



Steypning Grammar School

Safeguarding in a Boarding context 2025-2026

Overview

- Steypning Grammar School Boarding offers full and weekly boarding for girls and boys up to 113 students from Years 9-13.
- SGS is a member school of the Boarding Schools Association (BSA). The BSA Commitment to Care Charter is clearly displayed in the reception- staff are reminded about our duty to place safeguarding at the heart of what we do: [BSA Commitment to Care Charter](#)
- Steypning Grammar School complies with the [National minimum standards for boarding schools in force from 5 September 2022](#)
- Steypning Grammar School is inspected by Ofsted under the [Social Care Common Inspection Framework \(SCIFF\): boarding schools and residential special schools](#).
- Boarding schools have a duty of care 'in loco parentis' and assume legal responsibility for students whilst in their care. All staff have a heightened responsibility to safeguard students who live with us; every interaction is important. Boarding staff work very closely with students and parents/carers and get to know what normal behaviour is for a specific child. We monitor change in behaviour as they could be a sign of harm and safeguarding concern.
- [The Boarding Information for Boarders and Parents](#) sets out key rules, routines and expectations as well as practical information. This is updated each year and shared with students and parents during the induction period.

Pastoral support and communication channels

- Every boarding student has a Houseparent who is responsible for their day to day care; day school staff can find out this information on the student's SIMS page.
- The Houseparent is the first point of contact for parents who are reminded of contact details.
- Every boarding student has a Boarding Tutor who oversees holistic progress (academic and wellbeing) in a fortnightly meeting.
- In day school, every boarding student at KS4 has a Head of Year and Assistant Head of Year, whilst at KS5 they have a Head of Year who communicate pastoral and academic issues with Houseparent, and vice versa.
- The day school **Medical Welfare Officer** works closely with the **Boarding Health and Wellbeing Lead** to ensure continuity of care for students. This includes regular communication if a student is deemed not well enough to go to school or if they have to return to boarding due to illness.

Homesickness

The school acknowledges that any student may suffer from homesickness at any time during their time in boarding and staff are attuned to signs and symptoms of this.

We take a solution-focused approach to helping students with homesickness including:

- Personalising their bedroom area.
- Staying in contact with parents/carers/guardians and friends from home.
- Integrating into the Boarding community and local community.
- Developing good routines including work-life balance and sleep.

- Eating properly.
- Engaging in team building activities, hobbies and clubs.
- Assigning a buddy who has more experience of boarding.
- Signposting to how to get support in boarding.
- Signposting to support helplines.
- Regular welfare checks by staff in boarding and day school.

Updates to Keeping children safe in education part 1 2025 in a Boarding context

Child-on-child abuse

- The school acknowledges that close and personal relationships will develop between students in Boarding and that children can abuse other children on site or offsite, in person or online. Staff maintain a culture of vigilance and an attitude of **'it could happen here'**.
- All students sign the Boarding Behaviour Agreement each year at the start of term after having the opportunity to read, digest, understand and ask any questions about its contents :

Student and Parents Handbook 2025-2026 v6 September 25 (2).pdf

- Staff pay particular attention to relationships between students where there is a significant age difference or power imbalance. Contextual safeguarding information about a student will also be used to inform a rooming risk assessment if necessary; this may be from their child protection and safeguarding file from a former school or from their application form. For example, any underlying safeguarding vulnerability including historic and current health and wellbeing concerns.
- Parents will be informed of any safeguarding concerns regarding relationships between students and normal safeguarding procedures will be followed to report concerns in school via CPOMS, as well as making a referral to external agencies such as Social Care or the Police. For more information see: [Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges](#)
- The Boarding Wellbeing programme provides additional advice and guidance about healthy relationships, consent, the Law and how to report relationship issues or concerns.

Responding to concerns

Victims are always taken seriously and careful consideration will be taken to ensure they are never given the impression they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

Concerns are recorded on CPOMS and triaged in line with the school's safeguarding and child protection policy; this is likely to include a joint referral to Social Care and Police. School will await next steps from external agencies before taking any action, unless there is an imminent risk to safety.

If the victim and alleged suspect reside in boarding, due care and attention will be given to ensure they are both safeguarded.

This may include but is not limited to:

- Different nominated 'go to' members of staff (advocates).
- Safety plan/risk assessment.
- Confiscation of electronic devices.
- Room move or move of house.
- Offer of mental health support such as counselling.
- Signposting to helplines and support.
- Regular welfare checks.
- Restorative Justice if appropriate.
- Removal of boarding place if a crime has been committed and the student is no longer deemed suitable for boarding.

- Sanctions including fixed or permanent exclusion from the day school, Sixth Form College and Boarding.
- Final warning letters.

Gender separation

- At no time are students allowed in sleeping areas of the opposite sex; they are clearly marked in all houses with notices on closed doors.
- Bolton House and Bennetts House- is separated by gender by alarmed doors; alarm boxes sound in staff flats if doors are breached. The Boarding Behaviour Agreement outlines sanctions for this offence.
- If there is a cause for concern, the Head of Boarding, Operations Manager or DSL with permissions may review the CCTV to monitor student movement and if they spend an extended period of time in another student's room during sleep hours. This is followed up in conversation with the student and a sanction is applied if necessary.

Online safety

- During the induction period at the start of the year, boarding students have age appropriate online safety training, as part of the Boarding wellbeing programme, in addition to what they receive in day school in PSHE (KS4) and Next Steps (KS5). This includes how to stay safe online, the legalities around online safety offences, how to report incidents and helplines.
- Students will also receive practical advice regarding setting strong passwords, security settings on apps and social media, and common scams such as phishing.
- Students will also be informed of how to report hate crimes online.
- Students will receive specific advice about sharing nudes and semi-nude images and videos.
- Year 9 and 10 boarders must have their phones in at bedtime Sunday- Thursday.
- Students sign an acceptable use policy for digital technologies in school.
- The firewall blocks harmful content and the DSL reviews blocked searches for trends.
- Staff consult this guidance for more information: [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#)

Mental health and well being

- Staff are aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Education staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.
- Mental health concerns are reported as a safeguarding concern via CPOMS in school where Designated Safeguarding Leads triage to action the most appropriate course of action and support for the student.
- Vulnerability and optimism indices are used to identify 'hidden vulnerables' who may be suffering from poor mental health or those who may be more susceptible to mental health issues.

Child abduction and community safety incidents

- Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers.
- Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation.
- Details of Court Orders or Special guardianship arrangements are known by staff with safety plans in place to safeguard the child where necessary.
- The boarding experience seeks to increase the independence of students and the school acknowledges that practical safety advice on how to keep themselves safe should be given to students. Regular reminders to students reiterate the importance of a common sense approach to personal safety.

- Parents living outside the UK, or parents who live sufficiently far away from the school that collecting their child at short notice is not possible, **must** nominate a guardian aged over 25 years, who is resident permanently in the UK and who undertakes to be responsible for their child should s/he be required to leave the School for any reason at short notice, usually on the same day, during term. A DBS check will be required to ensure they are suitable for this role. [W SGS Guardianship Charter 2025-26.docx](#)

Signing in and out

Students may leave the site but must follow specific rules, particularly after dark.

- You must sign in/out with a member of staff in person.
- If you cannot find a member of staff, do not sign out.
- You may only sign out for 30 minutes at a time.
- You must sign out with at least one other person.
- All year groups must be back on site by 10pm every day.

Missing person protocol

[Missing person protocol](#)

Community safety incidents

The school has developed regular communication channels with the local Police and Wardens to share information about safeguarding trends and antisocial behaviour. If intelligence suggests an increased risk of harm in certain areas in the vicinity, then sign out expectations will be modified to ensure effective safeguarding.

Miscellaneous A-Z

Asking for help

- There are many members of staff that students can talk to, in addition to their parents/carers/guardians.
- The contact details for the Independent Person and the helplines are clearly displayed on notice boards in all houses. These can also be found in the parent/student handbook.. There are anonymous feedback boxes in all houses which are checked regularly.
- Students are regularly reminded that they can use the Boarding House phone at any time to make a phone call in confidence.
- There is an anonymous concern form called the Boarding Reporting App where students can raise a concern about a peer or themselves.
- The Boarding Counsellor is available to scheduled sessions or drop in sessions each week.
- The Chaplaincy Team offers additional pastoral and spiritual support where needed.

Admission process

- Boarding operates its own admissions policy different to that for day school applications; for more information see: Boarding Admissions Policy <https://www.sgs.uk.net/boarding/policies/>
- A satisfactory reference must be received before we consider an applicant for an interview. At the interview, the admissions panel must be satisfied that the candidate does not present a health and safety risk to themselves or anyone else and they will cope and benefit from the boarding experience. If there is any doubt over these two statements, then the application will be rejected on the grounds of not being suitable to board. The admissions panel will often call colleagues at the current/former school of a candidate should there be discrepancies between the application and reference.

Before and After School Activities and Contracted Services, including part time employment

Where the Local Governing Body transfers control or otherwise allows the use of school premises to external bodies (such as sports clubs) or service providers during or out of school hours, the LGB will ensure that these bodies or providers have appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures, and that there are arrangements in place to

coordinate with the school on such matters. Such considerations will be made explicit in any contract or service level agreement with the bodies or providers. In Boarding, such activities will be risk assessed in consultation and agreement with parents/carers.

[Offsite Boarding Enrichment Provision For Individual Students RA](#)

[Boarding Offsite Alternative Provision for Enrichment Activities Risk Assessment: Individual Student](#)

CCTV

- The Boarding CCTV Policy stipulates how the system is used by senior named staff only when there is a cause for concern and the expectations regarding GDPR
- Steyning Grammar School takes seriously its moral and legal responsibility to protect, promote and safeguard the welfare of all students in its care, as well as the staff, who reside in Boarding. The use of CCTV is an essential part of the solution to achieve this objective because it provides 24-hour internal coverage in boarding houses, entrances, corridors and some external coverage of the campus. This policy seeks to promote an individual's rights and respect their dignity in line with GDPR guidelines.

Complaints procedure

- [School complaints policy](#)
- We take all issues of concern very seriously and would hope that they can be satisfactorily resolved at informal stages of the school's Complaints Policy following discussions and exploring other resolutions.
- Whilst formal complaints are uncommon, we acknowledge that students, parents, staff, any person who has been provided with a service by the school, or a member of the public from the wider community may wish to make a formal complaint.
- If a concern cannot be resolved informally and a student wishes to make a complaint, they should speak to a member of staff and fill in a blue complaint form for the attention of the Head of Boarding.
- If parents wish to make a complaint about a boarding issue then please contact the Head of Boarding.
- If parents wish to make a complaint about the Head of Boarding, please contact the Headteacher. More information about the Boarding complaints procedure can be found within the School Complaints Policy on the school website.

Entering student rooms protocol

- Before entering a student's bedroom, knock 3 times, announce yourself clearly and ask if you can enter.
- Wait for 5 seconds for an answer and repeat steps 1 if necessary.
- After a further seconds, and if no answer has been received, knock a further 3 times and announce that you are going to enter.
- Staff may only enter the room if a third person is present (enter staff or student), and the door must be kept open at all times. If a third person is not present, you should go away and return with a second member of staff if you feel it necessary to enter the room.
- The only exception would be emergency situations/room search authorised by the Headteacher.
- Staff are reminded to avoid finding themselves alone in a room with a student with the door closed.
- In the event that a member of staff sees a student in a state of undress, they must inform the Director of Boarding immediately so the LADO can be informed by the Headteacher.

Medical provision

- For more information see: [Supporting students with medical conditions policy- Boarding addendum](#)
- We have an onsite medical centre overseen by the Health and Wellbeing Lead who ensures that all students are registered with the local GP Practice upon joining school, as well as running drop ins and arranging other medical appointments.
- ALL medication must be kept in the The Medical Centre, with the exception of asthma inhalers and epipens.
- Students allowed to keep any medicines, including paracetamol tablets, in your room unless this has been approved, risked assessed (Gillick Competency) and agreed by your parents (regardless of age).

- The wellbeing programme raises awareness and provides advice and guidance about alcohol/drugs, healthy relationships, sexual health, stress/anxiety/depression.

Prevent duty

All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

- Boarding students hand in their passports which are locked away during term time.
- In addition to education received in day school in PSHE (KS4) and Next Steps (KS5), boarding students are encouraged to share their opinions via numerous student voice channels.
- Major British events in the calendar are celebrated such as Remembrance Day.
- As a Church of England School, we attend church to mark the start and end of terms and students actively participate in worship if they feel comfortable in doing so. We also support students of other faiths such as making alternative catering arrangements during Ramadan,
- Travel arrangements are checked during half terms and holidays to ensure we know where students will be.
- Students participate in elections for Student Leaders and vote to nominate a boarding charity each year.
- National day celebrations ensure students learn about and experience cultures other than their own.
- Boarding students respond to the ‘Black Lives Matter’ movement with thought provoking social action videos.
- Students have created a video to champion the ‘Black Poppy Rose’ for Remembrance and celebrate Black History Month.

Spotting signs of extremism and radicalisation

- This is covered in the annual safeguarding training update.
- Boarding Staff (including Domestic Staff) are encouraged to be vigilant for signs, symbols or propaganda in bedrooms and inform the Director of Boarding if they have any concerns.
- Concerns are reported in line with [Pan-Sussex procedure on Children and Young People Vulnerable to Violent Extremism](#)

Risk Assessments for trips

These are completed for all trips/visits in line with the Educational Visits Red Book via Evolve, and approved by Hampshire County Council.

In Boarding, we keep up to date risk assessments for the following:

RA	Review	Location
Fire- all houses/site	Annually	Main office in case of emergency
Physical site/houses	Annually- with student input	HOB's Office
Student body for students who fall into particular categories: Deceased parent Wellbeing Plan Medicated/Self-medicated Shared room Drugs tested Medical conditions EAL Low Optimism Vulnerability index	Dynamic- changes when necessary.	HOB's Office Shared with team on Google

All partners of boarding staff not employed by the school	Annually	HOB's Office
Any student with a CP file and may present a risk	Dynamic- changes when necessary.	HOB's Office- copy with DSL
Any visiting student or staff member EG French exchange students- they also signed a behaviour contract. Rotarians.	Dynamic- changes when necessary.	HOB's Office
All trips and visits	Dynamic- changes when necessary.	HOB's Office
Governor' H&S inspection	Annually	HOB's Office

Residential accommodation and visitors

- The Boarding Visitor policy stipulates the expectations and responsibilities of all visitors on site: see [Boarding specific policies](#)
- The Headteacher and Head of Boarding conduct annual staff accommodation checks.
- No boarders have access to staff residential accommodation or private gardens, other than in exceptional circumstances and authorised by the Head of Boarding. Such an example would be in a medical or welfare emergency.
- All staff who live and/or work in Boarding are subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check which is renewed every 3 years.
- Partners of Boarding Staff and their children over the age of 18 years old are risk assessed and must also renew an enhanced DBS check every 3 years.

Safeguarding training

- All Staff attend the annual safeguarding refresher, updates to Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1, other Boarding specific training and indicators of harm/abuse. All staff sign to say they have read and understand their responsibility viz. this statutory guidance.

Security and health and safety measures

- All exterior doors are alarmed during sleep hours and alarm boxes sound in staff flats if doors are breached.
- External green gates are locked with key pad codes.
- Where possible, privacy curtains are installed in shared rooms.
- Students do not have access to cleaning chemicals (COSHH).
- All students have a lockable area or safe in their bedroom.
- Staff lock up all houses before they finish a duty.
- Students are frequently reminded not to let any visitors into the building and inform a member of staff.
- Parents are only allowed upstairs to rooms at the beginning and end of the academic year to help with packing.
- Takeaway drivers are not allowed on site.
- Any accidents involving students, both on or off site, must be recorded on an accident form.
- If a student needs to go to A&E or if an ambulance is called, the Head of Boarding must be informed immediately.

Staffing and recruitment

- Boarding staff are recruited and appointed in line with statutory school safer recruitment checks, BET recruitment process and other relevant policies and processes outlined in the [National minimum standards for boarding schools in force from 5 September 2022](#) and [Social Care Common Inspection Framework \(SCIFF\): boarding schools and residential special schools](#).

Staff training and development

- Boarding Staff are encouraged to undertake boarding specific CPD courses and conferences relevant to their role; including mental health awareness courses, BSA Accredited Practitioner and BSA Advanced Certificate/Diploma courses to further knowledge, expertise and professional networks.
- All staff who routinely work in boarding supervising students have an up to date First Aid Qualification, Fire Awareness training and Medication Awareness training.

Stranger danger

- All regular tradesmen are DBS checked and whilst on site are accompanied by a Premises Officer, or another member of staff, in their absence.
- Students are emailed about workmen on site, their location and estimated duration of visit.