



Green Hills  
Academy

“Towards Excellence”

# Green Hills Academy Boarding Handbook D r a f t

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## 1. Welcome

The program has been devised to provide an opportunity for students to thrive and grow into well rounded young adults. The GHA program has been developed for students to excel in academics and in extra-curricular activities, and to prepare them for their future in an international setting. As a Round Square school, we expect students to develop in all areas, including but not limited to the Round Square *IDEALS*: Internationalism, Democracy, Environmentalism, Adventure, Leadership and Service. We believe this will allow all our students a strong foundation to reach their goals and continue 'towards excellence'.

The staff at GHA Boarding are excited to welcome new students into the program and look forward to establishing a strong foundation for our boarding program, built on respect, commitment to others and life long learning. At its best, boarding is a platform for your child to learn more than a day-school can offer, as the opportunity to learn comes from everyone in the boarding community. As staff, we will care for your child, but it will be from each other and their own resilience that we hope your child will build the strongest memories and learn the most important lessons for their future. Green Hills Academy Boarding has been established to give your child the strongest foundation to succeed and we strive to provide abundant opportunities from a wide variety of sources for your child to be the best self they can be. We hope that providing a brand-new boarding program in an established school allows all our boarders to grow into students of learning that continue to reach for their own dreams and work hard to help others succeed in theirs.

As a boarder, you are expected to follow a routine and communicate in a way that allows everyone to get along, for the house to run smoothly and for everyone to feel heard and respected. This routine will help you to live in boarding and get the most out of your time. The daily routine will involve set times for wake-up and showers, chores, meals, prep and activities, as well as bed and quiet times. It will also allow time for you to continue to do your own things and be involved in your own hobbies, sport, music, hanging out with friends, movies, reading and games. If everyone respects the routine and is responsible for their behaviour, the boarding house can flow steadily and allow more time for fun and enjoyment

As a boarder, it is important to remember that you are now living in a large community, so please remember to be:

RESPECTFUL	COURTEOUS	SENSITIVE TO OTHERS
PATIENT	UNDERSTANDING	TOLERANT
RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR ACTIONS	HONEST and	PROTECTIVE

of and to each other at all times.

And also remember that the staff are always there for you to talk to about any concerns or problems.

## 2. Behaviour expectations

In the boarding house we hope to present a fair and just environment where students are aware of the expectations placed on them by the school, Boarding House staff and fellow boarders. All boarders should be able to expect that the following rights are respected, but also accept the following responsibilities.

Rights	Responsibilities
I have the right to be treated with respect and courtesy.	I have the responsibility to always be respectful and courteous to others.
I have the right to feel safe and protected.	I have the responsibility to make sure my actions are never threatening to others, to never act in an aggressive or violent way towards others.
I have the right to my property being safe.	I have the responsibility never to take another person's possessions or to damage property, and to look after my own property appropriately.
I have the right to feel heard, that my opinion is being valued.	I have the responsibility to listen to others and to participate in discussions and planning opportunities in the boarding house.
I have the right to expect punctuality from staff and students.	I have a responsibility to show respect by always being ready and on time.
I have a right to feel part of the community and to be able to communicate with others.	I have a responsibility to always include others in games, activities and social situations, and not to use language to exclude them.
I have the right to access equipment and facilities in the boarding house and school grounds.	I have the responsibility to follow appropriate procedure relating to usage and to look after all equipment.
I have a right to feel understood, to improve my situation.	I have a responsibility to approach staff and students appropriately with any concerns I have for myself, or about others.
I have the right to make up for my small mistakes.	I have the responsibility to accept set consequences and to learn from my mistakes.
I have the right to learn.	I have the responsibility to take opportunities to learn, to be open to learning new things and to learning from everyone.

### **3. Boarding House structure**

Green Hills Academy Boarding is currently made up of two houses on the grounds of the school, one house for male students and one house for female students. Each house has three floors and caters for 50 students and has rooms for students sharing in fours and in twos, plus communal areas, bathrooms, a laundry room, staff office and staff accommodations. Activities occur within the boarding house and wider school grounds, meals are taken in the Dining Hall and homework is done in the school building and in students' rooms.

Green Hills Academy Boarding will be staffed at all times by people of different nationalities that bring different strengths to the program. As a team, our mission is to provide the best care possible for your child and create an atmosphere in which all our students can be the best version of themselves. The program is overseen by a Head of Boarding, who lives in one of the Houses, and a Houseparent who lives in the other House. They are assisted by a team of day and night matrons.

To contact staff, please use the phone numbers and e-mail addresses that are provided with this Handbook. If you are unsure who to contact for a specific issue, the duty phone is on 24 hours a day and is the best first point of contact.

#### **Head of Boarding**

The Head of Boarding is responsible to the Headmaster of Green Hills Academy for the day-to-day running of the Boarding Houses and the welfare of all boarders in their care. With the help of the Boarding House team, the HoB will oversee the entirety of the boarding program at Green Hills Academy. The HoB is responsible for the admission of new boarders and the implementing of a boarding program appropriate to the individual boarders.

The day-to-day direction and the conduct of staff and students will be based on these policies and procedures. The HoB will be in continuous communication with staff, students and parents to review any issues as they arise. The HoB will act *in loco parentis* for your child and will continuously implement and review strategies to assist your child to reach their full potential. The HoB leads a team that works together to consistently provide an environment and a foundation that allows our students to work towards excellence in all areas and become a well-rounded, respectful and considerate member of the community.

#### **Houseparents**

The Houseparents' overriding aim is to enable each student to achieve his or her full potential in all aspects of school life within a safe and harmonious setting. They have overall responsibility for the welfare of boarders in their House, monitor the balance between academic and extracurricular activities and encourage all students to play a full part in the school community. Academically, they identify areas that need action, as indicated by grades, and teacher comments and devise and implement strategies to address them, keeping parents informed of progress where appropriate.

They ensure that correct routines are followed in their House with a keen eye kept on safeguarding the children under their care. In cooperation with the Head of Boarding,

the Houseparent is responsible for approving and monitoring all boarders' leave from the House and program and the signing of permission slips for school-related activities in an *in loco parentis* role.

## **Matrons**

The matrons are responsible for the smooth running of the domestic side of the boarding. In each House there will be one day- and one night-matron, and relief matrons will take turns covering weekends.

Their duties will include, overseeing the cleaning and maintenance of the house, facilitating laundry and repairing clothes. The matrons should provide a nurturing space for the students and help supervise the morning and/or afternoon routines. Boarders will be able to refer to the matron over any concerns with laundry, bedding, uniform or cleaning of rooms. Matrons will look after matters regarding the physical well-being of the boarders, such as arranging doctors' appointments and follow-ups. They will also accompany those boarders who need an adult presence with them to their appointment.

Above all the matrons play an essential role in the pastoral life of the House and keep a close eye not only on the physical but also on the emotional well-being of the boarders, liaising regularly with the Head of Boarding over any concerns which may arise.

## **Boarding tutors**

Tutors are members of the school's teaching staff who are assigned to supervise in the evenings or on weekends. They will take roll call, and oversee preps and activities. They provide an opportunity to model and reinforce appropriate behaviour in these settings. Tutors allow students to access experience and knowledge in the various academic areas and thereby extend the education boarders receive in the Day School. Tutors are an invaluable asset to the boarders' academic achievement and their growth into well-rounded individuals.

## **4. Boarding life/ Getting started**

The boarding facility is on the Green Hills Academy campus and split into two Houses, one for male and the other for female student boarders. Students are not permitted to enter the sleeping areas of a House other than their own, but they may attend supervised activities in the common areas of each House. Within each House there is a set space for boarders of different ages to allow routines and procedures to best fit the needs of the students. Each House has staff who reside in the House on a full-time basis with the students, so staff can be contacted by students without leaving the premises, 24 hours a day. Boarders live in shared rooms accommodating either two or four students. As boarders become more senior members of the house, they move into rooms of two.

### **Living in boarding**

Being a boarder is different from living with a family and there are parts of boarding

that will be new and different for you. Some aspects of boarding will be fun and exciting, such as new friends, activities, games, trips and outings. Others will be difficult: you may miss your home and family, you may wish for more privacy and to do things you once did at home. As a boarder a lot of your enjoyment rests on your shoulders, participation and involvement in all boarding has to offer is important. Your enjoyment, friendships and success definitely correlate with how much you join in: the more you participate, the more you will enjoy things.

It is important when living in boarding to develop an understanding of living in a group and how your actions affect others, and we hope that you start to think of others first and how your behaviour can affect them. Following simple routines allows the House to run efficiently and provides fairness to everyone in the House. Staff are there to help and guide you, but a smart boarder will develop strong routines to make sure that they and their friends have a house that can focus more on enjoyment and fun than on rules and reminders of chores. Living in boarding may be a struggle at first, as you learn how everything works but it won't be long before everything has become second nature. In the first few weeks it is important to ask for help; staff, buddies and older students are there to help you. Settling into boarding takes time, but eventually you will find your place. We hope that you enjoy boarding and find strength in being part of the community.

## **Friends**

You will make new friends in boarding: one of the advantages of boarding is the opportunity to meet many different types of people, with different backgrounds and values from your own. These friendships will be strong and close simply due to living with each other. The other boarders will become just like a family to you, and the strong connection allows you to develop strong levels of trust, loyalty and protectiveness to them. However just like a family, they will sometimes get on your nerves, make you angry and cause you problems. In a Boarding House it is important to remember that this is okay and that this is normal. But it is important that we all take the decision at the start to respect and to forgive the members of our new family. Often when asking adults who were boarders as children what they remember best, what was their favourite thing about boarding, it will be their friendships with others, and it is these friendships that they often still rely on in the outside world today.

## **Homesickness**

Homesickness is a very real and normal part of boarding and to some degree happens to everyone. The biggest sufferers from this often are parents: your child is off on a new adventure, whether exciting or scary, he or she is certainly busy, while you are at home missing them. Do not worry, you are not alone, as everyone feels this. It is important to give it time, and you will soon find advantages to having the extra time and space; and don't worry, the family can never be replaced. If a student forgets to ring home, or ends a conversation abruptly because they have sports or some other activity, or they just want to go hang out with friends, this is usually a good sign – hard to take, but a good sign. If you are a parent and worry, we encourage you to contact staff: we are here to assist you with this change, we can see your child in their up and their down times, and we are happy to tell you about their day.

Homesickness for your child will occur and surprisingly may not develop until weeks into the start of their placement. It is often once everything is no longer new, when routines have developed, that your child finds the time to miss you, their family, home and their old life. This can be upsetting for both child and family, but although it is concerning, it is normal and something that time helps to deal with. Your child will be helped through this by staff and other boarders and allowed to seek the help they need and deal with it individually. No matter when homesickness develops or how it looks in each student there are ways everyone can help.

What you as a student can do to help yourself:

- stay busy,
- talk to friends,
- allow yourself time to miss family,
- join in all activities,
- continue to do hobbies you liked at home,
- bring items from home,
- talk to staff about specific concerns.

What staff will do to help:

- provide activities for students,
- make sure students are allowed to feel sad and know that it is okay,
- communicate with students, make sure they are not lost and know what is expected of them, plans, routines,
- allow students to do things that may help if it doesn't affect others.

What parents can do:

- Give your child time.
- Do not only listen to the bad. If your child is listing what they don't like, ask them also to tell you what they do,
- Be structured with communication and ring at appropriate times. Often before bed is not a good time to ring, as this can cause a student to miss home more right before bed. Ring before activities or events your child looks forward to.
- Talk to staff: often your child only rings when they are sad, while they spend the rest of the time laughing with friends.
- If you have a specific concern, let staff know, we are happy to assist
- Although it may be hard to, it is important not to rush in and remove your child from boarding (even just for the night). If boarding is the place you decided is best for your child, removing them on weekends or visiting more than originally planned, makes the transition harder. It will take time for your child to feel

comfortable, and going home or being out of boarding and it's daily routine may mean that they have to start the process all over again of feeling connected. We understand this is exceptionally difficult for parents to do and are happy to help in any way.

## **Communication**

A member of staff can be contacted via the duty phone at all times. To contact a specific staff member, please e-mail or phone them at the address or the number provided. We understand that you as a parent need to stay informed, and the concerns that can arise on a day-to-day basis. Your children are our primary concern and our aim is to work with you to provide the best program for them.

To contact students you may contact them directly or via the House duty phone. Please be mindful of when you are calling, as there are certain times when phone usage is not part of the program. Please look at the student routine provided to help you to phone at appropriate times. Phones are not allowed to be used during study or at meals. As your child settles into boarding, phone calls late at night can affect homesickness and prevent a student from developing appropriate bedtime routines. After school and during free time is a great time to call, and setting up a regular chat time helps your child structure their daily life and manage their schedule.

The boarding staff will communicate with parents regularly and send home information via e-mail and a termly newsletter. We will also make sure that your child's reports and school communication make it home to you. Each boarder will have a boarding section in their school reports, and parents will receive a first week phone call from the boarding staff, and a first month settling-in report. In the future we will be looking to set up a boarding webpage and a blog, to further the ways in which parents can stay up-to-date with what their children are doing on a regular basis.

To assist us in caring for your child and being able to facilitate effective communication with you, please fill out the student details form and all forms in this handbook and return them to the boarding staff prior to your child arriving at GHA Boarding.

Thank you and welcome to GHA Boarding.

GHA Boarding Staff and Community

## 5. Routines

For a Boarding House to run successfully it is important that routines are followed by all boarders, staff and parents. This enables us to provide a productive foundation for students to get the most out of each day, and allows us all to work together to provide the best environment.

As a boarder you are expected to know and follow the routine to the best of your ability. Staff are there to assist and remind you but you should be responsible for managing your day. We have different routines for the weekend and certain events do not happen each day, such as meetings and activity time. At times there will be changes to your routines and they will be communicated to you by staff.

Daily Routine, Monday to Friday, 6:00pm		
6:00am	Wake-up for all students. Students should be waking themselves up. Staff and Dorm seniors to check all students are awake and getting ready for school and following morning routines. All morning chores must be completed.	
6:45am	Room, chores and uniform inspection: students wait at room door for inspection to be completed by staff.	
6:50am	Breakfast.	
7:25am	School starts. Break and lunch are taken with the day-students. Houses are closed to boarders.	
3:30 - 3:50pm	Boarding Houses are open to boarders; afternoon snack.	<p>Wednesday routine:</p> <p>Classes finish at 12:50, the supervised study period will be after lunch, from 2:00 - 4:00pm, followed by various activities until 5:00pm.</p> <p>After dinner, students may continue their homework, there will be House meetings and various House activities.</p>
3:45 - 5:00pm	After-school Activities: extra-curricular activities, study groups, use of school facilities.	
5:00 - 5:30pm	Boarding Houses are open to boarders; showers, change of clothes, prepare for Study Period.	
5:30pm	Dinner.	
6:00pm	Study period, at the Secondary School.	
8:00pm	Students return to their own Houses.	
8:15pm	Evening snack. Evening chores to be completed.	
8:45 - 9:15pm	Grades 7 and 8: Showers and bed time routine. Laptops and Mobile phones to be handed in.	
	Grades 11 and 12, from 9:00pm: Study period, in Houses.	
9:30pm	Grades 7 and 8: Lights out. Communal spaces closed for the night.	
	Grades 9 and 10: Showers and bed time routine.	
	Grades 11 and 12: Study period continues.	
10:00pm	Grades 9 and 10: Lights out.	
10:15pm	Grades 11 and 12: Showers. Senior study area and common room closed for the night.	
11:00pm	Grades 11 and 12: Lights out.	

Weekend Routine, Friday from 6:00pm	
6:00 – 7:00pm	House meetings, Housebank.
7:00 – 9:00pm	Friday night games: Types of games and activities vary each week. All held on school grounds.
9:15 – 11:30pm	Bedtime routines: Friday and Saturday bedtime routines are 30 minutes later than other weekdays and Sunday. Students have free time prior to bedtime routine but must be in appropriate areas.

Weekend Routine, Saturday	
8.30am	Wake up.
9:00am	Breakfast.
9:30 – 11:30am	Study period. <span style="float: right;">Arrangements can be made at this time, or at other times during the week, for students to attend faith-based activities.</span>
12:00pm	Lunch
1:00 – 5:00pm	Activity or excursion. (On some days, the Saturday schedule might be different to make time for longer trips.)
6pm	Saturday night BBQ.
7:00 – 9:00pm	Student-led activities
9:15 – 11:30pm	Bedtime routines: Friday and Saturday bedtime routines are 30 minutes later than other weekdays and Sunday. Students have free time prior to bedtime routine but must be in appropriate areas.

Weekend Routine, Sunday	
8:30am	Wake-up and tea.
9:00 – 12:00am	Faith-based activities. (Study period for those students not attending religious activities at this time.) <span style="float: right;">Arrangements can be made at this time, or at other times during the week, for students to attend faith-based activities.</span>
1:00 – 2:00pm	Room cleaning, preparation for the next week at school.
2:00pm	Lunch.
3:00 – 5:30pm	Free time/ activities.
6:00pm	Dinner.
7:00 – 8:00pm	House reflection.
8:15pm –	Weekday bedtime routines commence.

## 6. Meals

On weekdays, boarders will have breakfast and dinner together, break and lunch will be taken with the day students. On the weekends there will be special occasions, such

as a BBQ and Brunch. All students will be expected to be at meals before the set time and in appropriate dress. The dress code will change dependent on the meal and occasion, and students will be told beforehand. However at no time will a student be allowed into the dining area wearing unclean, offensive or revealing clothing.

## **7. Study/ homework**

Students complete their homework in supervised Study Periods, either in the school buildings or in their House. The time of this will vary depending on the students' age and the amount of homework they have. Study Periods are Monday to Thursday evenings, Friday afternoon and one set time on weekends, but students are expected to contribute extra time for study and completion of assignments when necessary. During the weekday Study Periods, teachers from the day school act as tutors, so students will benefit from additional support in their learning.

All students are checked into Study Periods and are expected to work in a way that does not affect their ability, or the ability of others, to complete their work. Senior students will have a second Study Period on Monday to Thursday evening, with the second session aimed at developing a strong work ethic and time-management skills.

## **8. Language**

While English is the main language of instruction at Green Hills Academy, most students have Kinyarwanda, French or another language as their mother tongue. The school therefore offers a 50/50 programme for francophone students, and provides support for students whose first language is not English.

In the Boarding Houses, it is important that everyone feels comfortable and able to communicate, in whatever language. Meetings will always be conducted so that everyone can follow and participate, the matrons will be able to speak English, French and Kinyarwanda, and extra support will be available during Study Periods for francophone students, to help them improve their English quickly. Everyone, whatever their native language, should work together to avoid fellow-boarders feeling excluded, from friendship or from the community.

## **9. Room/ House cleanliness**

Professional cleaners are employed in each Boarding House, to clean the communal areas of the house and students' rooms, but these cleaners are not expected to pick up after students or tidy their rooms. Students' spaces will not be cleaned everyday and each student is responsible for his or her space.

A clean room has:

a bed that is made,	no rubbish or belongings on the floor,
an empty bin,	a desk that is tidy and ready for study,
clothes and belongings put away,	dirty clothes in the laundry basket,

cupboard doors and drawers closed, lights switched off when not in use.

Students will be expected to keep their personal space neat and tidy at all times. Rooms will be checked each morning by staff and prefects.

## **10. Household chores**

As members of a Boarding House, all students contribute to the cleanliness and order of the House by sharing certain basic chores. These chores are a way for students to learn living skills, to work together and to be part of building a community. As students mature, they are given more privileges but also greater responsibilities in this area.

Chores may include such things as:

taking out rubbish, setting up and clearing at dinner,  
tidying up the communal spaces, other small community tasks.

## **11. Laundry**

Each Boarding House features a laundry room, with washers and driers, which students should use at scheduled times for their uniforms, casuals and linens. At the beginning of their first term in the House, students will be given detailed instructions by the matrons in how to use these machines. Detergent will be available for sale at the school.

All items of clothing and linen brought to the school need to be named prior to the school term, any clothes bought mid-term must be named before being put in the laundry; (matrons can assist with this.)

## **12. School uniform**

All the rules of the Secondary School about school uniform will apply to boarding students when they are on school grounds during normal school hours. At other times and on weekends, while they are in the Boarding Houses, they will be allowed to wear casual clothes, which must however be appropriate. When students leave the school grounds, especially on school-organised excursions, it may often be appropriate for them to wear uniform; staff will let them know what is required on such an occasion.

Students should make sure their uniform is ready and appropriate each evening before bed and report any damage or issues to the matron during the week. Boarders will have access to the shop at the school where uniforms can be purchased, and they can be taken shopping for shoes when necessary. Appropriate funds should be left with the boarding/school for these contingencies.

## **13. Valuables, personal possessions**

Each student does their laundry once a week, so it is important to have enough uniform items and casual clothes. In the Boarding House we want students to feel

comfortable in their space, and we encourage students to bring in items from home to personalise their room and to help them feel that they belong.

## Things to bring

Clothes	Other Personal Items	Optional
T-shirts Shorts Long pants Sweater Sports clothes Underwear, socks Shoes, slippers Rain jacket, umbrella	Bed linen: sheet, pillow case Towels (at least two) Toiletries, toiletry bag Laundry basket/bag Name tags for clothes Alarm clock Padlock for the wardrobe	Small sporting, musical and hobby equipment Games Mobile phone Computer Decorations Reading lamps Books A small rug
Some of these items can be replaced throughout the year from the boarders' shop.		

It is important that you choose belongings that others in your room will not be affected by and that fit in the available space. Please do not bring such things as items of furniture, heaters or cooking equipment. In case of doubt, please check with the Head of Boarding first.

Each student is provided with a lockable space and is responsible for their valuables, such as small amounts of money, phone, camera, etc. All large amounts of money, important documents and other valuables should be left at home or handed into the Office to be locked away. Unfortunately we cannot protect all your belongings, and it is important that you take responsibility for your own things, and that you show others the appropriate respect by keeping their possessions safe.

## 14. Passports

All students are to hand in passports, travel tickets and other important documents at the Office on entering and returning to the House. Passports will be recorded and locked in a safe. A photocopy will be kept in each student's file and a copy given to the student to keep with them for filling out documents etc.

## 15. Finances

The Head of Boarding operates a 'House Bank', into which boarders pay money when they arrive, to cover incidental expenses during the term. Boarders will be able to charge items bought at the Tuck Shop, such as detergent for the laundry and snacks, or at the school's Stationary Shop to their account, and at a set time each week they will be able to withdraw a small sum, for personal use when they have permission to go outside the school. The use of Housbank will be at the parents' discretion.

The money in the Housebank will also pay for such things as

- trips that boarders take with the day-students in the Secondary School,
- rental fee for a musical instrument, if the student joins the band,
- individual and class photos at the Secondary School,
- barber/ hairdressing service: the Head of Boarding will arrange for professionals to provide this at set times.

The recommended sum is RwF 200,000 (approximately US\$ 275) per term. The Head of Boarding will keep a detailed account for each student, and any funds remaining at the end of the term can either be refunded or carried over to the next term.

## **16. Phones/ technology**

Students are permitted to have mobile phones and computers within the Boarding House. It is expected that students follow usage guidelines and understand that having this technology is a privilege in the Boarding House, and that abuse of this privilege will result in removal of the items concerned. Students and parents will need to sign the contract for phone/ technology use at the end of this handbook and return it to staff. All technological possessions need to be recorded in students file and should be clearly identifiable to staff.

Students in grades 7, 8 and 9 will have their technology equipment collected at night time, prior to Lights-out. All other students will have the opportunity to earn the privilege of self-managing their technology usage behaviour. Any student who uses the technology inappropriately will have it removed for a set time, have usage restrictions placed on them, or have the items removed indefinitely.

### **Rules:**

- No use of technology during meal times, after Lights-out at night time, during meetings or any other occasion when directed by staff or instructor.
- Computers are only to be used during Study Periods, for homework and study, and at other times allowed by the staff.
- No student is to take photos of other students or staff without permission.
- All students should use the technology appropriately and never in a manner that reflects poorly on the Boarding program.
- Students are to make sure that their usage does not remove people's privacy or violate and other social laws.

## **17. Behaviour expectations**

In the Boarding House we hope to present a fair and just environment where students are aware of the expectations placed on them by the school, Boarding House staff and fellow boarders. All boarders should be able to expect that certain basic rights are respected, but also accept certain responsibilities. These rights and responsibilities are

listed earlier in this Handbook, and all students should sign a copy of the list, to show that they have understood the points and intend to follow them.

## **Rewards and Privileges**

Within the Boarding House students should work to achieve certain short- and long-term goals, to modify their behaviour, to show examples of appropriate values and to present themselves as capable and honest young adults. There will be the opportunities to take on roles of responsibility and leadership within the Boarding House.

Students will be given privilege cards when they exceed expectations in different areas, such as service to others, kindness and putting others first. These cards can be traded for instant rewards and privileges, such as:

first choice of activity, extra dessert, 30 minutes later bedtime (weekend),  
weekly prize box draw, end-of-term draw, use of gym/sport facilities for extra time.

At the completion of the school year there will also be Boarding awards for students who have demonstrated abilities and actions above our expectations. These will be awards chosen by both staff and fellow boarders. Awards will take into account areas such as citizenship, leadership, achievement, kindness, service and participation.

## **Consequences**

The primary aim is to create a positive and safe environment in the Boarding House, in which students can learn, thrive and grow. It should be a place where they can try new things, meet new people and become responsible and valued young adults. With this in mind we hope that the students demonstrate appropriate behaviour and use an understanding of what is expected of them to monitor their own actions. However, at times it may be necessary for a student's behaviour to result in consequences, in the hope that they can use these to improve or modify their choices.

Within the Boarding House there are different types of inappropriate behaviour. Many fall under the area of not following routines or set responsibilities. Some actions will result in the student being able to make up for their poor choice in a set way, such as but not restricted to the following:

- Untidy room: Room Infringement notice warnings, supervised extra cleaning of a communal space.
- Failure to do chores: The student will be placed on extra chore roster.
- Being late to or missing a meal: The student will make up the time with dinner related chores (which may include providing entertainment ...)
- Being late to or missing an activity: The student will take responsibility for roll call for activities, create and run activities
- Inappropriate use of technology: The students will have their technology time limited, supervised or removed.
- Inappropriate behaviour in an activity, at a meal, during study time: The student

will have the opportunity to discuss their behaviour and be given support and time to demonstrate improved behaviour to staff and fellow students.

- Swearing: Warning, the student will have the opportunities to expand their vocabulary to have other words to use next time.
- Disrespectful behaviour to staff and fellow boarders: The student will be given the opportunity to apologise formally and assigned an activity to make up for their behaviour.

Unfortunately at times a student can behave in a way that has to lead to more serious consequences and to action needing to be taken. These behaviours would include but are not restricted to:

- Continual inability to follow expectations and routines, intentionally damaging property,
- Truancy, i.e. being absent from school or from the Boarding House without permission,
- Physical violence, extreme verbal aggression,
- Bullying,
- Stealing,
- Use or possession of drugs and alcohol,
- Inappropriate physical relationships with another boarder.

If a Boarder shows these kinds of negative behaviour, an individual review of their boarding place will occur. After this review there will be a meeting between all relevant parties and a discussion of appropriate consequences. These consequences may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Behaviour probation reports,
- Grounding,
- Removal of privileges,
- Suspension,
- Possibility of the student's boarding placement being cancelled; (note that in this case no refund will be allowed of fees paid or still due.)

## **18. Leadership roles and positions**

Within the Boarding House students will have the opportunity to present themselves for leadership roles. These roles are an opportunity for students to take on responsibility in the Boarding House, to have an expanded and positive role in the community, and to increase their participation in the planning of activities and events within the house. It is an area for students to show how capable they are and gain the respect of their fellow-students and staff. These roles also allow students to gain extra privileges by showing their willingness to take on extra responsibility.

- Head Boarder.
- Heads of House: one for each House.
- Section Seniors and Vice-Section Seniors: one for each section.
- House Prefects: three from each House in senior years, specialising in one of the following areas: Sports and activities, Service and community, Academic and learning
- Year-Group Leaders: one from each grade.

Every student can only hold one of these positions in a year. The leadership students will support each other in large tasks, with the senior prefect in that area leading the team. Leaders will have meetings with staff and as the Boarders' Council represent the other members of the Boarding House.

## **19. Moving outside the school**

### **Permissions**

Boarders may be given permission to leave the school for different reasons, if this is approved or requested by parents. In general, permission will only be given for weekends, when the leave does not interfere with lessons or other school activities.

- Religious leave: Students are allowed to attend a religious service at a church, mosque or other such location; arrangements should have been made with the Head of Boarding at the start of the boarding term.
- Family leave: Students are permitted to leave with a parent or an approved family member, at any time that does not infringe on the academic or boarding program. A Leave Form should be filled out in advance, including the time of return and a way of contacting the family member, and given to the Head of Boarding or the House Master/Mistress for approval.
- Non-family leave, either during a day or overnight: Students are permitted to leave with an adult who has been approved by both their parents and the Head of Boarding, at any time that does not infringe on the academic or boarding program. A Leave Form should be filled out in advance, including the time of return and a way of contacting the approved adult, and given to the Head of Boarding or the House Master/Mistress for approval.

- Long-term leave: If a student has to be absent from the boarding for an extended period of time, due to illness or a family situation, parents will need to contact the Head of Boarding directly to discuss the situation.

## **Transport**

When boarding students go on trips outside the school, the driver and the vehicle are provided by the school, and both the driver and the vehicle will have passed rigorous checks. A list of the students and staff on a trip must be kept at the school.

At other times there are strict limitations on the means of transport boarders are allowed to use, for instance when going to attend church on Sunday, and the drivers and the vehicles they use must have been explicitly approved by the student's parents.

Students up to Grade 10 are not allowed to take public transport on their own, and older students only if explicit permission has been given by their parents, for a particular occasion. However, students may use public transport if they are accompanied by an adult who has been approved by their parents. For reasons of safety, boarders are never allowed to use *taxi moto* (motorbike taxis) while they are resident at the school.

## **Start and end of the residency periods**

At Green Hills Academy there are three academic terms, with no breaks between the terms, but with a three-week break in the middle of the second term. Boarders will therefore be in residence at the school from mid-August to mid-December, and again from early January to end of May, with a one-week break for Genocide Memorial Week in early April, as well as a number of shorter breaks. For precise dates please check the school calendar for the year.

At the start of a residency period, students are expected to arrive at least a whole day prior to the start of classes, and two days before the start of classes if it is their first term in Boarding, so that they have time to settle in. Parents should inform the school at least two weeks in advance when and by what means their child will be arriving. Boarders who arrive by plane can be picked up at the airport in Kigali, and the school may make arrangements to pick up students in other places, using school transport. (Their may be a fee for this.)

At the end of a residency period, boarders should leave within a day of the end of classes, or within up to three days if there is no earlier flight to their destination. Parents should inform the school at least two weeks in advance when and by what means their child will be leaving, and provide the required tickets. Boarders who leave by plane can be taken to the airport in Kigali, and the school may make arrangements to take students to other places, using school transport. (Again, their may be a fee for this.)

## **Short breaks**

In the short breaks between terms, and for Genocide Memorial Week in April, boarders are expected to go home, or perhaps stay with local relatives, if possible. For those

boarders whom this is not possible – for instance because they are too far from home – it may be possible to put on a special programme, for which a separate fee would be payable.

## ***20. If things go wrong***

If a student or parent is unhappy with the Boarding Program, the routines or the policies, they are encouraged to reach out and contact the Head of Boarding immediately. The HoB is always happy to meet and discuss ways in which they can help or advise.

If parents are unhappy with a decision staff have made in response to a student's behaviour, we hope that they will feel happy to contact the HoB or the House Master/Mistress, to get full information on the incident. If after making contact they still have concerns about the decision, a meeting can be scheduled with the Head of Boarding. The Boarding House staff are contactable via the duty phone or e-mail at all times.

The Head of Boarding will inform parents immediately of any incident that might affect their child's ability to remain part of the boarding program. If any student has been put on academic or behavioural probation, a parent will be required to attend relevant meetings about the actions taken.

## 21. After-school activities

From Monday to Friday each week, all boarders are expected to participate in the after-school activities at the Secondary School, whether it be a sport, drama, music, tutoring, extra study or another, personalised program. These activities allow students to develop in a variety of areas, try new things in a safe environment and develop friendships with day-students. Boarders will sign up for these activities at the beginning of each term, and attendance will be checked.

## 22. Weekend activities

Each weekend we will run an activity program for all boarders. These activities will be great fun, but also in line with the ideas and values of Round Square and of being an IB Learner, such as:

- Culture/ internationalism
- Adventure/ leadership
- Service/ community
- Environment/ educational

There will be social activities in the evenings that students can participate in as a year group, as a House or as the whole boarding community, and there will be a large group activity or excursion every Saturday for all boarders.

### Friday and Saturday evening activities

These activities will be a mix of small and large groups, catering for set groups, or by age and gender. There will also be an expectation of our senior boarders and leadership students to propose and run activities.

Some options and ideas:

Board/ card games	Computer game challenge	Share a skill
Trivia/ puzzle challenges	Scavenger hunt/ obstacle course	Cooking, art
'Boarders Got Talent' show	Dances, discos, socials	Movies
'Name That Tune' competition	Sports, swimming	Theatre

### Saturday activity plan - Example

Date	Activity	Time and Location
15 August	Scavenger Hunt and ice cream social	1:00 - 4:00pm, school grounds
22 August	Hike, bush walk	1:00 - 5:00pm
29 August	Orphanage visit	1:00 - 4:00pm

05 September	Cooking class	In house
12 September	Art studio	In house
19 September	Bowling	1:00 - 5:00pm
26 September	Service/ volunteer	1:00 - 4:00pm
03 October	Visit to a local market	1:00 - 4:00pm
10 October	First Aid class 1	
17 October	Horse Riding	1:00 - 5:00pm
24 October	Orphanage visit	1:00 - 5:00pm

### **23. Special Events**

Living together in the Boarding House we have many special events and occasions. Although some of these are planned in advance, often things that we can all participate in will come up in the community or the House at short notice. Students celebrate birthdays and national holidays together, as well as participating in celebrations from Rwanda and observing certain international holidays.

On some occasions boarders also have more formal dinners, when students are expected to dress up and have their meal together in a more structured setting. At some of these we invite guests from the community to address our students and pass on their knowledge and share their inspiration. These formal dinners alternate with theme dinners, where we celebrate and learn to understand other cultures from around the world and develop greater international awareness.

## **24. Security**

Rwanda is a very secure country, and guards are on duty around the clock on the grounds of Green Hills Academy. The Boarding Houses on the grounds of the school are enclosed in their own fence, and a guard will be patrolling the area at all times. The Boarding Houses, the one for boys and the one for girls, will be locked at night, once a roll call has been taken by the night matron in that House. The two night matrons will be keeping an eye on their House throughout the night and be available to boarders.

There are two sets of emergency stairs and exits in each House, near the students' rooms, but the doors to the stairs can only be opened from the inside the House, and opening a door will set off the fire alarm. The windows in both buildings either have bars or are locked so that they cannot open beyond a certain point.

## **25. Safety matters**

The school makes every effort to keep students safe at all times, and staff will constantly be on the look-out for any risks and correct behaviour that might lead to injuries. But students also have a responsibility to avoid behaviour such as playing on the stairs, running electrical or computer cables across their rooms, and so on, and to report any dangers immediately, such as spilled water. We look to the older boarders and boarders in leadership positions to play an active role in keeping the community safe for everyone.

Tampering with the smoke detectors installed in each room or abuse of the fire-fighting equipment is dangerous and will be considered a serious offence.

## **26. Sickness/ injury**

Green Hills Academy has on-site nurses during school hours who the boarding students will have access to. Boarders who are unable to attend school will be placed in the nurses' care. If a boarder becomes sick during the night, or in case of an injury, staff on duty will assist with the matter, and if necessary call the on-call doctor, call an ambulance or take the child to the hospital. A car and a driver will always be available for this purpose. In any such situation, the Head of Boarding will be informed immediately and communicate with parents.

For the school to be able to work in the best interest of your child in an emergency, we need to have all the relevant medical information about them. All parents must therefore complete a medical form about their child, including life-style choices, details of medications to be taken, and doctors or hospitals to visit. Parents are advised to sign a written permission for the Head of Boarding or the Houseparent to authorise a life-saving procedure in case a student's parents cannot be contacted at short notice. Any medical concerns should be discussed with the Head of Boarding before the child starts in the program.

Boarders are required to have insurance cover, which in the case of students from outside Rwanda must include cover for a medical evacuation for treatment that may

be necessary but not available in Rwanda. A copy of the insurance policy will be kept with the student's medical form.

At times it may not be possible for a boarder to continue to board due to medical concerns, such as medical issues, problems of mobility or contagiousness. If a student is removed for any of these reasons, they will need to be cleared by approved medical staff before they are allowed to their return to the Boarding House.

## **27. Medication**

The Boarding Houses will have basic over-the-counter medications on site, such as paracetamol, medicines for colds and flus, allergies, rashes, blisters, pain, menstrual cramps, and digestive and bowel problems. On the medical form which parents complete before a student joins the Boarding House is a list of the medications that the student has permission to obtain. If these are not basic over-the-counter medications, they require a prescription written by a recognised doctor or health practitioner. All medication needs to be clearly labelled and marked with the student's name. All medications are kept locked in the Office and administered by on-duty staff who will keep a record of each administration.

Certain kinds of medication may need to be kept with students, such as an epipen, or medications for asthma or diabetes. Staff will advise on the best way for these to be kept safely; any student with a known acute disorder will have an individual health and wellness program in place.

Medications which may not be suitable for a boarding house at all will be locked away and returned to parents at the earliest possible time. For more information on these medications please contact the Head of Boarding directly.

## **28. Emergency procedures**

### **Fire**

The first priority in the case of a fire, or a suspected fire, is the safety of the students and of staff. The rooms in the Boarding Houses are fitted with smoke detectors and there are fire alarms throughout the buildings. There are two sets of emergency stairs and exits in each House, near the students' rooms, and opening one of the doors to the emergency stairs will also set off the fire alarm.

Students have the evacuation procedures explained to them when they join the boarding program, including escape routes and assembly points, and fire drills are conducted throughout the year. Information about the evacuation procedure and fire safety is also posted throughout the House. While there is fire-fighting equipment installed in the Houses, such as hose reels on each floor, this is not for use by students. When there is a fire or the fire alarm rings, all students must leave the building as quickly as safely possible.

## **Lock-down**

Green Hills Academy Boarding House also has a lock-down procedure in place that will be used in any emergency when staying in the building is the safest course of action. Students will be have this procedure explained to them, and practices will occur throughout the year with students, staff and security personnel.

## **Other emergencies**

Staff are trained to deal with emergencies and all such situations will be faced calmly, with the protection of students placed ahead of all other concerns. Weather disasters and dangerous situations will all be planned for in advance, so staff and students can react instinctively and quickly to these situations without panic.

## Conclusion

The Boarding Handbook is a tool for students, parents and staff to understand the expectations, procedures and rules of the Boarding Program at Green Hills Academy. While it is impossible to cover all the issues and incidents that may occur within a Boarding House and with our boarders, it is our hope that this Handbook provides an understanding of the type of program we wish to implement.

If on reading this Handbook you have questions, concerns or comments, please contact staff, as this program is for the students and we hope to provide the best program we can for them.

The success of the Boarding House is influenced by many factors, some that we as staff can control and others that we can not, and we hope that by providing students with as much information as possible they will be ready to be boarders and understand the expectations we have. The students in the Boarding Houses are the most important factor and the reason for the program. A good Boarding Program has good students, who are well-behaved and follow rules; a great Boarding House has great students, who reach and exceed our expectations, who take responsibility for their actions and ownership of the program, and who want to be part of the program's success. A boarding program with students who are responsible for their own behaviour is one that has a lot more flexibility in procedure and programming, as it allows staff to focus less on behaviour and more on finding ways for students to excel and be creative in achieving not just their needs but their wants.

We ask that parents and students sign this page to acknowledge that they have read and understood this Handbook and will do their best to not only follow the set guidelines and procedures, but also behave in a way that positively influences the Boarding House for themselves and the whole of the community.

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Date

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Student's name

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Signature

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Student's name (if second student)

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Signature

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Parent's name

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Signature