



HOUSE HANDBOOK

2024-25

A large blue banner with a gold fringe hangs from the ceiling. In the center of the banner is a crest featuring a shield with red and white vertical stripes, a yellow section at the bottom, and two black birds above it. The word "WELCOME" is written in white, serif, all-caps font across the middle of the banner. The background shows a white balcony with a decorative railing and a large crest mounted on the wall.

WELCOME

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WELCOME FROM THE HOUSEMASTER

A very warm welcome to Northumberland House!

It is such a great honour to be the Housemaster of such a fantastic House and I am incredibly excited to get to know and guide you over the coming terms and years.

I have been working in independent boarding schools since 2015 following a career as an Electrical Engineer with the British Army. During my time in education, I have been fortunate to experience a variety of pastoral appointments (even a stint as a Mantron!) and whilst I will bring experience with me, I am excited at the prospect of a new adventure at Barney, and working together to make Northumberland the very best that we can be. My partner Rachel is a Housemistress at a school in South East England and she and our daughter Maeve (along with Orla the springer spaniel), are looking forward to joining myself and Alfie the (other!) springer spaniel before too long.

Northumberland House, 'North' as it is referred to in Barney, is a place where the boys should be able to relax, be themselves and explore who they want to become, safe in the knowledge that the staff and I will offer them kind, open and honest guidance to reach their potential. North is, and will continue to be, a vibrant and positive home from home where good conversation and laughs underpin our desire to see each North boy grow to become courageous, confident, humble, and curious young men, always recognising the importance of their impact on the world.

Best wishes,

Barry Imms







A BARNEY EDUCATION

At Barney we believe in character education. Underpinning our academic and pastoral programmes are four key pillars that we consider to be at the core of a Barney Education. These pillars are supported by twelve values that we consider vital to every young person's journey through Barney.

The language of these values is well-established within the School; you will hear about them in Assemblies, House Meetings and Tutor Meetings from teachers, your own peers and visiting speakers.



FEEL

*How you feel
within*

Gratitude

Courage

Resilience



BE

*Who you are &
how you behave*

Humility

Integrity

Humour



SHARE

*How you interact
with people*

Compassion

Service

Leadership



GO

*How you learn and
make progress*

Curiosity

Endeavour

Creativity

OUR HISTORY

Northumberland House came into existence on 2nd February 1886 when the incomplete school buildings were first employed as boarders' accommodation. At the time there were only 116 boarders, all of whom were boys, although this number rose to three hundred by the turn of the last century.

The name Northumberland (or North' for short) was chosen because originally only boys from Northumberland were placed in the House, whilst those from Durham and Yorkshire went into Durham and York Houses respectively. The crest on our House Flag and Shield reflects our connection with the County of Northumberland – it is that of the 12th Century Earl of Morpeth, the Duke de Merlay III. Northumberland House is one of the School's two boarding houses for boys in Years 9-13. The House colour is blue and the House shield can be found on the first floor balcony of central hall, as well as on the front of this handbook.

MATRON

The Matron acts as mother-figure and has a vital role to play in Northumberland House. Matron plays a pivotal part of daily life in the House and is responsible for waking the boys up and ensuring their rooms are tidy and that they leave for school looking smart. She will also take boys to medical appointments during the school day. Crucially, Matron is available for chats and advice throughout the evening as she dispenses medicines and supervises after Prep. Matron is qualified in First Aid and can often be the first to be called upon when the boys are unwell, due to her central residential position alongside her empathy and caring nature.

She has a vital pastoral role to play in the house and gets to know the boys well; enjoying excellent relationships with all and insisting on the highest of standards whilst carrying out her duties in a calm and cheerful manner. She is also available to talk about any problems with the boys in a sensitive way, liaising with the Housemaster.

HOUSE TUTORS

Tutors oversee your child's day to day academic and pastoral life and are the first port of call for any queries. Each morning tutors will meet their tutees for registrations, and throughout the week, as part of the Head Space programme, there is a group tutor time, as well as opportunities for individual meetings.

Tutors have regular contact with home through phone calls, emails and parents' evenings. At strategic points in the year, your child engages in regular target setting sessions and reviews with their tutor and you will have an opportunity to discuss these with tutors during parents' evenings. Tutors work very closely with the HSM in order to raise and resolve any issues relating to pupils' pastoral or academic performance. Any repetitive or significant pastoral, behavioural or academic concerns will be dealt with by the HSM.

If your child is absent from school due to illness, please inform the tutor and HSM by 8.40am.



WHAT TO BRING

All items of clothing must be labelled with your name and school number for laundry purposes.

Duvets, sheets and pillows are provided by school, however some students chose to bring their own.

Space is limited with each boy having a wardrobe, chest of drawers and storage under their beds. If you choose to bring portable electrical appliances to school, they will have to be PAT tested before use and should be declared to the Housemaster on arrival.

Below is a list of items that you are required to bring, in addition to the School uniform.

1 x Pair of school shoes

1 x Dressing Gown

1 x Pair of slippers / sliders

2 x Pair of Pyjamas

2 x Hand towel

2 x Bath towel

Shoe cleaning kit

1 x Large laundry bag

2 x Small net laundry bags for underwear

2 x Single duvet covers

2 x Pair of trainers

1 x Rainproof light jacket

1 x Warm coat (uniform colour)

20 x Spare name tags (for clothing purchased whilst at school)

MEDICAL

You will have received a medical card and other documents to register at the local surgery with this information pack. These must be completed and returned to School prior to your arrival.

All boarders are registered with the local surgery. A GP from the local surgery attends the school each morning before school to see boarders and appointments to see the doctor can be made at the School Medical Centre.

If a boarder is unwell the first person they should tell is a member of the boarding staff or any other member of staff on duty. If they need to see a doctor or the staff in the medical centre, we will arrange this.

If a boarder feels unwell during the night they should contact a member of staff on duty who will decide on the best course of action. If they are unable to walk to the member of staff they should ask a roommate to do it for them. If serious injuries or problems occur, pupils will be taken directly to Hospital.

Generally, medicines cannot be self-administered. Any medication prescribed or otherwise should be handed in to the Matron with clear written instructions by parents. Guidance for this is in your school medical card which also contains the Policy on Homely Medicines.

The School Medical Centre will also coordinate transport to medical and orthodontic appointments as necessary. In general, to minimise disruption to the school day, regular dental check-ups should be conducted at home during the holidays.



BARNARD CASTLE SCHOOL

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PUPIL POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY

Pupils have ample opportunity to take on responsibility throughout their time in the House.

Each year, a member of the Upper Sixth is chosen to be the Head of House. A Deputy (sometimes Deputies) and House Prefects will be chosen to support them. These positions generally go to pupils who are wholehearted, trustworthy, approachable, and who set a good example. These senior pupils are expected to take on responsibility for the organisation of House practices and are expected to be role models for younger pupils.

As experienced members of the House, those in positions of responsibility have a varied role; this could range from being on duty in the House, disseminating information to other pupils or being the first point of contact for a pupil who has an opinion they wish to channel or a problem they feel they would prefer to air with another pupil.

In addition to these senior roles, pupils from across all year groups have the opportunity to volunteer for different committees. These include Anti-Bullying Ambassadors, Peer Supporters (Sixth Form), Diversity Focus Group and Food Committee.

Each September hustings are held for pupils who wish to represent their year group on the School Council. A whole School election then takes place and the School Council members for that year are announced in the Headmaster's Assembly.

HOUSE COMMITTEE

Boys in Northumberland House have a chance to represent their views to the Housemaster through a House Committee. This is chaired by the Head of House or his deputy, and meets twice a term. Each year group has a representative on the council. Minutes are recorded and published on the House notice board. The pupils have found this forum to be an effective way for them to suggest improvements to the House; numerous ideas, which were proposed by pupils, have been put into place in previous years.

Important topics and the direction of the House are discussed at council meetings; in March 2019 the committee were pivotal in rewriting the House electronics and bedtimes policy, and in 2020 they helped design and plan the new games and common room space.





HOUSEKEEPING

House Funding

The House is partly funded using a House subscription of £10 per pupil, per term, as well as the money raised by the tuck shop. The money is mostly used for entertainment purposes and for purchasing prizes and gifts (e.g. House trophies, weekly merit prizes).

Security

- The House is secured via electronic door access at all times. Pupils are issued with an access fob which they are responsible for. Access to the boarding House is solely for boarding students; all visitors must be announced to House staff. At the beginning and end of term access will be granted for parents to assist with the arrival and departure of students.
- Each boarder is provided with a key for their room. Rooms should always be locked by the last occupant when they leave.
- Keys for your room, locker and your fob should be kept on your person at all times. Spare keys (for locker padlocks, personal safes or your home) may be deposited in the House bank.
- Lockers are provided for each boy in his room. Boys must bring their own padlocks to fit their locker.
- Valuables should be kept in lockers when not in use. This should include iPods and personal laptops and mobile phones (when not under the care of House staff), small amounts of cash, wallets and bank cards, watches, and cameras. It is strongly advised that valuable items which are brought to school be named on a contents insurance policy.
- Passports (for boarders who live abroad) should be left with the Housemaster at all times.

Fire

The fire alarms are tested weekly on a Wednesday morning. At any other time, the sounding of the fire alarm must always be treated as an emergency situation. If anyone encounters a fire they should break a fire panel immediately. The fire assembly during the school day is on the grass outside of A Block; after hours is in Chapel unless the red light above the door is on.

DAY-TO-DAY

Registration

Registration takes place each morning by House tutors and is completed between 8.30-8.45am and then again by teachers at the end of lunchtime. This is recorded electronically in a central School database, an absentees list is produced after each registration session closes, which is after 8:50am and 1:50pm each day. If a pupil is absent from School, their parents/guardian must ring the House Office or send an email before 8.40am. If a pupil arrives late to School, they should register themselves at the General Office.

Wednesday House Meetings

House meetings are held each Wednesday at 8.55am. The HSM leads the meeting. Each meeting starts with School notices and then there is often a review of the previous week, followed by preparation for the following week. Weekly awards are given to those who have been nominated by pupils and staff. Nominations are for those who demonstrate characteristics such as: kindness, compassion, leadership, selflessness, and for those who have experienced successes both in school and through activities outside of school. Weekly merit prizes are also given to those that gain the most merits in the Juniors, Inters and Seniors categories. Finally, the House meeting finishes with a “Pentatalk” on the weekly theme delivered by one of our Sixth Formers.



Routine

Breakfast is available between 7:30am and 8.15am. After breakfast pupils tidy their rooms and make their beds. They register at 8:40am.

The School Day begins at 9.00am and lessons end at 4.05pm (12.00pm on Saturdays).

Every weekday from 4.05pm - 5.00pm is Activity time. After this time, boarders may change out of school uniform.

Tea is from 5:30pm-6:00pm.

Prep lasts from 6:15pm-7:30pm for Year 9 and until 8:00pm for Year 10 and above each evening (not Saturdays). On Sundays there is a shorter prep time from 8:00pm-8:45pm. After Prep each night there is free time during which there is an organised activity with a member of staff before boys get ready for bed.

Bedtimes

Year 9 should be in their rooms for 9:15pm and lights out is at 9:30pm.

Year 10 should be in their rooms for 9:45pm and lights out is at 10:00pm.

Year 11 should be in their rooms for 10:00pm and lights out is at 10:15pm.

Sixth Form should be in their rooms and lights out at 11:00pm.

All electronic devices (phones and laptops) are collected 30 minutes before bedtimes.

HOUSE EVENTS

House Service/Celebration

This is held annually to celebrate the pupils of the House, their achievements, our House history and to showcase the talents of our current pupils. All members of the House, their parents and former members of House are invited to attend.

House Competitions

House competitions cover a vast array of interests, both sporting and non-sporting in order to encourage as many pupils as possible to take full part. While the majority of House competitions take place internally on Wednesday afternoons throughout the School year, please look out for invitations to certain House events which parents may attend, such as the Barney Run and Sports Day.



CONTACT WITH HOME

Routine home contact will happen via assessments, reports and parents' evenings. The Housemaster or Tutors generally make phone calls to address other issues as they arise. Parents are encouraged to call the Housemaster if they have any issues they wish to address. Parents should expect a call from their son's tutor if they have any immediate concern about attendance, lateness and academic progress. Parents can also contact tutors to request a meeting in person or on the phone.

There is a direct telephone line to the Housemaster's study (01833 696004), which parents and guardians are encouraged to use to discuss any aspect of their child's education and welfare. The Housemaster can also be contacted by email at north@barneyschool.org.uk or mobile 07741560311. Parents and guardians are welcome to arrange meetings with the Housemaster and/or their son's tutor at any point throughout the term.

The school sends out regular emails with any pertinent letters that staff wish parents to read.

REWARDS AND SANCTIONS

Pupils are awarded merits for good work and strong assessments (the very best are given a Headmaster's Certificate) and these are celebrated in House meetings. Weekly merit prizes are awarded in North House. A number of termly and yearly trophies are also awarded in the House; some recipients are chosen by the House Monitors and some by Tutors. House trophies have been donated by departing and former staff and students.

If academic progress is below a satisfactory standard the tutor may instigate an academic report for a short period. This requires teachers to comment upon work and/or conduct on a lesson-by-lesson basis and is to be taken to the Housemaster for countersignature each day. Tutors review the folder each day and contact home if they see the need for more dialogue. More serious infringements of school rules would be referred to the Deputy Head (Pastoral). Parents may also be invited to a meeting to discuss the progress of their son. Simple house-based infringements are dealt with by the Tutor/Housemaster.

ROOMS

Televisions are not permitted in rooms. Pupils may make use of the televisions in the communal common rooms during their free time.

Tuck (food) may be stored in rooms in small quantities by Sixth Form pupils only, provided that it is non-perishable. The House tuck shop will be open daily and, in addition, pupils may purchase non-perishable items from shops in town. Chewing gum is not allowed in School.

Soft drinks may be kept in rooms. Pupils should ensure that drinking vessels (glasses, water bottles etc.) are regularly cleaned. This may be done in the dishwasher in the House Kitchen.

Games consoles (including handhelds) are not permitted. Access to games consoles is available in common room space, and is age appropriate.

Mini-fridges are permitted for all those in Year 12 and above. Pupils must maintain the cleanliness of these items and ensure that any food stored remains in its consume by date.

Kettles and toasters are not permitted and are provided by the School for your son to use.



Electronic devices, such as mobile phones, tablets, iPods and laptops are permitted and may be used by pupils during their free time. Their use during School hours should be in accordance with the School Phone Policy and Internet Acceptable Use Policy (AUP). **They must be handed in** to staff 15 minutes before bedtime.

Pupils must register the details of their electronic items at the beginning of each term, and update upon the addition of new items.

The School's secure wireless network may be used by all in accordance with the AUP. Its security settings are closely monitored and access is switched off at bedtime.

SIGNING IN OR OUT - ORAH

As part of our ongoing commitment to provide the best possible care and supervision of our boarding family, we have adopted a cutting-edge online management tool to enhance communication between parents, boarders and our boarding staff.

Orah, a web-based iOS app, allows us to keep a closer track of the whereabouts of each boarder in our care, as well as streamlining requests for absence and transport arrangements. The system is designed so that up-to-date details of a boarder's whereabouts are always available to House staff to ensure student safety and continuity of care through a series of electronic sign-in tiles around our school site.

One of the benefits of Orah is that parents can create an Orah account in order to request leave for their child, which will automatically inform the child and House staff of the request. This will make weekend and Exeat arrangements far more efficient for our House staff to collate and organise with you. Parents can use Orah with a web-enabled device, such as a smartphone or laptop, and all that is required to sign up is an active email address.

If you would like any further information about how we will be using it, please contact your child's Housemaster or Housemistress.

Additional support:

Parent Guide

<http://success.boardingware.com/parents-and-guardians/your-account/getting-started-parent-guide>

Student Guide

<https://success.boardingware.com/en/articles/425839-getting-started-student-guide>

OUT OF BOUNDS

It is important that everyone stays within the School grounds unless they have the permission of the Housemistress or they are on a supervised trip or fixture.

The following areas are OUT OF BOUNDS to all Longfield House pupils:

- The playing fields after sunset.
- Main School building after 7.15pm without permission from the HSM or the House Duty Staff.
- Old Courts.
- Mount Eff Lane.
- The trees at the top of the fields and the housing estate behind them.
- All classroom areas beyond the S Block (after 5:10pm), back gate, and behind the Sports Hall.
- The River Tees and its surrounding area.
- Town without proper permission.

The breaking of bounds is a serious offence.

HOLIDAYS AND EXEATS

Weekends

It is recommended that new boarders stay with us for the first weekend to allow them to settle into their new environment. After this, boys may take leave on any weekend, but they may not leave until they have finished any School commitments such as Games fixtures on Saturdays.

Weekend leave must be cleared by The Housemaster in advance on Orah. Pupils should return on Sunday by 8:00pm. In some circumstances pupils may be allowed to return on Monday morning for registration.

There are popular Sunday activities which might include bowling, paintballing, cinema, go-carting, Newcastle Falcons matches, professional football matches, Durham cricket matches, shopping or on-site games and activities. Most trips are optional and some incur a charge at cost price, however, they are popular and offer all girls an opportunity to participate in activities off site.

Exeat Weekends

Exeat weekend offers a perfect chance for boys to go home or to a relative's house for a mid-term break. However, those pupils who cannot go home easily may opt to stay at school for the weekend. Escorted trips to popular destinations take place on the Saturday and attendance is mandatory for those who have opted to stay in school for the weekend.

THE FOUNDATION STONE OF THIS BUILDING
WAS LAID BY EARL FORTESCUE,
ON THE 6TH NOVEMBER 1855.





BARNARD CASTLE SCHOOL