

Famous alumni

You may be assured your confidentiality is absolute, for which reason we do not publicize the names of our former pupils, though I may say that they include a current bishop, one of the country's leading taxidermists and several prison governors. One likes to think that their time with us has helped them in their careers.

Medical services

We have engaged a local general practitioner to provide medical services for us when required, and we have a sick bay which is widely regarded as a model of its kind. Matron was trained by a woman who was herself a student of Florence Nightingale's, than which there can be no greater recommendation, as I am sure you will agree.

Every boy is checked for head lice and threadworms at least fortnightly, and one of the attic rooms can be used if any contagious disease is suspected.

Dale

I hope this little pamphlet has whetted your appetite and convinced you that St Ignatius' is just the sort of school that would benefit your young child. If you have any questions I should be delighted to answer them. It is, of course, vulgar to "blow one's own trumpet", but perhaps I may close by quoting one of our senior judges who recently said in court "I wish to say that no blame in this matter attaches to St Ignatius' School which, it seems to me, does all it can to ensure that boys know that the outside world is often heartless and cruel and which teaches boys to have a sense of self-reliance that will stand the defendant in good stead during his inevitable custodial sentence." It is good to know one's efforts are noticed.

Welcome to St Ignatius' Preparatory School



From the Headmaster

We are delighted that you are thinking of sending a son of yours to our school. St Ignatius' has been educating young boys since the 19th century, during which time we have clung fast to traditional teaching methods and have avoided many of the pitfalls that have affected schools that have been seduced by the spirit of the times.

Our Boarding House

Young boys are accommodated in the very centre of our school, the tall block you can see in the photograph. There are no more than six boys to a room, one of whom will be a prefect. The younger boys are expected to act as servants for him in order to encourage respect for one's elders from an early age. We wish to make clear that the prefects are only allowed to cane boys in very limited circumstances. The four rooms in the attic are not used as bedrooms normally, but boys who commit serious offences such as trying to escape from the school grounds may be placed there for a night or two. The doors can only be opened from the outside with a key, which reduces interruptions while they contemplate their faults.

The School Day

The day begins at 5.45 when Matron will ring the bell that tells our boarders that it is time for their exercise. At 6 a.m. precisely they will begin their cross-country run round the school perimeter (except, of course, that they are not permitted in the school graveyard) after which they take a cold bath before breakfast. The school morning is a long one and we have found by experience that porridge is the ideal way for young boys to keep going through till lunchtime. Parents will be pleased to know that we are keen on healthy eating, so we no longer allow sugar, syrup or other sweeteners in the porridge, and salt is limited to one teaspoonful per boy.

Lessons begin at 8.30 sharp, except for boys whose parents have chosen Additional Latin, which is offered at 8 a.m. There is a 15-minute break at 10.30, during which boys may play anywhere in the school grounds except the graveyard.

After a further two lessons lunch begins at 12.45. The older boys go first while the younger ones act as waiters, which helps to instil a sense of community service in their young minds. At 1.30 we have the second sitting, at which the younger boys can have anything that is left.

School begins again at 2 o'clock, when there are three more lessons before the school day ends at 5 p.m. and all the boys make their way to the chapel for Evensong, followed by Vespers. These are relatively short services and are usually finished by 6.30 so the boys can do at least some of their homework before tea at 7.

We encourage recreation but we regard the television, radio and especially computers as pernicious influences, so none of these are allowed. However, boys may borrow a book from the library to read until lights out at 8.30.

The Weekend

As one would expect, we have Saturday school but this finishes at 12.45 so that the boys can enjoy games in the afternoon. Since running around on a full stomach is not recommended, no lunch is provided on Saturdays. We have a fine tradition of muscular Christianity and boys can choose from rugger, lacrosse and gymnastics. Our games master was a noted gymnast himself before his accident.

We believe in discipline and Sunday observance is a major part of that. Boys are expected to behave soberly on Sundays, and after breakfast and Mattins in the Chapel, they can join Matron for a nature ramble or perhaps help exercise the school's hounds. However, we do not encourage boys to feed the doberman since the regrettable incident in 2014 that you may have seen in the newspapers. I want to assure parents that we have adopted the Coroner's findings in full.

In the afternoon the boys may telephone home for a maximum of five minutes each when we hope they will speak to their parents or at least have the opportunity to leave an answerphone message. We have found that any longer contact may encourage homesickness and depress the fragile youthful mind. For the same reason we ask parents to restrict parcels for the boys to a single birthday present not exceeding five pounds in value.

The packed school day does not allow after-school clubs but on Sunday afternoon there are a number of activities that excite our youngsters, including chess, stamp-collecting and community singing. A number of our pupils enjoy working in the school garden where they grow vegetables which they are welcome to eat. It may interest you to know that the school has developed its own strain of broccoli which is often on the menu in the dining hall.