses and compete in various competitions against each other including basketball, swimming and table tennis. Points are also awarded to individuals for effort grades in school, achievements in all areas of school life, good conduct etc.

Every house has allocated staff who live within the house who are on call to encourage pupils to be involved as positively as possible in activities outside the classroom. Every pupil has a variety of adults they can speak to if they are concerned academically or socially. Indeed, each member of the boarding house has an allocated house tutor and all international students have an English speaking mentor. Our annually monitored pastoral system is promoted as a collaborative service involving parents, pupils and staff and where appropriate external agencies.

More detailed information on our boarding houses and welfare system can be found in our Boarders handbook, received prior to arrival, or on request.

Woodhouse Grove School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all employees and volunteers to share our commitment.

A day in the life of a boarder

Daily routine

Weekdays

7.30am	Rising bell
7.45am	Breakfast
5.45pm	Tea
6.30pm	Prep/Homework (all year groups)
10pm	Year 9 Lights out
10.15pm	Year 10 Lights out
10.30pm	Year 11 Lights out
11.00pm	Sixth Form Lights out

Saturday

	Breakfast in Boarding house
9.30am	Activities/Games fixtures/Leave
12 noon	Lunch
2.00pm	Games fixtures/Boarding Activity
5.30pm	Tea and roll call

Every Saturday there is a varied programme of optional boarding activity or entertainment.

Lights out is at the discretion of the Boarding Staff on duty

Sunday

	Breakfast in Boarding house
11.15am	Brunch followed by optional boarding activity
5.30pm	Tea

In general, activities on Saturdays will be in and around school. On Sundays trips and outings may be arranged further afield.

Individual boarding houses develop their own style but these basic timings are maintained throughout both boarding houses.

Life as a boarder by Jess Warden Y13

"I joined Woodhouse Grove as a boarder in year 9. The idea of living at school was both exciting and scary. The first night I was preoccupied with thinking about home as the other girls in boarding had so many questions to ask me; what's your name? what year are you in? what school did you go to? It was hard to be upset as everyone made such an effort to make me feel welcome and it was not long before I realised I had a lot in common with the majority of the girls.

The first day at school was just the same but with a lot more questions, however, with the help of Courtney (another boarder in my year) by the end of the week I had made friends and felt like I had been at the school for years.

I am now in the 6th form at the Grove and have actually been here for almost 5 years! There is nothing that I would change about my time here. Being a boarder has allowed me to make friends from all over the world, build strong connections with the staff in boarding and memories that will stay with me for a lifetime. The opportunities that are on offer in boarding are also great, with trips organised for weekends and access to the facilities in school; there is always something to keep you occupied.

I have always been grateful for all the support that I have received from my boarding tutor and all members of the boarding team. At the end of this year I will find it very difficult to leave, as Woodhouse Grove has not only been my school for the last five years but it has also been my home.

Frequently asked questions

What happens if I am struggling with my work or need a bit of academic advice?

All boarders are assigned a House Tutor on arrival who is readily available to help. This tutor will conduct regular formal meetings as well as monitor progress along with the Head of Year.

I am worried that my English is not very good. What help will I get?

Woodhouse Grove has a dedicated ESOL department to work with you in developing your confidence in the language. All international students for whom English is a foreign language also have a mentor who will help them learn the language, and with their integration into school life.

Can boarders go out of school at weekends?

Yes. Providing that they have fulfilled any school commitments (including matches) and an appropriate leave form has been completed by parents (this can be via email).

Local leave can be granted by the member of House staff on duty. Pupils below the 6th form are not allowed to take leave alone and must report to the member of staff on duty on their return.

What can I wear?

Casual dress may be worn after school and throughout the weekends. However school uniform must be worn on all formal school occasions.

What do I do with my pocket money?

It is recommended that senior boarders open a bank account with a cash card so money can be easily withdrawn from local cash machines (10 minute walk). Support can be given to International students wishing to do this. Younger boarders can leave money with the Houseparent who will supply small sums on a weekly basis.

What happens if I get poorly?

The school has on onsite medical centre with qualified nursing sisters. We also have a school doctor that holds a surgery twice a week.

How do I keep in touch with home?

Pupils can use their personal mobile phones or laptops. The boarding houses are wifi enabled and the school also has ready availability of Skype. Each boarding house also has a pay phone which can receive incoming calls. There is also an on call duty mobile so parents can get in touch with boarding staff when required. We encourage pupils to set up email accounts so regular contact can be made with parents over the internet.

How do I wash my clothes?

General laundry is done on site and is collected on a regular basis. Items for dry cleaning are sent off site once a week on Monday. All clothing should be named.

Why our boarders like the Grove

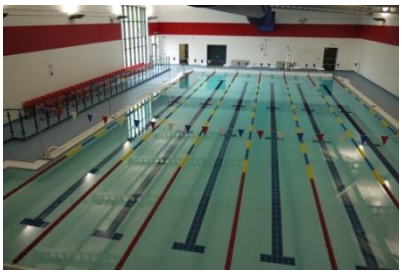
Boarding Activities

We offer a highly varied boarding activity weekend programme run by our specialist Boarding Trip Coordinator with activities including:

Wakeboarding
Cinema
Bowling
Theme Parks
Pottery
Zoo
Archery
Orienteering
Climbing
Shopping
Laser quest
The beach

The programme of activities is very flexible and can change on an annual basis, based on the interest of boarding pupils.

The weekend activities programme keeps the pupils busy at weekends and allows them exposure to a huge range of activities and the opportunity to gain new skills. It also allows the pupils to develop friendships and socialise in an environment outside school. International boarders are also encouraged to visit day
pupil's houses at weekends to experience different cultures and build relationships outside the boarding community.



Boarders are also encouraged to partake in extra-curricular activities based at school. All boarders have access to an extensive array of facilities that the school has to offer. These include the new 25m competition pool, the artificial all weather pitch, tennis courts, a climbing wall, squash courts, performing arts centre, ICT suites and of course the extensive playing fields.

All these facilities have dedicated time for boarders use, ensuring that there is always something on the school campus available for boarders to do.

Catering

Our newly equipped catering service offers visitors to the dining hall a huge variety and choice of options.

The daily menu includes a hot meal, a pasta option and a full salad bar. A large selection of fresh fruit is available at every meal time.

The catering department ensures that every boarding house is equipped with fresh bread, fruit, milk and cereal to give our boarders the opportunity to make their own snacks and breakfast should they wish to.

Menus run on a termly cycle and cater for all requirements. Should a pupil have a specific dietary requirement this can be discussed with the Catering Manager.

What the pupils say?

I have been a boarder at Woodhouse Grove for over 2 years and it has been one of the most memorable experiences I've ever had. The members of boarding are very close, helpful and loving, almost like a big family. The staff are willing to listen and help at all times, no matter how big or small the problem is. I enjoy the variety of trip and activities that are offered to us by the staff. Some of my favourite trips and activities are paintballing, go-karting and the theme parks. The facilities around school are always available to us; the facility I use the most is probably the fitness suite.

Ronney Wong
Year 13

A day in the life of a Woodhouse Grove school Girl Boarder is interesting, busy and above all – inspirational. Life in boarding consists of the right balance of academic work, exercise and lastly having FUN. A boarding house is a place where people should feel safe. For me, I see Girls boarding as a place that I can call my second home.

Rachel Amankwatia
Year 12

Life at Girls boarding is challenging, fun and full of excitement. The Woodhouse Grove boarding experience is truly like no other. In the seven-day week, life is very full and gives special opportunities to focus on excellence in academic areas, sport and extracurricular activities whilst having every opportunity to make friendships which can last a lifetime.

Teodora Delcheva
Year 12

The Boarding house is a very nice, warm place. The teachers in boarding are very friendly and offer a wide range of evening and weekend activities to make student's time here, fun and interesting. From sports, climbing and games, to art, drama and baking club, there is something for everyone to enjoy. They are also very happy to guide us if we need help with our studies. The school is in a good location, with easy, quick transport to the cities of Leeds and Bradford.

Wei Zhang Year 11

Although at first I sometimes found it difficult and got quite homesick, boarding life kept me busy. Making new friends and living with new people was a great experience, it's like being one big family; we may not always get along but everyone is very supportive and always there for one another.

Danni Royston
Year 11

Although my family is far away and therefore I have minimum contact with them being a boarder is surprisingly fun and a good experience. I have my family here so I never get sad or homesick, sometimes I even try to find ways to stay here. It's a good experience as it helps you bond with girls of different years who you normally wouldn't talk to round school.

Ropa Chinyoka

Year 10

From the beginning

How to apply

Please contact the Admissions Registrar who will give you an indication as to whether your client would meet our entry requirements. The client would then complete a registration form which can be found on our website.

How much to pay now

We do not charge a registration fee. A deposit of £3,350 is payable upon acceptance of a place. £3,000 is refundable when the pupil leaves the school (less any extras incurred).

Assessment/interview process

The entrance procedure for Overseas Students comprises three parts:

- Entrance Exam - Two papers; Mathematics and English
- Report - A confidential report and references from the applicant's current school
- Interview – An interview will take place at the educational fair. If the applicant is currently at school in the UK, then we would ask them to visit for interview.

When we recruit

If boarding space is available, we accept students at any time during the academic year. Students wishing to study GCSE or A Level courses must start in September at the beginning of the autumn term.

When you get here what happens?

When an overseas student arrives at The Grove, they will be allocated an English speaking mentor who will be responsible for welcoming them to the school, encouraging them to speak English and introducing them to their friends.

Guardians

Parents who reside overseas are expected to arrange guardians for their children. Such guardians should live within easy travelling distance of the school and be mature adults, able to offer accommodation to the pupil for leave weekends and half terms. It is also helpful if they can attend parents' meetings and give appropriate support and encouragement to the pupil. In any emergency they would be expected to act as the parents' representative. If parents have difficulty organising this we can put them in touch with guardianship companies who we have relationships with.

VISA

Woodhouse Grove School is a Tier 4 Highly Trusted Sponsor with the UK Border Agency.

Overseas Students Integration Programme

The Overseas Students Integration Programme is a mentoring scheme which has been developed to bring together our British and Overseas students.

Aims:

- To enable overseas students to feel welcomed and supported.
- To enable overseas students to play a full part in the academic, social and curricular life of the school.
- To encourage integration within our international and multi-cultural community.
- To provide opportunities for English-speaking students to broaden their horizons, by getting to know students of a different cultural and national background.
- To instil social and diplomatic skills that our students will find useful in life after school.

When an overseas student arrives at The Grove, they will be allocated an English speaking mentor who will be responsible for welcoming them to the school, encouraging them to speak English and introducing them to their friends.

Overseas students will have a local guardian where they go to stay during some of the holidays and the exeat weekends, but we also encourage them to have a 'Grove family home stay', so they can stay at the home of a day pupil for the weekend or for some of the holidays.

Intensive English Language Courses

Woodhouse Grove is partner to three excellent English Language Schools. The courses they provide are designed to intensively improve a pupils English language skills prior to undertaking GCSE and A levels courses.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

At Woodhouse Grove ESOL is part of our learning support department and we provide specific ESOL lessons for our overseas students. It is the aim of the ESOL department to engage students in as interesting and useful classes as possible. Students should feel that ESOL is special for them, a place where they can practise their English in a relaxed and friendly environment.

Students are encouraged to develop their English capabilities in the following areas: Composition (Grammar and Vocabulary), Reading, Listening and Speaking; all of these elements are important. Written work is set at regular intervals and, where possible, students are encouraged to incorporate any new grammar and vocabulary.

Years 7 to 11

ESOL students in years 7 – 11 should attend at least two lessons of ESOL per fortnight. If staffing and timetabling allows, this can be more. The main emphasis must be on improving grammar, vocabulary and writing skills. Listening and speaking skills can also be focussed on; however, these skills can and should be developed outside of the classroom during normal social interaction. Grammar and vocabulary can be delivered through the core text books that are used for each year group. Teachers have a choice of text books for each year group. Each text book offers suitable material delivered in an interesting and structured manner. Grammar and vocabulary learnt through the text books should be developed through regularly set written work.

Years 12 to 13

All overseas students are encouraged to take the IELTS exam. However, if they have achieved a C grade or above at GCSE then it may not be necessary for them to do this. It is impossible to fail an IELTS exam; all IELTS exams are graded out of 9. Students must achieve a 6.5 or above in order to meet most University entrance requirements.

Speech and Drama

At the start of term, ESOL students are strongly encouraged to enrol in Speech and Drama. It is expected that new overseas students, and existing students who continue to be weak orally, do Speech and Drama. This is seen as an essential part of their English language development.

Fees

Agents Commission

Commission will be offered at an agreed percentage of the school fees usually for the student's first year at Woodhouse Grove School. We would draw up a contractual agreement between yourselves and the school.

Acceptance Deposit

On accepting a place at Woodhouse Grove an acceptance deposit of £3,350 is payable. £3,000 is returnable, held against the final term's fees. £350 is retained by the school to cover administrative costs, and a lifetime subscription to the Old Grovian Association, together with any extras incurred in the final term.

Fees for 2015/16 Entry

Years 7-10	per term	per annum
Day pupil	3995	11985
Weekly boarding	7775	23325
Full Boarding	8310	24930

Years 11-13	per term	per annum
Day pupil	4110	12330
Weekly boarding	7870	23610
Full boarding	8330	24990

Our fees remain virtually all inclusive.

Additional charges are not made for meals, first examination fees, career tests, most text books, special learning support and pupil personal accident and off site activity insurance.

In association with market-leading school fee finance provider 'School Fee Plan' www.sfpschoolfees.co.uk, you can apply online to pay your school fees by monthly instalments*. It's quick, easy and once approved, we will notify School Fee Plan of your termly fees, including extras

*Credit is subject to status. Terms and conditions apply

Fee discounts?

We offer a sibling discount of 5%; this percentage is increased with larger sibling groups. Discounts are available on fees for those wishing to pay more than a year in advance. Further information on this and other fee related enquiries should be directed to the school finance office.

The Curriculum

Years 7 to 9 – Laying Foundations

Children usually join the Grove at 11 but a number also join at 12 and 13. The first three years at Woodhouse Grove provide a thoughtful transition from the much smaller world of prep or primary school. Pupils follow a common curriculum designed to broaden the subject base and pick up learning momentum before embarking on the GCSE programme.

Maths, English and French are taught in sets, but otherwise pupils are put into mixed ability classes within Years 7 and 8. Each class is overseen by a Tutor who knows the pupils well. Together, the tutors form a team reporting to the Head of Lower School, who has overall pastoral and academic responsibility. For pupils with specific difficulties, e.g. dyslexia, there is a specialist learning support unit where qualified staff provide appropriate support and guidance.

In these pivotal years, bridging the gap between primary and secondary school, Woodhouse Grove believes in offering pupils as wide a range of experiences as possible to assist their development into caring, confident and capable young people. These experiences include off-site visits and residential trips and involvement in a wide range of extra-curricular activities.

Years 7, 8 and 9 comprises of the first three year groups of Woodhouse Grove and provides a thoughtful transition from the much smaller world of prep or primary school.

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For the next three years, pupils follow a common curriculum designed to broaden the subject base and pick up learning momentum before embarking upon the GCSE programme.

Years 10 to 11 – Platform to Success

As pupils enter Years 10 and 11, the foundations have been laid for the main thrust of GCSE work. With so many pressures and choices ahead, pastoral care and academic guidance are vigilant and responsive to need.

Account is taken of the growing maturity of pupils who are encouraged to take increasing responsibility for managing their time and workload.

Emphasis is placed on the development of study skills, revision programmes and examination techniques in preparation for both internal and external public examinations.

These are testing years, thoughtfully provided for at the Grove with a wide range of co-curricular activities designed to create a more rounded personality.

Pupils learn to think ahead, to prepare not merely for GCSE but also for the challenges beyond it. Individually and in discussion with staff they will look for a balance of academic and creative subjects which will make the narrower choice at A Level easier, and ensure a fruitful match of interest and ability.

Talent, application, high quality teaching and facilities all play their part in ensuring all-round achievement for students in the Sixth Form. This achievement comes from the progressive maturity of pupils´ ability, skills and sense of responsibility over their school career.

Sixth Form – Academic Launch Pad

Over twenty-five AS and A-Level courses are offered in the Sixth Form. Additional breadth of study is provided by our Sixth Form enrichment programme including the Extended Project and General Studies. Most pupils go on to university, and there is a long history of representation across the whole spectrum of degree courses, including those at Oxford and Cambridge.

These are the vital statistics of success but they are not simply or solely the product of a book and class-based curriculum. Pupils achieve because they are stretched in different and stimulating ways: by commitments to House and team, by appointment as a school prefect, by clubs, activities or work in the community as well as the paramount academic effort.

Over 20 AS and A Level courses are offered in the Sixth Form. Additional breadth of study is provided by our Sixth Form enrichment programme including General Studies.

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A Level and GCSE Options

GCSE – Years 10 & 11

Pupils study English, Maths and Science to GCSE level. In addition, all pupils participate in PE and Games and PSHE lessons. These subjects constitute the core curriculum. To complete the timetable, it is necessary to then choose four further subjects, one from each of four blocks, as shown in the example below:

Option Blocks

Block A	Block B	Block C	Block D
Business Studies	Art	Art	Business Studies
French	Computer Science	Business Studies	Design Technology
French FT	Drama	Design Technology	Drama
Geography	Geography	German	Geography
Religious Studies	History	History	History
Learning Support	Music	PE	Spanish
	PE	Religious Studies	

A Level – Sixth Form (2 year course)

The blocks below illustrate the A Level subjects available for Academic Years 2015-2016.

Students should choose one subject from each of blocks 1 – 4 (Block 5 is optional).
Please note that many subjects appear in more than one block.

Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4	Block 5
Art	Business Studies	Biology	Biology	Computing AS
Biology	Chemistry	Business Studies	Design Tech	Photography AS
Chemistry	Economics	ELLA	English Lit	Geology AS
Drama§	English Lit	History	French	Cert. – Finance
Economics	Geography	Maths with Further Maths*	Geography	
History	Music§	Physics	Maths	
Maths	Physics	RS	Maths with Further Maths*	
Psychology	Politics	Spanish	Media Studies	
Sport	Psychology		RS	
			Sport	

Other enrichment opportunities will take place within or outside the timetable. These may include: General Studies, Community Service, LEAP, other language options and Duke of Edinburgh.

Life after the Grove

Our advice on the stage beyond school aims to match individual aspirations to real-world requirements. For most pupils, that means a university degree course to maximize their career options and appeal to prospective employers in today's highly competitive job market.

We give guidance to pupils embarking on the serious decision of where to spend the three or four years immediately after leaving Woodhouse Grove. Not only are pupils deciding where to spend those years, but also shaping the decision of their future careers.

The decision of up to five university courses must be made extremely carefully and following detailed individual research and consultation with both careers staff and subject staff here at the Grove.

Get in Contact

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions you may have.

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For further information contact:
Mrs Tara Gilks – Admissions Registrar
gilks.tv@woodhousegrove.co.uk