Faculty with Dormitory Responsibilities Handbook
Introduction

Boarding School life at Maplebrook is designed to help students develop a sense of responsibility, self-sufficiency, and connectedness unique to boarding school experience. Students at Maplebrook enjoy living in a nurturing and safe environment. Faculty with Dormitory Responsibilities (FDRs) take on a parent-like role or “in loco parentis” giving each dorm a true family feeling. From helping with independent living skills, giving advice, to hosting movie nights in the common room, FDRs build strong relationships with the students.

The purpose of this handbook is to give direction and guidance to the faculty who have responsibilities in the dormitories. This should be used as a reference when interacting with the students outside of the classroom. As a boarding school, we have the unique opportunity to teach life skills to our students while being role models for them in a less structured environment. Being an FDR can be an enriching experience whereby we can teach on a whole new level.
Professionalism

Because what we are doing is so very important, we need to treat it as such. Just by “looking the part,” speaking clearly and with authority, and demonstrating expertise, an FDR has credibility and trust from the students and their parents. If we want those around us to treat us like professionals, we must demonstrate professionalism in what we do.

Communication: When meeting with parents in person, speaking with them on the phone or writing an e-mail, we must sound professional and use correct grammar and spelling. The same is true when communicating with the students and your colleagues. Be polite, be clear, refrain from colorful language or coming off as too friendly. For example, we are addressed by formalities (Miss, Mr. Ms., etc.) and as such, parents should be addressed in this manner as well. Please do not use only first names around the students or call parents by their first names.

Confidentiality: Sharing student information always needs to be done in a manner that preserves the dignity of the student and his/her family, and the integrity of the FDR/student relationship. Students' personal information should not be openly talked about. The conversation should not be shared with another students or other families. When information must be shared with other faculty/staff, please be aware of your surroundings and speak in a private place.

Boundaries: We have a responsibility as staff members, employed within a position of trust, to provide students with adequate levels of protection against harm and to safeguard their welfare at all times. It is absolutely appropriate to be friendly, but we are not friends with the students or their families. Personal information sharing with students and families should be with discretion.
Role of the FDR

As FDRs, part of our teaching responsibilities are outside of the classroom, but the method does not change. We are first and foremost role models for the students. It is important to understand that the dorm at certain times of the day is a type of classroom.

Responsibilities of FDRs include, but are not limited to:

- Supervise students during wake-up and morning hours. This includes attending breakfast with students the morning after overnight duty.
- Conduct a weekly dorm meeting.
- Assist in supervising the dormitory in the evenings after study hall, even when there is no overnight duty. This includes assisting with fire drills.
- Complete dormitory logs, progress reports and MILES reports in a timely fashion.
- Be the FDR responsible for the dorm during assigned overnights during the week. This includes checking the rooms and securing the dormitory after lights out at 10:00 PM.
- Cooperate with the appropriate supervisor in residential advisement of students and/or parents.

Private time: Working at a boarding school is demanding, but incredibly satisfying. Living and working in the dormitories does not allow for the same amount of time away as a public school. The administration works hard to ensure that you have sufficient time to rest, regroup and tend to your personal needs. When it’s your time off, we recommend you do not spend it in activities with the students; rather, develop a hobby, spend time away from campus or engage with friends. It is highly recommended that you use your downtime for you.
Daily Schedule

The first thing that needs to be established is a routine in the dorm that all the DRs agree to follow. It is advisable to post the schedule, routines, rules and expectations throughout the dorm. Visual reminders are good for both staff and students.

The morning routine should include a 7:00 AM wake up during the week and 8:00 AM on Saturdays. Students should be reminded to set alarms. FDRs should plan to begin their wake up rounds by 7:10 AM. Students should be showered, dressed properly and ready for breakfast by 7:45 AM and 8:45 AM on Saturdays. There will be time after breakfast to finish room care and daily chores before dismissal for school. Sundays have an adjusted schedule for a later wake up and brunch at 11:00 AM. Attendance should be taken for each transition.

The evening routine is a good time to bond with the students. After dorm chores and snack time, the students have relaxation time after the long day. Prior to 9:30 PM when students are required to be in their rooms, staff should collect electronics and use the opportunity to close out the day on a positive note. Lights out is 10:00 PM during the week. FDRs should do a room check after 10:00 PM to make sure students are not in each other's rooms and it allows for you to remind them of the routine. Finally, it shows the students that you are accessible and consistently monitoring them. Fridays and Saturdays allow for a lights out time of 11:30 PM.

Snack time is 8:15 - 8:45 PM. Snacks are kept in the locked closet so that staff can assist in monitoring choices, portion control, etc. Please do not leave snack closets open and unmonitored.

Sundays are important for completing dorm chores, laundry and assessing the progress of independent living skills taught during the week. For laundry, students will fill out the laundry slip and add it to their laundry bag.
Electronics Policy

We believe in productive communication between students and their families. While students have access to e-mail on a daily basis during the school day and study hall, we have established distinct nights when students can use their cell phones. Phone nights are Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday. Students will receive their phones after they have completed their Independent Living Skills (ILS) and have had it checked by staff.

Students have from 7:45 - 9:00 PM to use their phones. At 9:00, students, unless they have earned the proper RISE level (see RISE book), must turn in their phones to staff. They will be locked in an electronics closet along with other devices such as iPads and laptops.

Visitation & Rules

Dormitories are more than a place where students sleep at the end of a busy day. Students learn by living with peers from across the United States and around the world. Through daily interaction with peers, students make lifelong friends and learn important life skills in the process. Best of all, some of the most memorable, positive, and fun experiences happen within the dormitories.

Because socialization is an integral part of what we teach at Maplebrook, we encourage visiting within the dorms. Students should not enter another student's room without being invited to do so. Students should be mindful of their roommates and be respectful of the needs of others. Staff apartments are off limits to students. That is your private place and blurring the boundaries by allowing students to spend time in your residence is strongly discouraged.
Other dormitory rules:

- Room care and dormitory chores must be completed before students leave for the day.

- Quiet hours:
  
  Sunday - Thursday: 10:00 PM - 7:00 AM
  Friday & Saturday: 11:00 PM - 8:00 AM

- There is no borrowing of other student or staff property.

- There is no food, candy or drink other than water allowed in dorm bedrooms. Common areas are available for snack time.

- Music, movies, video games must be enjoyed at a reasonable volume. Staff may ask students to use headphones if necessary.

Reporting Procedures

In compliance with the school-wide effort to be more green, all reporting forms, such as dormitory communication logs and MILES reports are kept on the school's website: www.maplebrookschool.org.

FDRs are expected to record pertinent information on daily communication logs that will be submitted to other dormitory staff and administrators for review. The proper supervisors will follow up on any behavioral concerns and/or providing any additional training you may need to execute your job to the best of your ability.

Because these are official school records, the same protocols for confidentiality, professionalism and good writing are required.
A Final Word

**Emergencies:**

Fire and Stay-in-Place drills are conducted once a month in order for students and staff to practice where to go in the event of a dormitory fire. All FDRs are required to assist with emergencies if they are in the dormitories even if it is your time off. We have an obligation to ensure the safety and security of all who live in the dormitories.

**Support:**

Administrators are available to answer questions, provide training and advice as needed. Serving as an FDR does not necessitate that you know everything at all times. Please do not hesitate to ask questions, establish a private time to speak about concerns and celebrate the victories.

We work together at Maplebrook as a team. We strongly encourage positive reinforcement, even in the smallest instances. We hope you enjoy this unique aspect of your job. Being an FDR is incredibly rewarding and you never know how far your influence will reach.

Thank you for being part of the Maplebrook family!