

OVERSEAS STUDENTS POLICY

This policy is applicable to all College pupils, including those in EYFS

This Policy is available on the College website, or upon request from the School Administration Office.

Aims

- To improve the quality of the academic, pastoral, spiritual and social experience of international students at St Lawrence College;
- To reap the full benefits for the rest of the College community of having a strong international contingent at the College;
- To maximise the contribution which students can make to their own cultures when they return to them.

Context

In recent years the School has accepted growing numbers of international students who now form a very significant part of the school's student body. This policy aims to assess and address the specific needs of this group. The school needs to do this as a business in a highly competitive international market. There is also an educational and moral imperative to make every effort to ensure that the instruction and care of overseas students are of a very high quality, taking account of their specific needs.

General Overall Approach

The school seeks:

- To ensure that all international students feel welcomed and valued by the school;
- To ensure that they continue to feel supported throughout their stay at the school;
- To ensure that all international students receive comprehensive and continuing induction into the British way of life, and more specifically into the school's social, academic and pastoral systems;
- To provide appropriate inset so as to ensure that school staff are properly prepared to respond to the needs of international students;
- To ensure that home students appreciate their responsibilities for the welfare of student visitors from other cultures;
- To ensure that the whole school community gains the maximum benefit from the range of international students who come to the school;
- To show respect for the faiths and cultures of international students, without compromising the school's own spiritual foundations.

In order to achieve these goals, the school's overall emphasis is on integration rather than allowing groups to maintain separateness from the overall school community.

Specific Aspects:

Recruitment:

- The school should seek to take in students at a young age to facilitate greater integration;
- To maintain academic standards, the following are the expected minimum entry requirements for students in EAL: FCE level for entry to the Sixth form; PET level for entry to the 4th form. Pupils without recognised certificates will sit the College's own test;
- Those with weaker English will be advised to spend time on intensive language study before entering into the school;
- A preliminary term in the summer, with a parent organisation, could be organised to help those with weak English, perhaps including approved home stay accommodation. This can become part of the requirements for entry visa;
- In time, core documents relating to school recruitment should be translated professionally into the languages of major client markets.

New Students:

- Record Keeping. When students enter the school, records should be kept of their nationality, country of birth, country of residence (parental) and first language. This information is accessible to staff on iSAMS;
- Induction. Students are given adequate induction to give them the best chance of adapting successfully to life in Britain, to the U.K. educational system, and to life at the College.

College Organisation and Planning

Integration:

At the root of this is the need to give students opportunities to mix with those of other language groups, in the context of cooperative activities.

- The senior management should give priority to this at the planning stage (particularly of the school's physical and social structure, its timetable and calendar and the nature of activities done);
- The school aims to plan activities to utilise the gifts and backgrounds of international students, gaining maximum benefit from their varied cultures, beliefs, languages and experiences. School life is greatly enriched by this;
- Recreational facilities take into account the interests of international students: football, basketball, table tennis and badminton, for example are more popular with overseas students;
- The school aims to educate the British students to realise their part in the integration of international students into the school community; this is at least as much the responsibility of British students as of the international students themselves.

Other planning considerations:

- International students' needs – for example, that it is difficult for them to travel home for short periods – is kept in mind when planning the structure of the school year;
- Students are provided with adequate facilities to enable them to maintain good communication with their parents during term time;
- Occasional questionnaires are used to find out from international students about their school experience in areas such as sport, Exeats, EAL, chapel, friendship, houses, food and guardianship.

Boarding and pastoral considerations

- It is the school's aim that students from the same (non-English) language group should not be put in the same study and where possible there should be a mixture of nationalities in dormitories;
- 'Language manners' (e.g. not using own language when non-speakers are present) and 'British manners' (e.g. use of 'please' and 'thank you', difference between requests and demands, holding doors open for others, etc) should be taught to students. Sixth formers, in particular, should be asked to give a lead to those lower down the school.

English language considerations

- Although there may be short-term reasons for students from the same (non-English) language group sitting together in subject classes, in the long term this would be considered detrimental;
- During the school day (8.30 am to 5.00 pm), and particularly in the classroom (with the obvious exception of foreign language classes), English should be spoken by all students. This includes lunch times as they form part of the working day.

Other Academic and Curricular issues

- Academic subjects are continuously monitored by the Deputy Head to ensure that they are appropriate to the needs of our international market;
- Students need to be tutored in the concept of active learning, which is alien to the way in which many will have learnt before. They also need to be taught effective revision methods;
- Guidelines are given, by the EAL department, about correction of language in other subject work;
- As far as possible school sports reflect the interests and abilities of international students.

Staff Induction:

International awareness induction must form an appropriate and ongoing part of staff training. The aim is to improve the general knowledge of all staff about the cultural, religious and educational background of their main groups of students, specifically:

- The importance of international students and their specific needs; our responsibility towards international students;

- Their pastoral needs; particularly, symptoms of culture shock which they are likely to experience, and ways of addressing it;
- Language issues faced by them: differences in learning methods in other countries; strategies for oral communication, preparation of work sheets, etc; policy on correcting linguistic errors in other subjects;
- Their academic needs: specific learning difficulties faced by particular groups of international students; systems for monitoring of different groups; need for flexibility in setting of students (since initial testing of international students can be misleading);
- Spiritual issues which they might experience: a general knowledge of world faiths, and differences in their interpretation and observation between individuals. This will give understanding of students' perspectives on moral and spiritual issues.

Guardianship:

- Guardians are essential for international students, and will be provided by an outside agency. The school should be clear about its expectations of guardians, and establish good communication with them.

Responsibility for co-ordination and monitoring progress

The Head, with the help of the senior management team, is responsible for

- the overall implementation of this policy;
- overseeing the induction programme for new students which may be led by the ISC;
- arranging regular staff inset on issues relating to international students.

The Deputy Head is responsible for

- monitoring the school's treatment of international students in all aspects and reporting on such to the Head;
- with the agreement of the Head, bringing issues and concerns to the attention of the College community, both staff and students;
- providing other staff with the necessary support in issues relating to international students;
- pre-testing of potential students;
- keeping an appropriate balance of nationalities in the school;
- all matters relating to recruitment of new students;
- record-keeping;
- concerns and queries relating to guardianship.

Housemasters and house staff are responsible for

- the pastoral care of international students (in the first instance);
- induction of new students in houses;
- implementation of the above policies in the houses, particularly those relating to pastoral care.

All Teaching staff are responsible for

- implementation of the above policies in the classroom and around the school.

The EAL Department is responsible for:

- liaison with other departments, and advice and support, regarding teaching methods and the language needs of particular students;
- oversight of language progress and recording of results and profiles of EAL students;
- devising appropriate strategies to deal with EAL difficulties and special needs of language students.

Process for review and development

- The Deputy Head will meet with the Head to discuss international student matters on a regular basis;
- The Head will report back to the governing body at least once a year.

Out of class activities may include:

- The school should seek to celebrate the diversity of its community by including at least one day of celebration in any school year;
- Every effort should be made to ensure that overseas students are invited to a British home during the course of their time at school;
- An international quiz: house teams of different nationalities. Each has to answer questions on other countries as well as their own;
- Half-term or Exeat trips to other parts of the UK;

- Sports competitions involving different nationalities, eg. the World Cup football competition held in recent years; table tennis/badminton/tennis doubles with each pair having 2 different nationalities;
- Displays by students from a given region in front hall or library; or creation of an international artwork;
- An international film festival/food evening;
- Writing of a light-hearted guide for new international students compiled by existing students, including:
 - top 10 tips to get the most out of being in the UK;
 - 10 best things in Britain;
 - 10 worst things about Britain;
 - Views/quotes from different nationalities about coming here;
 - glossary of useful information;
- Presentations about 'my country' by seniors to Kirby/Junior School.

This policy will be reviewed in accordance with the Policy Review Schedule

REVISION HISTORY

Version No.	Revision Date	Summary of change	Approved by	Updated by
1.1	20/01/2020	Review and update of Job Titles.		ER