

WRITE

WITH INSPIRATIONAL

YOUR

BOARDING AT

OWN

WOLDINGHAM

STORY

# Foreword

## Your story...your world

As a boarding student at Woldingham we'll help you become the author of your own story, opening your world to an exciting future.

With inspirational boarding at the heart of our fantastic school, we'll help you write your own plot, shape your characters and set the tone for your own unique story and life – at school and afterwards.

The beauty and peace of our wonderful location in the Surrey Hills provides the ideal setting for you to start exploring your own storyline in a safe and stimulating environment. You'll be supported, encouraged and motivated by staff who care about you, both while you're at school and for your future ahead.

Living and learning alongside fellow students from the UK and around the world, Woldingham boarding will help you become confident, compassionate and courageous, ready to take your place in the world.

Make your life story a thrilling adventure by choosing boarding at Woldingham.

Be the

# AUTHOR

of your own

# STORY



*Make your life story a thrilling adventure*



# Chapter 1

At Woldingham we don't just have one 'room with a view', we have many different views from many different rooms, in our stunningly beautiful green valley in the Surrey Hills. Joining us as a boarder aged 11, in the Sixth Form, or in between, it's a place that will stay in your heart for the rest of your life.

Our quiet corner of Surrey is simply a wonderful place to live and grow, from joining as a young girl to leaving as a young woman ready to take on the world. Woldingham is safe and peaceful - ideal for studying, thinking and writing - but it's only 30 minutes from London, one of the world's most exciting and vibrant cities.

Whatever the season, you'll be inspired to work on your own life story at Woldingham as you watch the leaves turn from green to russet red in the autumn, are refreshed by the crisp clear air (and sometimes snow) in the winter, and energised as the spring bulbs turn our parkland a vibrant yellow. When the heat of the sun makes us dream of holiday adventures, it's time for the long summer break.

Our amazing location is just one reason why so many students thrive academically at Woldingham, become first-class sportswomen, accomplished musicians, and win awards for science. Whatever your dream, even if you don't know what it is yet, Woldingham will help you achieve it.

**In EM Forster's *A Room with a View*, Lucy Honeychurch is inspired to love while visiting the beautiful landscape of Tuscany, leading her to reassess her future life and key decisions.**

# A ROOM *with* A VIEW

700 acres of beautiful Surrey countryside



# Chapter 2

Boarding in an all-girls environment at Woldingham means you can focus all your energy into exploring the subjects you want to study as well as trying lots of new things. You won't know your passion unless it's on offer and you step up to try it. You won't love or be good at everything. No book is worth reading without a few plot twists and turns. You'll find your own interesting and unique storyline by trying, succeeding and failing, with a soft landing. This is what you'll get by boarding at Woldingham in a high achieving environment.

We'll challenge you to find your sport – are you more yoga than cross country or swimming rather than hockey? Do you want to shine on stage in our 600 seat theatre, or would you prefer to be backstage? Do you want to volunteer with local young people with disabilities at the Orpheus Centre, learn about computer programming in Coding Club or play in a flute ensemble?

With so many activities to try during the week in lessons and in school clubs and at weekends, the most difficult decision will be which to choose. They help shape the plot of your own narrative.

As Abi Daré says in *The Girl with the Louding Voice*, it's important that you choose to live a life you control and make your destiny. Boarding at Woldingham allows you to focus on your studies without distraction, spread your wings to try lots of new things and forge your identity.

**In Abi Daré's book, *The Girl with the Louding Voice*, Adunni is a fourteen-year-old Nigerian girl finding her 'louding voice'- the ability to speak for herself and decide her own future.**





Spread your wings and cement your character

# THE GIRL WITH THE LOUDING VOICE



# Chapter 3

Despite Woldingham being rural, peaceful and safe, the school is remarkably accessible. Unlike Mary Lennox in *The Secret Garden*, who has a long and arduous journey to England from India, it is an easy journey to Woldingham, whether you travel by road, train or plane.

For students travelling by air, the school is only 30 minutes from Gatwick and 45 minutes from Heathrow. We think we are the only school in the UK with our own train station, where you can catch a regular train and be in London in around 25-30 minutes. By car we are three miles from the M25.

Frances Hodgson Burnett, who wrote *The Secret Garden* in 1911, wouldn't recognise the technology we use today to keep in touch with family and friends. At Woldingham, we embrace the opportunities new technology provides, encouraging students to take advantage of the benefits of our interconnected world – in a safe way. There is wifi throughout the school and students can use their own mobile phones and tablets in their free time to keep connected with parents, family and friends. The IT suites in Sixth Form boarding, and around the school, as well as laptop and iPad use in many lessons, mean that students are tech-ready for the world of work.

**Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden* is a classic of children's literature where Mary finds love, friendship and happiness through discovering a secret garden.**



# THE SECRET GARDEN



30 MINUTES BY TRAIN  
TO CENTRAL LONDON



# Chapter 4

As Virginia Woolf says in *A Room of One's Own*, a successful author needs her own space to write and to think. In the words of Virginia Woolf, *'There is no gate, no lock, no bolt that you can set upon the freedom of my mind.'* Boarding at Woldingham gives you exactly this in abundance and living with girls in your own year group means you'll build bonds and friendships that last a lifetime.

From Year 10 onwards, boarders at Woldingham have their own room meaning you can study, read and think at an age when having your own space is really important. When you need company, are working on joint projects or want friendly chats, there are relaxing common rooms, IT suites and wellness rooms.

Younger boarders in Years 7-9 have the fun and excitement of sharing rooms, with lots of care and attention from our warm and friendly boarding team, who are available round the clock.

In the Upper Sixth, boarders get even more independence with ensuite study bedrooms. It's like being in a university hall of residence a year early.

***In A Room of One's Own Virginia Woolf reflects on what is needed to be a successful writer in the early 20th Century and concludes that is 'money and a room of her own'.***

# A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN



**INDIVIDUAL**



**BOARDING**

**ACCOMMODATION FROM YEAR 10**

# Chapter 5

Our boarding is truly international. Every year we are home to students of more than 30 nationalities. As Kari Herbert describes in *The Explorer's Daughter*, memories created during childhood living in a close community with people from other countries and backgrounds last a lifetime and shape a person's future.

We love welcoming international students to boarding at Woldingham. As their home in the UK, we take extra special care to make sure our international students feel safe and cared for. Our Woldingham valley is not as remote or as wild as some of the places Kari has travelled to, including the North Pole, Oman or Grand Canyon, but we can promise exploration, personal growth and educational stimulus.

Boarders have more independence as they get older. In the younger years we organise lots of activities and events at school as well as weekend trips to famous, and not so well known, landmarks and towns. Local trips to enjoy ten-pin bowling, meals out and the cinema, for example, are very popular.

Students in Year 9 and older can go by school bus to nearby towns, such as Oxted, in small groups. In the Sixth Form, students can choose day trips to London to visit the city's world renowned galleries and museums, as well as go shopping.

Regular Friday night pizza evenings are a highlight for all boarders, young and old, as well as our staff team. Weekends are also a hive of activity for competitive sport and for rehearsals in the run up to our fabulous music and drama events.

And if that all sounds very busy, we make sure there is down time and, especially when GCSEs and A Levels get closer, there is plenty of study time so every student can do her best.

**In *The Explorer's Daughter*, British travel writer Kari Herbert returns to the communities of the Arctic where she spent time as a child, reflecting on memories and on her sense of identity.**





# The Explorer's Daughter



Home to students of more  
than 30 nationalities

# Chapter 6

We have 'great expectations' that all our students will have a fantastic time at Woldingham, thrive and enjoy every aspect of boarding life. It is a place which will come to feel like home and you will grow in self-knowledge during your time here.

We don't just have great expectations for students academically, but also out of the classroom. With our reputation for excellence in drama and music, the performances students stage every year always meet the great expectations of our students taking part, as well as our audiences.

We have lots of choice and flexibility. Students can board full time, where they stay at weekends with their friends. This is ideal for international boarders and for those who live further away in the UK, or for students coming up to exams who want to focus on studying, away from distraction. Weekly boarding is ideal for students who want to live at school in the week and spend the weekends at home. This is a perfect option for students who live within an hour of school. We also have flexi-boarding where students stay up to two nights a week at school. This suits many families who live locally, or who are London-based.

Everything is arranged around the needs of individual students so that you can focus on what is important to you and your family.

***Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens, one of his most famous works, follows the trials and tribulations of the character, Pip, through his childhood, to becoming a young adult, as he grows in self-knowledge.**



# GREAT EXPECTATIONS

FOCUS ON WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO YOU



# Chapter 7

Our boarding community at Woldingham is special. It's where kindness and love thrive and grow. It's not just about grand gestures, it's about the small ways in which we treat each other every day. This is at the heart of Arundhati Roy's award winning feminist novel *The God of Small Things*.

Nurtured and supported by our kind and caring team of housemistresses, teachers and support staff, our boarders find Woldingham is a real home away from home. It's about being truly whole-hearted in everything you do.

Our Catholic tradition and our Sacred Heart goals of faith, intellect, social awareness, community and personal growth, underpin how we care for and treat each other. We welcome girls of all faiths and none. Kindness is at the heart of every Woldingham story. In our rough and tumble world, we teach students to be kind to themselves and to each other: to give and, when necessary, to forgive.

At Woldingham students are given the time and space for personal reflection, enabling each and every student to gain the resilience and determination necessary to navigate life's highs and lows. Woldingham provides the solid foundations for the exciting life story of each student, as she grows to understand her place in the world. It's only then that we can succeed in meeting our vision to provide an outstanding education that empowers women to change the world.

**In *The God of Small Things*, Indian novelist Arundhati Roy's first book, she reflects on the idea that while major events impact on society, what matters most to people are the small kindnesses and acts of love between individuals.**



# THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS

WHERE KINDNESS AND  
LOVE THRIVE AND GROW

# Conclusion

Being a boarder at Woldingham enables you be the author of your own story. Following in the footsteps of the thousands of Woldingham students before you over more than 175 years, we'll help you become who you want to be, whether that's a scientist, a doctor, a CEO, an entrepreneur, a designer, an accountant, or something completely new. It's your life. We'll help you discover ambitions you never knew you had and guide you to find your own unique talents with kindness, love and support.

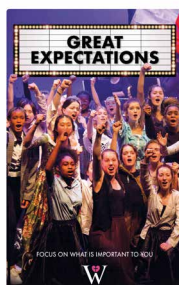
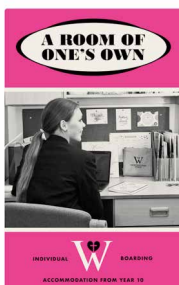
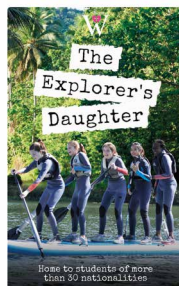
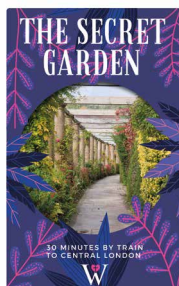
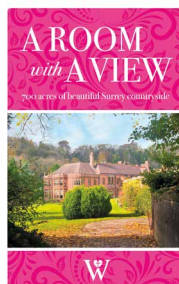
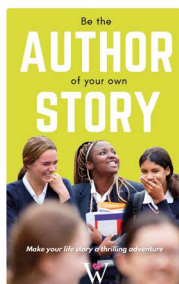
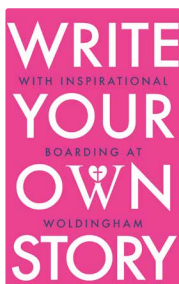
Boarding at Woldingham helps you gain the skills, exam results and resilience to choose the route in life that is right for you. It's our role to help you start your journey so you can achieve your ambitions and be happy on the path you choose.

Whatever your story, you'll find your voice and develop the confidence to write your own story at Woldingham.

To learn more about boarding at Woldingham, contact the admissions team on **01883 654206** or **registrar@woldinghamschool.co.uk**. We would love to tell you more about why girls love boarding at Woldingham and invite you to see the school for yourself.



What will you choose to be on the front cover of your book?



# Bibliography

We combined our love of reading and love of boarding as we wrote this, our own book about boarding at Woldingham. We hope it gives you a good introduction to life at Woldingham and how brilliant boarding is here. We also want to share with you a little more about the books which inspired us as we wrote our own story about boarding. Some of the books you may know well and have already read, and some will be new to you. They can all be found in our well-stocked library at Woldingham. We hope you'll be inspired by some of the choices we made and encouraged to start writing your own story at Woldingham.

## ***A Room with a View* by EM Forster**

Published in 1908, *A Room with a View* is one of EM Forster's most well-known novels, partly as a result of the 1985 Merchant Ivory film based on the book, starring Judi Dench, Maggie Smith and Helena Bonham Carter. Set in Italy and Surrey (not far from Woldingham in fact), the book is about a young woman, Lucy Honeychurch, travelling, having adventures and falling in love. We were inspired to include *A Room with a View* in our selection as Woldingham is located in such a beautiful part of Surrey and we have so many rooms with fantastic views.

## ***The Girl with the Louding Voice* by Abi Daré**

Abi Daré's book is a complete contrast to *A Room with a View* in many ways. Published in 2020, *The Girl with the Louding Voice* is set in Nigeria and features fourteen-year-old Adunni dealing with a series of difficult, and sometimes upsetting, situations as she grows up determined to become a success. While the experience of students at Woldingham will be very different to Adunni's, her determination to overcome difficulties and make a positive change makes her a good role model for our students to follow. *The Girl with the Louding Voice* is a great read for anyone with an interest in social justice.



### ***The Secret Garden* by Frances Hodgson Burnett**

We had to include *The Secret Garden* in our book of boarding because our landscaped gardens, lawns and beautiful two mile drive up to the school, means that we have our own secret corner in the Surrey Hills. A classic, read by generations of school children since it was published in 1911, *The Secret Garden* shows how love of place, friendship and kindness allow a young girl to flourish. All things that hold true at Woldingham.

### ***A Room of One's Own* by Virginia Woolf**

One of the more demanding reads in our bibliography, *A Room of One's Own* is a seminal work by renowned British author Virginia Woolf. Based on two lectures delivered by Virginia Woolf at the University of Cambridge, *A Room of One's Own* is an extended essay published in 1929. Making a statement about the social and economic constraints for women of the time, she writes: '*A woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction.*' Having the resources, space and time to achieve your ambition is as important for young women now as it was for Virginia Woolf with her aspirations to be an author. The title *A Room of One's Own* is particularly relevant at Woldingham as students from Year 10 and above have their own study bedrooms.

### ***The Explorer's Daughter* by Kari Herbert**

Travel writer Kari Herbert wrote about her experience of travelling and living in the Arctic in *The Explorer's Daughter*. Published in 2005, the book explores themes around adventure, what home means and the exploration of cultural traditions. Anyone becoming a boarder at Woldingham starts her own adventure joining students from the UK and from more than 30 countries around the world meaning *The Explorer's Daughter* was an obvious choice when describing life at Woldingham. It's a great read for anyone with aspirations to travel and explore the world.

### ***Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens**

It's the name *Great Expectations* rather than the storyline which led this 1861 novel from Charles Dickens to feature in our book of boarding at Woldingham. Another classic English book in this bibliography, Dickens tells the story of orphan Pip whose life includes poverty and wealth and deals with issues of confusion, despair and hope. In contrast, the great expectations of boarding at Woldingham is that your experience as a student will be fantastic, and you'll achieve more than you could ever hope for.

### ***The God of Small Things* by Arundhati Roy**

Published to great acclaim in 1997, Arundhati Roy's novel set in India looks at how small things can affect people's behaviour and their lives. Like some of the other books in this list, *The God of Small Things* is not light reading and deals with some difficult issues, complex relationships and politics, as well as faith. As a Sacred Heart Catholic school, where God and faith are important, and where the small kindnesses matter, Woldingham provides a warm welcome to students of all faiths and none.

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Every book needs its reviews. Read here what students across all year groups have to say about boarding at Woldingham.

*“ Everyone is very friendly and if you need any help you don't have to be shy you just have to be yourself. ”*

Year 7

*“ Picturesque - really quiet and peaceful. ”*

Year 8

*“ My favourite thing about weekends is that there is always something to do or somewhere to be. ”*

Year 9

*“ I like the environment... that it's really quiet and... the animals... and also the train station, which means that it's not far away from school to London. ”*

Year 10

*“ Boarding gives you a new experience. You learn people skills, how to organise yourself and take care of yourself. After Sixth Form you'll be living by yourself so these skills come in to play. ”*

Year 11

*“ I like how, when you get older, you get more choice of what you do at weekends with your free time. There's lots of activity options – there's always something you're going to want to do. ”*

Lower Sixth

*“ My parents gave me a voice and Woldingham taught me how to use it. ”*

Former Head Girl