



**Treetops Boarding**

**Boarding Handbook**

**2023 - 2024**

**For Students and Parents**



**Confident Individuals**



**Responsible Citizens**



**Learners Enjoying Success**

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# welcome



**D**ear current and prospective members of the Braeburn community,

It is my absolute pleasure, as Head of Boarding, to warmly welcome you to Braeburn Garden Estate (BGE). The purpose of this handbook is to highlight the plethora of opportunities and experiences on offer to each pupil, within boarding at BGE, and to ready each student as best as possible for their arrival/return to our remarkable campus.

At BGE, our collective, primary objective is to create a home away from home, whereby a closely-knit and inclusive community is quickly fostered each September, and where each child feels safe, supported and cared-for throughout every moment of the academic year. I truly believe that in such a busy and ever-changing world, the greatest gift an adult can offer a child is time. Our well-trained staff and carefully constructed boarding routines ensure there is always time to provide each student with the highest level of pastoral care and academic oversight, thereby providing the most purposeful holistic education possible. At BGE, we always aim to develop the person, not just the pupil.

After an ambitious refurbishment programme, BGE now boasts world-class boarding facilities - it is a truly inspiring environment in which to live. There are a vast array of in-house spaces in which pupils can reap the benefits of communal living, and our fantastic outdoor facilities

enable the provision of a diverse and exciting activities programme, which of course is instrumental in ensuring each student maintains a healthy and balanced lifestyle.

Reflecting upon my own upbringing and background (in Banbridge, Northern Ireland), regardless of my age, educational establishment or social setting, the word 'opportunity' consistently springs to mind. My main passions are, and always have been, sport, music and exploration – all of which require passion, resilience and a progressive mindset. Having been fortunate enough to play international level hockey (many moons ago!), enjoy a multitude of world-renowned orchestras, and travel to almost every continent of the globe, I can safely state that enrichment is at the core of my ethos, and I can assure you that each boarder will have the opportunity to flourish in as many educational or social environments as possible during their time at Braeburn Garden Estate.

I hope by now, after digesting the snippets of information provided above, that you are thoroughly excited by the prospect of boarding at BGE, and that it is clear our boarding provision perfectly aligns with Braeburn's core values - to help each individual develop into inspirational and confident leaders, whilst maintaining the humility to become responsible, and respectful citizens.

Finally, I trust you will find this handbook useful in preparing for your time here. Exciting times await!

Aaron Appleton  
*Head of Boarding*

## Boarding Principles and Aims

Boarding at BGE is a close community which consists of students of all ages, cultures and nationalities, and residential boarding staff who constantly encourage, guide and offer support. In turn, we trust that each boarder will gain confidence and enhance their social and independent living skills; actively lead and remain principled when in positions of responsibility; enjoy each learning process and achieve academic excellence, and as a result, be able to effectively plan for university or the workplace.

These overarching principles offer a special opportunity for students to develop important life skills and values that are becoming increasingly important in the modern world, as outlined by Braeburn's core values below:

Assisted by proactive students in leadership positions, we celebrate the diverse range of cultures and faiths within the boarding community - offering opportunities for pupils to discover more about the world around us and to embrace what it is they find.



We aim to prepare our pupils for life. In a supportive and caring environment, pupils are offered opportunities and guidance in order to develop qualities such as compassion, resilience, boldness and self-reliance. Developing these life skills enables pupils to become progressive, responsible and mature members of society.

Pupils are encouraged to aim high and strive to fulfil their potential. We celebrate success and achievement, no matter how great or small, and foster the spirit of mutual peer support. A wide range of enriching opportunities are offered to bolster each pupil's in-class learning – such as on-site activities, weekend excursions and residential trips. This helps encourage our pupils to leave their immediate comfort zone, to challenge themselves to discover strengths, talents and skills which will further develop their creativity, independence, self-confidence and determination.

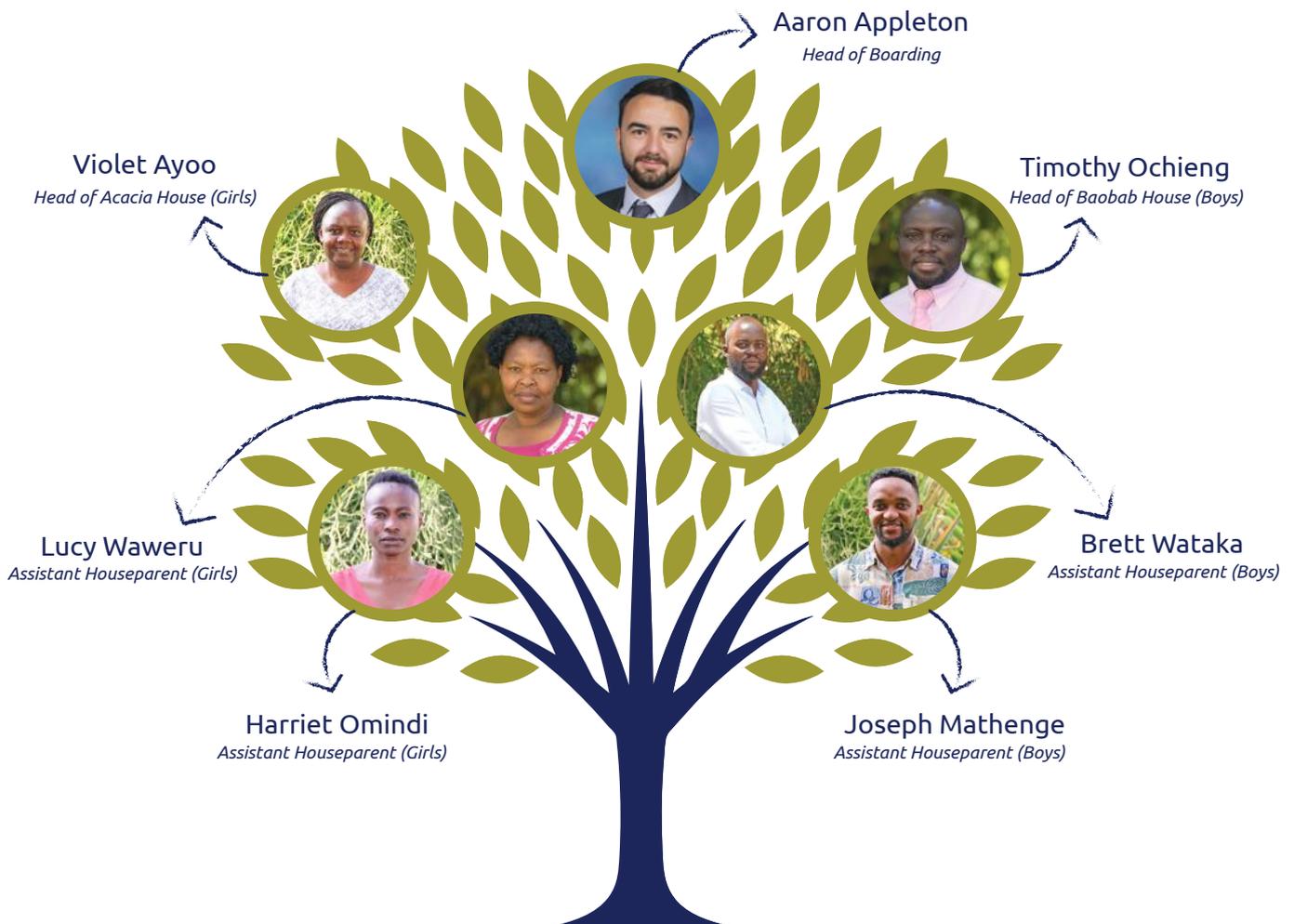
## Providing the Perfect Conditions for Progress and Success

At BGE, all pupils are cared for in a friendly and stimulating environment, and life in boarding creates the opportunity for students from every part of the globe to come together to live, work, and develop skills for life. In such an inclusive environment, pupils will support one another, discover and flourish their talents within our diverse enrichment programme, and form lifelong friendships.

To fully enable this, our boarding provision is underpinned by a strong pastoral support system. Naturally, a student is free to approach any member of boarding staff, at any time, if they have a pressing worry or problem, and this will be communicated with designated individuals to resolve any matters at hand. However, beyond the Head of Boarding, Houseparents and Assistant Houseparents, pupils have a variety of other routes to discuss their woes and/or well-being - such as their Form Tutors, School Nurses, School Counsellor, Independent Listeners, House Prefects and/or assigned buddies.

Additionally, a proactive approach is taken to monitor each pupil's well-being, happiness and overall progress - House Staff will be assigned specific tutees and will meet with each pupil on a regular basis. During these meetings, they will discuss and track recent achievements or issues, and they can use the opportunity to help prepare each student for the busy week ahead. In addition, all staff at BGE are fully trained using CPOMS (Child Protection Online Management System), which helps ensure complete oversight of each child's welfare.

## Meet the Team





## Boarding at BGE

**B**raeburn Garden Estate offers both weekly and full-time boarding for students in Year 9 and above. Treetops offers a home from home for students that might otherwise be challenged by factors such as time consuming commutes, or where parents may spend spells outside of the country; thereby offering a stable and productive environment.

Students in weekly boarding arrive at school on Monday morning and stay through to Friday afternoon, when they can be picked up or utilise the school transport system\* (included in the boarding fees). Naturally, the full-time boarders avoid all such time on the road, and have access to around the clock care, that includes an exciting range of life-enriching excursions, residential trips and on-site activities.

*(\*This is only available to certain areas of Nairobi - please liaise with the school transport coordinator for further details)*

## Term dates and arrival/departure times

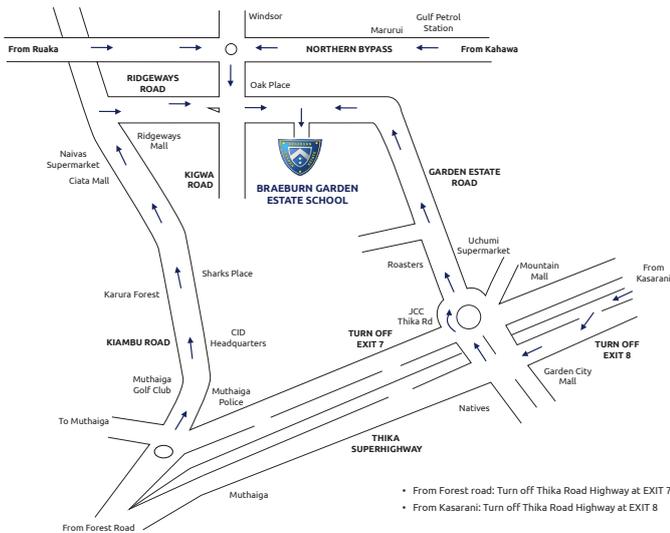
**O**ur term dates are published on BGE's website (up to a year in advance). Beyond this, specific arrival / departure windows, activities and trip dates etc will be emailed to all parents and guardians in an extremely timely manner (one term in advance - where possible).

## Exeats

**T**raditional boarding schools run a number of exeat weekends throughout the year. On each exeat weekend, boarding will close at 5pm on Friday and reopen at 5pm on Sunday (boarders must be back by 7.30pm). The purpose of an exeat weekend is to ensure pupils have a period of relaxation and/or reflection during each half-term. Even though these breaks from school are short, they provide students with the perfect opportunity to recharge - at home or under a guardian's care - before returning to our engaging and appropriately demanding environment.

Before each exeat, and at the end of each half term/term, we ask that specific details of where each pupil will be spending their leave period, and any relevant transportation details, are provided. Travel forms, which will be completed electronically via Google Forms, need to be submitted approximately two weeks before each child departs, and specific information regarding travel form deadlines will be shared regularly throughout the year. This information is used to ensure that the pupils are kept safe - as part of the school's safeguarding commitment.

## Travelling to and from BGE



Located on a tranquil 28-acre site, BGE sits 8km northeast of the centre of Nairobi in the leafy suburbs of Garden Estate. It is far enough from the hustle and bustle of the city to feel rural, yet close enough to enjoy the amenities of a large, vibrant city. The school is conveniently located near Karura Forest, Windsor Golf and Country Club, several large shopping centres, and is just a short drive away from Jomo Kenyatta International Airport.

We seek to alleviate any potential burdens associated with transportation. Therefore, for weekly boarders who require assistance with transportation on Mondays and Fridays, services are available – as per the Bus Route Schedule in the School Information Pack. Transport assistance (for exeats and half-term/end of term breaks) can be available if required (see section on travel forms above).

## Arriving at Boarding – Induction!

It is entirely normal for a pupil to be both excited and nervous before they arrive/return to boarding. All staff and experienced boarders at BGE are acutely aware of this, and we are here to help each student settle-in as quickly and as comfortably as possible. New boarders will always be assigned with ‘buddies’, and an action-packed induction programme soon breaks the ice. By the end of their first week, all new boarders will have engaged with several exciting yet purposeful activities – enabling them to meet new people (both staff and students), familiarise themselves with their new surroundings, and to learn of the range of exciting opportunities that will be offered to them throughout the academic year!





## Boarding Kit List

Necessities	Optional Extras	Examples of prohibited items
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Casual clothing for evenings</li> <li>Sportswear, including Games and Swimming kit</li> <li>Two bath towels, laundry basket, necessary toiletries</li> <li>Name tags - to mark all clothing</li> <li>Alarm clock</li> <li>Padlock (ideally number-coded)</li> <li>Passports and relevant documentation</li> <li>Mobile phone and charger</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Duvet, pillows and covers</li> <li>Hairdryer</li> <li>Mosquito net</li> <li>Clothes hangers</li> <li>Shoe cleaning kit</li> <li>Power surge protectors</li> <li>iPads/laptops/electronic devices</li> <li>Pocket money (ideally MPESA, as cash will need to be kept in the house-safe)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extension cables, kettles, hot irons, hot trays, mini-fridges/ any other kitchen appliances</li> <li>Firelighters, firearms, fireworks, knives or dangerous instruments, controlled substances, alcohol, illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia</li> <li>Tobacco products or smoking paraphernalia (cigarettes, e-cigs/vapes, chewing, nicotine gum, etc.)</li> <li>Vitamins, medicines and supplements - unless declared and provided to, and approved by, staff upon arrival</li> </ul>



## World-Class Facilities

As aforementioned, Treetops (the name of the boarding-area on our stunning campus) has just undergone an extensive refurbishment programme, and it now proudly provides state of the art facilities - creatively designed to facilitate each pupil's academic needs, to enable them to wholeheartedly enjoy their time in boarding, and ultimately to thrive in their surroundings.

Treetops itself is divided into two Houses (Acacia and Baobab) - both of which house boarders from Year 9 to Year 13, and as such, contain the youngest pupils eligible to board up to those students who are preparing for their IGCSE and IB examinations. This wide range of age-groups greatly contributes to our ethos of creating a home away from home - as an incredible range of opportunities for cross-year group interactions enable the development of a family-orientated community, whilst encouraging the sharing of knowledge/wisdom during the many educational experiences found at BGE.

Within each House, Year 9 and 10 students are likely to find themselves in shared accommodation (maximum 4 per room), which is perfect in aiding the development and maintenance of strong social circles. Our triple, double and single rooms are allocated to our more senior boarders. IB2 students in particular will always receive a single room - providing them with an environment similar to what they will likely reside in during their first year at University. Each pupil has their own bed, wardrobe, desk, chair, storage area and a lockable space. Each student also has a personal A2-sized pin-board and are encouraged to bring along photographs/posters which they can put up to quickly make their room feel like home. Bedding, pillow, pillow cases, duvets, duvet covers and sheets are provided by the School, but many boarders prefer to bring their own from home. All bedding and laundry is taken care of by our cleaning staff at BGE, ensuring pupils are always well-presented and clean, and live in an entirely hygienic environment.

All students will have access to our well-designed communal areas (which include modern TV rooms, board games areas, ping-pong and pool tables, as well as 'quiet spaces'), and our newly implemented WiFi, which is both closely monitored and filtered - in-line with our safeguarding and appropriate use of technology policies - enables students to reap the benefits of research whilst studying (as well as permitting us to watch the most popular, age appropriate, series of the day on streaming services online!).

## Enrichment Programme

Enrichment provides a wide range of opportunities and experiences for our pupils, which are not only fun, but productive and vital in the development of both academic and interpersonal skills. These skills aid the concept of a 'holistic education', which is becoming increasingly important in the eyes of universities and employers in the modern world.

BGE provides a strong and diverse enrichment programme – consisting of both on-site activities (daily), off-site excursions (at weekends) and residential trips (once per half-term).

The extensive sporting facilities at Braeburn Garden Estate, such as the modern astro-turf tennis courts, squash facilities, heated swimming pool, badminton and basketball courts – to name just a few - are available for all boarders to use, and this is encouraged through structured activities each evening. Likewise, social clubs, art and music facilities, an occasional evening trip, and boarding-wide gatherings greatly enhance the sense of community – enriching those within it.

At weekends, all full-time boarders will experience our incredibly exciting programme of off-site excursions and residential trips. They will vary in duration, distance travelled and type of activity, however several things are all but guaranteed – they will be engaging, interesting, enriching, and they will cater for all types of individual. You are permitted to have a sneak-peak at what could or will be on offer... but note, this list is far from exhaustive: Nairobi National Park tour, virtual reality experiences, archery in the forest, cinema trips, paintballing, go-karting, horseback riding, white-water rafting and many more!

There is a need to carefully achieve a balance between the academic and social aspects of boarding. Students are expected to study in a supervised setting each weekday evening, with teaching staff on hand to assist students with their study and provide academic support when required. Close collaboration with the main teaching body is a daily routine for Boarding Parents, and this is key in enhancing the academic development for each of our boarders.



## Leadership Opportunities

Pupils chosen for positions of responsibility frequently display/possess a range of desirable qualities. They are reliable, punctual and organised, and they conduct themselves in a dignified manner at all times. Their role is to encourage and offer channels of communication and feedback between the student body and house-staff, as pupil-voice is instrumental in ensuring our boarding environment is truly a home from home. Frequent feedback is sought across all aspects of boarding, and this 'you said, we did' ethos fosters pupil-engagement, a sense of belonging, and ultimately a well-bonded community. Boarding at BGE proudly offers a range of positions of responsibility, as briefly outlined below:

### Boarding House Captain / Prefects

House Prefects will assist staff with the smooth-running of general house routine, to help reinforce standards and expectations within the house including behaviour, politeness, punctuality and time-management, and to help maintain a positive, nurturing and happy environment within the boarding house

### Boarding House Council

After collaborating with all pupils within each house, House Council members must effectively manage a house-budget. Their aim is to orchestrate purchases to benefit all members of the house, and to organise and run in-house events on a half-termly basis.



Boarding at BGE proudly offers a range of positions of responsibility, as briefly outlined

### Activities Committee

On-site activities, off-site excursions and residential trips are often among the highlights of a pupil's boarding experience. Pupils on the activity committee will help design the boarding-enrichment programme, using the thoughts of the wider boarding community, by suggesting what pupils are eager to see, experience and do on both weeknights and weekends.

### Food Committee

Food committee members will attend half-termly meetings with the dining hall staff and Head of Boarding. After accumulating the range of opinions from the student-body, their task is to offer suggestions as to how the dining hall staff can further develop an already excellent menu. In addition, they will help organise themed days – based on specific cuisines or cultural celebrations.

## Daily Routines

The daily routine has been carefully designed to facilitate and promote academic excellence, whilst providing sufficient time to engage with our diverse enrichment programme; to socialise and form long-lasting friendships; and of course, to eat well and rest sufficiently.

Pleasingly, students quickly improve their organisational skills and soon become responsible for their time-keeping under our care, namely as a result of the high expectations set by each member of staff.

Weekday Routine	
07:00	Wake-up call, ensure room is tidy, get dressed (in uniform)
07.20 to 07.50	Breakfast
07:50	Leave for school
08:00 to 15:45	School day
15:45 to 16:45	After school clubs and activities, snacks provided in boarding
16.45 to 17:55	Free time
18:00 to 18:30	Dinner
18:40 to 19:55	Supervised prep
20:00 to 21:15	Boarding activities / Free time
21:45	Lights out for year 9*
22:00	Lights out for year 10 & 11*
22:30	Lights out for years 12 & 13*
<i>*A minimum of 15 minutes prior to lights out, students are expected to return to their rooms, to prepare for the following day and shower.</i>	
Weekend Routine - Saturday	
07.15 to 07.45	Breakfast (optional) / delivered to houses
07.45 to 12.30	School-related commitments / free time
12.30 to 13.00	Lunch
13.00 to 17.00	On-site enrichment opportunities / free time
17.00 to 18.00	In-house quiet time / prep
18.00 to 18.30	Dinner
18.45 to 20.00	Boarding activities
20.00 until lights out	In-house events
Weekend Routine - Sunday	
08.00 to 10.30	Opportunities for Worship*
10.30 to 11.00	Brunch
11.00 to 17.30	Off-site trips (snacks provided) / free time
18.00 to 18.30	Dinner
18.45 to 20.00	Boarding activities
20.00 until lights out	Free time in-house / preparing for school
<i>*To cater for each child's cultural and spiritual needs, BGE can liaise with parents to arrange transport to nearby religious venues at weekends.</i>	

## Ensuring Academic Progress

As seen within the daily routine, all boarders will be required to undertake a period of prep each evening from Monday to Thursday. This is a supervised, focused and dedicated period for the boarder to finish tasks from the day, complete set homework and to revise.

Years 9 to 11 will undertake their prep in our excellent Learning Resource Centre, whereas IB students may complete their prep either in their room, or in a specified common area in each house – promoting independence and responsibility in our more experienced students. House Prefects assist our teaching staff (who oversee prep and are able to provide specialised subject knowledge during this time) in maintaining a calm, quiet and productive environment for the duration of this important period of the day.

## Food Provision

The dining-hall staff produce an exceptional range of meals on a weekly basis. We fully recognise that growing adolescents have a substantial appetite – therefore our aim is to provide a healthy and balanced diet, but also to ensure they never go hungry! Beyond set meals in the dining-hall and the hot snacks that are provided to the boarding houses, students may have food delivered to school on Tuesday and Saturday evenings. The newly fitted kitchenettes, in both boarding houses, are stocked with essentials (such as cereals, milk, bread, fruit, jams etc), and food-storage areas are available for those who wish to practise and enhance their culinary skills in the evenings!

As ever, pupil-voice is instrumental in ensuring our provision of food is as strong as it can be, and our menu/weekly offerings will vary from one term to another – depending on the suggestions provided by our Food Committee members.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
<b>LUNCH</b>				
Assorted salads	Vegetable soup	Assorted vegie salads	Leek potato soup	Assorted salads
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grilled burgers</li> <li>• Burger buns</li> <li>• Baked potato wedges</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Panfried boneless chicken (Honey and Garlic)</li> <li>• Vegetable rice</li> <li>• Seasonal vegetables</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grilled sausages</li> <li>• 'Gravy'</li> <li>• Creamed potatoes</li> <li>• Buttered garden peas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buttered pasta</li> <li>• Bolognaise sauce (Traditional githeri)</li> <li>• Tossed spinach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chicken nuggets</li> <li>• Chips</li> <li>• Steamed seasonal vegetables</li> </ul>
<b>VEGETERIAN</b>				
Vegetable burgers	Red bean casserole / ratatouille	Vegeterian enchiladas		Vegetable quiche
<b>DESSERT</b>				
Assorted ice creams / fruits	Fresh apples	Marble cake with custard	Watermelon slices	Yogurt
<b>DINNER</b>				
Assorted salads	Assorted salads	Assorted salads	Assorted salads	
Assorted pizzas / meat and vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irish stew</li> <li>• Chapati /Mashed potatoes</li> <li>• Broccoli and carrots</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Panfried chicken supreme</li> <li>• Mushroom sauce</li> <li>• Egg fried rice / sautee potatoes</li> <li>• Steamed mixed seasonal vegetables</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assorted Grills</li> <li>• 'Barbeque sauce'</li> <li>• Assorted accompaniments</li> <li>• Buttered spinach</li> </ul>	
<b>VEGETERIAN</b>				
	Jacket potato, Grated cheese / baked beans	Vegetable spring rolls / cheese omelette	Mac and cheese	
<b>DESSERT</b>				
Mixed fruit slices	Fruit crumble	Mixed fruit cuts	Assorted ice creams	



## Communication with staff

**C**orrespondence between staff and parents is essential for quality co-parenting. To effectively care for, assist and safeguard, good-communication is vital.

As of September 2023, boarding reports will now be offered in-line with day-school reports – providing staff the opportunity to efficiently communicate on a half-termly basis. Parents will also be invited to have a brief yet informative meeting with their child’s respective Houseparent before the end of September, namely to discuss how each pupil is settling into the school routine and to answer any questions parents may have.

Please do not be worried if a Houseparent has not been in contact in-between reporting periods - a ‘no news is good news’ approach can be assumed. Houseparents will always report to parents and guardians, at the first possible instance, should a pupil show outstanding and exemplary behaviour, or when your support is required to correct and rectify poor behaviour.

When contacting the School, please try to ensure that the relevant Houseparent and Assistant Houseparents are contacted. House staff can be contacted via email when there is a need to provide us with information or when a query is raised – we aim to respond within 24 hours. In addition, normally in the case of an emergency, each house will have a duty phone, which is operational between 8am and 8pm (EAT) every day.

The following is a list of contacts that you should be aware of:

School LandLine	+254 (020) 501 8000	
School Cell	+254 (0) 720 667 622	
Acacia House Team (Girls)	+254 (0) 757 984277	bgeacacia@braeburn.ac.ke
Baobab House Team (Boys)	+254 (0) 757 550485	bgebaobab@braeburn.ac.ke

Should you wish to contact a member of the boarding team directly, please use the email addresses found below:

Head of Boarding	Aaron Appleton	aaron.appleton@braeburn.ac.ke
Houseparent (Boys)	Timothy Ochieng	timothy.ochieng@braeburn.ac.ke
Houseparent (Girls)	Violet Ayoo	violet.ayoo@braeburn.ac.ke
Assistant Houseparent (Girls)	Lucy Waweru	lucy.waweru@braeburn.ac.ke
Assistant Houseparent (Girls)	Harriet Omindi	harriet.omindi@braeburn.ac.ke
Assistant Houseparent (Boys)	Brett Wataka	brett.wataka@braeburn.ac.ke
Assistant Houseparent (Boys)	Joseph Mathenge	joseph.mathenge@braeburn.ac.ke

We strongly recommend that all pupils have a mobile phone for safety purposes, and to maintain interaction/ dialogue with parents and guardians. However, despite this, we encourage all pupils to report directly to house staff when they are having any problems, worries or woes, and parental support is required to encourage such a culture. This will aid staff members in being informed in a much more time-efficient manner, and we can therefore deal with any potential situation as effectively as possible.



## Rewards and sanctions

**W**ithin boarding at BGE, rewards are provided to incentivise consistently good behaviour, or to acknowledge when a pupil goes above and beyond to help boarding as a whole and/or others. Rewards range from promotion of specific achievements during in-house assemblies, to emails or 'postcards' to parents, to nominations for the 'Boarder of the Week', or to more tangible, physical rewards and the opportunity to represent your house and/or the boarding community in boarding committees, or as a House Prefect.

Staff will always seek to encourage and support students, however sanctions do exist - to deter pupils from displaying inappropriate behaviour which we feel has no place in our boarding community. The sanctions used vary according to the severity and frequency with which rules and expectations are broken. Sanctions will be appropriate to the infringement, and range from verbal warnings to exclusion. Detailed records are kept, and boarding staff monitor these records regularly to ensure fair and just treatment of all boarders under our care.





For further information contact:

**Braeburn Garden Estate School**  
Garden Estate Road, Nairobi  
P O Box 16944 00620 Nairobi, Kenya

Primary School: +254 710 649301  
Middle School: +254 715 433218  
Secondary School: +254 720 667622

[enquiries.garden@braeburn.ac.ke](mailto:enquiries.garden@braeburn.ac.ke)  
[www.gardenestate.braeburn.com](http://www.gardenestate.braeburn.com)

Please visit: <https://gardenestate.braeburn.com/> & download the BGE App from either the App Store or Play Store for up-to-date information



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