



## Standard 10

# Boarding

- 10.1** Schools enrolling boarders provide boarding facilities that are safe and developmentally appropriate.
- 10.2** The physical premises and facilities are fit for purpose, safe, hygienic, well-maintained, sufficient and appropriate for the accommodation of boarding students and for the numbers of students accommodated.
- 10.3** The accommodation arrangements enable the provision of a child-safe environment.
- 10.4** The boarders receive a well-balanced and nutritious diet.
- 10.5** Staff employed to supervise the boarders are competent, fit and proper persons, qualified to manage their care, welfare and needs and compliant with the *Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004*.
- 10.6** The school maintains open and effective communication with the parents and guardians of boarders.
- 10.7** The code of conduct for students sets out the minimum standards of conduct to be observed at a boarding facility.

### Supporting evidence

The following may be requested from schools providing boarding facilities:

- Current number of boarding students.
- The policies and procedures for the welfare, safety and care of boarding students.
- The details of staff employed in the management and operation of the school's boarding facility.

### Explanatory notes

#### **Policies and procedures**

Policies and procedures must be in place for student boarding facilities and should detail how a safe, healthy and supportive boarding environment for all enrolled boarders, including those with disabilities, is being provided and maintained at all times. Students, parents and staff must be given a clear and comprehensive statement of these policies and support their implementation. The boarding student welfare and safety policies and procedures including provision for reporting critical incidents and the student code of conduct must be reviewed regularly, including after the occurrence of any critical or emergency incident. Breaches of the student code of conduct are to be dealt with in accordance with the school's disciplinary procedures (compliant with Standard 14).

The policies and procedures should be benchmarked against contemporary best practice in protecting the safety and wellbeing of students in boarding facilities, as determined by a relevant peak body, such as the *Boarding Standard for Australian schools and residences* [AS 5725:2015] published in July 2015.

## **Boarding premises and facilities**

Boarding premises and facilities will be viewed at each site visit and may be inspected at any time. All buildings used to accommodate boarding students must meet the requirements of the Building Code of Australia for Class 3 buildings to ensure appropriate standards for the health and safety of all enrolled students, including those with disabilities.

The boarding facilities, vehicles, furniture and equipment must conform to fire and safety regulations, be sufficient and appropriate, provide personal privacy, and be clean and well-maintained for all the communal and private aspects of boarding. Where there are students with disabilities, their accommodation should be suitably adapted for access to all necessary facilities and areas.

Like other school premises, boarding accommodation, including new parts of existing premises, for which a building approval application was lodged after 1 May 2011 must comply with the *Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010*, Standard 20, made under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth).

## **A child-safe environment**

The boarding arrangements must enable the provision of a child-safe environment and aim to eliminate opportunities for grooming behaviour, bullying and harassment, child abuse, assaults and self-harm to occur undetected. This requires careful consideration of boarding policies and procedures as well as the physical environment from this perspective.

## **Boarding staff**

Details about boarding supervisors and other staff are to be recorded on the staff register. All must hold a WWCC or have applied and not been refused (in which case, the application date and receipt number must be recorded).

Whether a member of the boarding staff is a boarding supervisor or not depends on whether he or she supervises the boarders, or any of them, at any time. Any staff member whose role includes supervision of boarders at any time is a boarding supervisor. As of 1 January 2016, boarding supervisors are mandatory reporters (of suspected child sexual abuse) under the *Children and Community Services Act 2004*. Note that nurses are also mandatory reporters. Training of all staff members within boarding facilities, particularly referencing the school's Staff Code of Conduct and guidelines on how to comply with it, is to be conducted on a regular basis. Boarding supervisors must also receive training in their mandatory reporting obligations with regular revision.

## **Director General's considerations**

### **Appropriate**

In assessing the appropriateness of boarding accommodation, the Director General will consider such factors as whether it is:

- adequately heated and cooled;
- in compliance with fire and safety regulations and equipped for emergencies;
- free of significant hazards and safe for all boarders;
- hygienic;
- secure from intrusion and sufficiently private;
- well lit, well ventilated and well-maintained;
- accessible to all boarders; and
- sufficiently spacious for study, sleep, meals and recreation.

### **Relevance to other standards and requirements**

The premises and facilities standards (Standards 5 and 6) overlap significantly with this standard. Standards 5 and 6 apply equally to boarding accommodation and facilities as to other school buildings and facilities where relevant, including the requirement for regular maintenance and replacement schedules. There is also overlap with the staff standard (Standard 4) although boarding staff are recorded on a separate section of the staff register (noting that boarding staff who also teach and/or provide student transport must be recorded on all applicable sections of the staff register). Compliance with this standard will contribute to the levels of care provided by the school (see Chapter 8).