



Borden Grammar School

A Guide for Parents

Pupil's Name _____



A BIG CHANGE

Your son will now be starting secondary school. Borden is almost certainly larger than his primary school with a larger site. From September your son will:

- Be responsible for his own possessions
- Organise his books, kit and homework every day
- Complete homework each night and hand it in on time
- Be responsible for his locker key, canteen card, bus pass, letters home, returning reply slips, completing his homework planner daily
- Change rooms for lessons and get used to various teaching styles
- Make decisions about how to use his free time during break and lunch time

To help your son settle in to this new routine he will have an experienced Form Teacher, a Welcome Booklet to keep with him explaining 'what to do if...' and a map of the school. He will spend a day at Borden in July so that he can meet his Form Teacher, find out who will be in his Form and experience a few lessons. On the first day of term in September, boys will be given their timetables, be issued with a locker (they must bring a padlock), have dinner in the cafeteria (school dinners or packed lunch – boys choose daily) and find out where all of their classrooms are. In the first few weeks he will build confidence, explore the school and ask questions. Teachers, Support Staff, Prefects and selected older students will be on hand to help.

Many fears that pupils have when transferring to secondary school soon disappear. If concerns do arise any time throughout the year, Form Teachers, Form Prefects, the Year Head and Head of School are always on hand. School counsellors are available for pupils with serious or ongoing problems. (Parental consent must be received before appointments are made.)

UNIFORM

Uniform unites the boys in the school and makes them representatives of Borden. Your son will be expected to come to school and return home from school each day in full uniform. Top buttons should be done up, ties should be the correct length (an inch above the waist line – *please practice*), the blazer must have a badge on the top pocket, socks must be black or grey (never white), trousers must be grey and black shoes (no trainers or plimsoll) must be worn. Good turnout reflects well on the school and your son.

All boys are issued with a uniform card, which must be carried at all times. A member of staff will sign the card if your son is not dressed correctly. After receiving five signatures, your son will be given a detention. A detention is also issued if the card is lost or your son is unable to produce it when asked.

The school runs its own uniform shop and items may be purchased at any time. Order forms are available from the school office and the school website. Payment should accompany orders. As the school buys directly from manufacturers there is no middle man and all profit from the shop goes directly to the school, benefiting all pupils.

PROBLEMS

Each year in Year 7 the biggest problems stem from teasing and homework. Younger boys are very quick to tease each other, often thinking that it is fun and that other boys don't mind. It is not fun, almost always leads to unhappiness and can lead to some unpleasant situations. Boys are anxious to make friends and look popular within their peer group. Sometimes boys who have been bullied in their primary school actually become bullies in secondary school. This behaviour is never acceptable. Incidents must be reported and will always be investigated.

Running, chasing, playing 'man – hunt' and misbehaving in form rooms during free time are also causes for concern. Boys should remember that they are now secondary pupils and have been selected to come to Borden because they have academic ability and the potential to do well, as our motto says, 'to strive forward'. Silly or unruly behaviour will be challenged appropriately.

Homework must be recorded in their planners (or 'No H.W.' entered if none has been set) and must be done on time. It is important to establish a good routine from the start. A quiet work place *without* distractions such as television, games consoles, smart phones and tablet devices result in better work habits. Choose a routine and try to stick to it; check exactly what your son is doing for homework. In Year 7 each homework subject should take about 15-20 minutes on average. As boys progress through the school homework will get longer.

ORGANISATION

Bag packing and organisation of books, work and materials is a problem for many boys. Once again a good routine is essential. Parents will need to oversee school preparation, then once a routine is in place boys should become responsible for this themselves. Uniform should, ideally, be made ready the night before. When homework is completed in the evening, the school bag should be packed for the next day. Morning *is not* the time to begin these tasks!

You will have a copy of your son's daily lesson timetable and daily homework timetable so you will know what he needs to take to school each day. He should not be bringing all of his books to and from school each day, and must make intelligent use of his locker.

It is helpful if you check his bag for letters. It is important that you are aware of communications sent from the school and many letters will require you to sign a return slip for your son to take back to school. Letters are also available on the school website: www.bordengrammar.kent.sch.uk and via email through Parentmail which you will be invited to join, and would recommend as the most efficient and quickest way of communicating.

MEDICATION

If your son requires medication during the school day, this needs to be clearly labelled with his name and brought to the school office where it will be kept securely. Office staff are only able to issue medication under these circumstances. Trained first aiders are available, should your son become unwell or sustain an injury in school

KEY POINTS

The following points are worth remembering, and helping your son to remember!

- **All clothing and equipment must be named.**
- Boys will need P.E. and games kit only on the days they have these lessons.
- Kit should then be taken home the same day.
- Three dictionaries are required, English, Spanish and French. (these are available from the school Library) and must be taken to lessons.
- Pens, pencils, rubber, a small selection of coloured pencils, ruler, calculator, headphones (a pair from the local pound shop rather than Dr Beats) and maths equipment are needed every day. No boy should need to borrow these materials from other pupils.
- Lockers must be used as the school cannot be responsible for possessions.

Mobile devices may only be used in form rooms 8.30-8.45 am and at morning and lunch breaks. At all other times they should be switched off and out of sight. In particular, cables and earphones should not be visible. Students should not ring or send texts from the medical room but allow office staff to make contact with parents/carers instead.

Students should not make calls from their mobiles. There are two exceptions to these rules.

- School office staff may, at their discretion, give a student permission to use a mobile to make a call during the school day (in the office area only).
- Should students need to check their phones for messages from parents or phone them after 3.30pm it would of course be in order to do so (but not whilst attending study sessions or detentions).

FOOD

Food is available at break time and lunch time. We have a cafeteria which operates via a cashless card system (details to follow) and boys may choose each day what they wish to eat. If boys prefer they may bring a packed lunch. Between 8.00 and 8.30 each morning breakfast is available in the Hall. If your son wants to have breakfast he can enter the school by the kitchen door between 8.00 and 8.30. He may only enter the main school at 8.30 when the other doors are unlocked. All boys should use the side doors to enter and leave the school, *not* the front entrance. Exceptions are made for Prefects or boys being collected by parents during the school day (e.g. when ill or being collected for an appointment).

TRANSPORT

If your son walks to school he **must** use the crossings provided as the road is very busy before and after school. He should enter via one of the side entrances. Boys must not cut across the front of the school or car park. Pupils must not congregate outside the school gates causing an obstruction.

If your son cycles to school he should ride up the side road and walk his bike to the bike racks located behind the cafeteria. Care should be taken when cycling on the Avenue of Remembrance before and after school as this road is very busy. He must **not** cut through the staff car park or front drive.

If your son is driven to school he should be dropped off away from the school entrances. Parents **must not** drive into the car park, the front entrance of the school or stop outside the gates of the school. Many boys are dropped off and met in the evening at the town library or other town parking areas away from the congestion outside the school. He should enter school via a side entrance and not cut through the front drive or staff car park.

If your son travels by bus he is expected to be well behaved when on the bus and to wait sensibly at the assigned bus stop before and after school. If problems arise the bus company should be informed directly. Pupils who cause problems risk losing their bus passes. He should enter school via a side entrance and not cut through the front drive or staff car park. At the end of the day, boys wait for buses within the school gates so that pavements are not blocked, and are supervised by a member of staff.

If your son travels by train he should walk to and from the station using the crossings provided. If any problems arise you should contact the rail company directly. He should enter school via a side entrance and not cut through the front drive or staff car park.

HISTORY

Borden Grammar School as we know it today was built in 1928. The Hardy Block was added in the 1970s and the Short Building in the 1990s. In recent years we have added an artificial pitch, multi-use games area, Pavilion, Climbing Wall and a Library Resource Centre. The original Borden Grammar School can still be seen off College Road as it is now the Adult Education Centre. We have been educating boys since 1879. Your son's registration number will tell you exactly how many boys have gone before him. We hope your son will carry on the high academic standards that have existed for over 100 years.

All boys who come to Borden deserve their place. Your son should not worry if others find work easier than he does. The important thing is that he does his best every lesson. At the end of their first year they will be expected to know all of the work they have covered during the year. *Striving Forward* begins with good habits in Year 7.

REPORTING

Your son has the ability to do well but will only do so if he is well organised, has a good routine and works hard. Good habits start now! To help monitor his progress you will receive a printed audit sheet three times a year. This will give diligence and achievement grades for all subjects. Audit sheets will always have a reply slip for you to sign and your son to return. A full report will be written once a year. A parent consultation evening is held once a year.

If homework is not being completed on time or to a satisfactory standard you will usually be contacted via a note in your son's planner. If the situation does not improve you will be asked to come into school to discuss your son's progress. Checking and signing the homework planner allows you to keep a close eye on work requirements. A 4 or 5 on an audit report usually means homework is poor, regularly late or not done at all. 1s and 2s are expected diligence grades for *all* boys.

Monday – Friday a supervised homework club is held in the school Library. Many boys find this is a helpful way to make a start on their homework and some manage to complete all their tasks at the club. The computer rooms are also usually available for boys to use at lunch time and after school.

ABSENCE AND LATES

Should your son be unwell and unable to attend school, I would ask that you ring the school before 9.30am on the first day of any absence to let us know. A written note will be required when he returns to school. For any planned absences, please write to your son's Head of Year in advance.

Your son must arrive at school by 8.40am. Registration is at 8.50am and he must be in his form room by this time. If he arrives late to school, he must sign the Log Book in the main entrance hall and explain the reason for his lateness. Repeated lateness will lead to sanctions.

The full school policy on absence and lates is available on the school website.

WELCOME BOOKLET

Your son will have a Welcome Booklet that will give him details of what to do if he is late, lost or ill. Please read it with him and ask him to keep it with him at school for the first few weeks.

Some boys take many months to settle into secondary school while others feel at home straight away. We want your son to be happy and to achieve his best while he is at Borden. If you have any worries please contact your son's Head of Year or Form Teacher; most problems are quickly resolved. As a Borden boy we want your son to follow the school motto and *strive forward* and enjoy his time at Borden Grammar School.