

BOARDING HANDBOOK

The principles of boarding will be applied equally to all children irrespective of differences in ethnic background, culture, language, religion, gender and physical ability.

The Daily Routine

A typical day at our boarding starts at 6:45 am. Students take a shower, tidy their bedroom and make their bed. Then they go down for breakfast.

From 8:00 to 11:30 most of them are at school busy with their academic studies. Those doing home-schooling, stay at the boarding house learning as well.

Mondays and Tuesdays kids usually have to go back to school after lunch, from 13:30 to 15:00 or to 16:00, depending on their age, while Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays school finishes at 11:30 most of the times, so they can dedicate to their music studies the rest of the day.

Lunch is at 11:45. After lunch all kids can enjoy a break until 13:30 (we let them use their electronic gadgets during this break), then, depending on the day of the week and age, some of them have to go back to school while others stay at the boarding and start with their homework, music lessons and practice time until 20:00.

Dinner is served at 20:00, after which the boarders have some free time (we let them again their gadgets until bed time) Time to go to bed is at 21:00 and all electronic gadgets have to be given to the Head of Boarding. The older ones can read a while in bed at night, until 22:00, when all the lights should be off.

On weekends, some boarders go back home.

For those who stay at the boarding house, weekends start at 9:00. They enjoy a more flexible schedule, leaving room to rest and do other activities outside and inside the residence. On weekends bed time is at 22:30.

Facilities

There are a number of facilities available to the boarders in the evenings and at weekends. These include:

- Common rooms
- kitchen
- Snack area
- Table Tennis Table
- Football Table
- Outdoor play facilities

We encourage students to play outside when the weather is suitable and also to use their free-time sensibly. We discourage too much television or use of electronic items.

Bedrooms

The Boarding Houses have rooms of different sizes all with their own characters. We allocate rooms at the start of the academic year and monitor the dynamics in the houses.

We try to mix nationalities in each room as much as possible to encourage the speaking of English. We also try to accommodate the wishes of the students regarding whom they share with, but it is not always possible to place them in a room with all their friends. As the year progresses, friendships develop and occasionally bedroom changes are made, however this is at the sole discretion of the Head of Boarding.

We supply pillows, duvets, sheets, and covers.

We like the children to decorate their own area of the dormitory with suitable posters, personal belongings, and for special occasions, for example, Christmas. This results in a warm and homely atmosphere that helps the boarders to thrive away from home. However, erotic, racist, controversial or vulgar posters are not acceptable.

Beds must be made and the room tidied every morning before breakfast; rooms should always be kept tidy. Rooms are for exclusive use of students, no adults, except staff members are allowed in the students floor and rooms.

Cleaning

The Boarding House is thoroughly cleaned and vacuumed constantly by cleaning staff. All children are expected to keep their own rooms and possessions tidy and to help staff with occasional chores.

Meal Times

All of our school meals provide a balanced and healthy diet for the children.

We encourage children not to be "picky" about their food but if your child has a severe dislike or an allergy to a particular food, please let us know in writing and we will provide an alternative meal.

We provide vegetarians with a good range of non-meat dishes and boarders with religious restrictions are also provided with an alternative meal.

Mealtimes are an occasion when students come together as a community and we like to take advantage of this. We promote good manners at the table and embrace cultural differences, offering themed nights and specialty dishes.

We discourage the eating of too much tuck and boarders are not allowed sweets or food in their bedrooms for health and hygiene reasons.

Personal Belongings

Students may like to bring in their own toys, electrical or other personal belongings. All items must be clearly named.

The School takes no responsibility for the loss or damage of personal items.

Electronics

Mobile phones, laptops and other electronic items may be brought to the boarding house. Please ensure that the Boarding Team is aware of how many items your child has in their possession and that these are all clearly named.

We have a strict electronics policy which only allows children to access their items at specific times of the day, in the evening and at weekends. This is to encourage other forms of activity and socialising within the Boarding House.

All electronic items will be collected in before bedtime and will be safely stored and charged until the following day.

Pocket Money

We are keen to teach the children the value of money and therefore have strict guidelines on the amount of money distributed during the term. There is no need for children to arrive at boarding house with extra money, and credit/debit cards are strictly forbidden.

The purchase of essential items, such as toiletries and phone top-ups can be organised through the Head of Boarding. All pocket money and extras will be recharged to the student's account. We cannot accept responsibility for the loss of any cash that is not handed in.

Insurance Swiss

Law states that all students who are registered as residents of Switzerland must have health and accident insurance coverage that is valid in Switzerland. Students registered for a full school year must therefore select one of the insurance options offered by the school or show proof that they have valid health and accident insurance that meets the Swiss LAMal standards and covers them for Switzerland.

Our health and accident policy covers 90% of doctors' fees and medicine as an outpatient, and 100% of treatment and expenses in a hospital, either in a semi-private or private room depending on the programme option chosen. This insurance is valid during the school year, and although it can be extended for the whole year, it is generally only valid for medical costs, as they exist in Switzerland.

Alcohol & Cigarettes

The possession or consumption of alcoholic drinks is not permitted and constitutes a serious breach of boarding rules. Smoking is not permitted under any circumstances whether at boarding or on activities and excursions.

Drugs

Any student found to be in possession of any illegal substance or to have taken any banned drug will be immediately suspended and/or expelled. The School Director will contact parents immediately should a student be found to have consumed alcohol or be in possession of cigarettes or drugs.

Abuse of this rule may lead to either temporary or permanent exclusion from Boarding.

Flammable Items

As the boarding house is a wooden chalet, flammable items are strictly forbidden. The following items are therefore NOT permitted: candles, lighters, matches, fireworks, cigarettes or heaters. The breaking of this rule may lead to either temporary or permanent exclusion from school.

Academic Matters

The Boarding Team closely monitors the academic progress of all of our boarders and communicates daily with Academic Staff. We encourage the children to work hard and have a number of compulsory study sessions within our boarding program.

If you have any concerns regarding academic matters please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Boarding Team or Academic Staff for assistance. All of the staff are also available for private meetings should you wish to discuss your child's progress in person.

Accidents

All accidents and injuries in school-time, whether in the buildings, sports field or during extra-curricular activities, must be reported to the Boarding Team. Parents will be informed by telephone if any significant medical care is required.

Health and Medication

The Boarding Team looks after the boarders' health. The administration of medication by Boarding Staffs must be agreed on an individual basis in writing. If your child must take medication the Head of Boarding MUST be informed and must hold the medication, with clear written instructions, on behalf of the child. Boarding Staff will assess whether it is appropriate for children to self-medicate, (e.g. inhalers).

Medication will only be accepted if it is still in its original packaging and where appropriate a prescription is provided. Children must NEVER bring medication into the boarding house that the Head of Boarding is not aware of in advance.

Hearing, dental and eye checks are the responsibility of parents and should be arranged during holiday time. If a boarder develops a problem during the term then we will refer the matter to the parents or guardian and arrange for an appropriate test to be carried out by a qualified specialist or GP. All appointments will be recorded and the School will deal with any insurance formalities. All related costs are the responsibility of the parent.

Hygiene

Your child's personal hygiene is extremely important. The Boarding Team check that the boarders look after themselves, ensuring that their teeth are cleaned at least twice a day and that they shower daily. Our facilities include individual shower/bath rooms and privacy is provided for all boarders during wash times.

This should be respected by fellow students. Please inform us immediately if your child has been in contact with any infectious diseases during periods away from school. We carry out regular checks for head lice and treat any cases with a special lice shampoo.

Appearance

We encourage students to take pride in their appearance by ensuring that they comb their hair each morning, tuck in shirts and that their shoes are clean. We insist that all boarders dress in accordance with the Boarding dress code.

Clothing

The School expects a neat and tidy appearance from all students at all times. Coloured nail varnish is not permitted during the school day and jewellery should be kept to a minimum of one pair of stud earrings and a simple watch. Children with long hair should have it tied back for health and safety reasons.

Any essential items which are not brought to the Boarding at the beginning of the term will be purchased by the Boarding Team and the cost added to your account. ALL items of clothing that come into the Boarding House must be clearly named. The Boarding Staff will assist your children in naming any new items.

Laundry

The Boarding Team is responsible for all the laundry in the Boarding Houses. Please be aware that all clothing needs to be machine-washable. Laundry is collected weekly for each child in baskets provided and is returned the following day. A hand washing and dry cleaning service is NOT provided by the Boarding Team.

Sanctions

We expect the highest standards of behaviour from our boarders at all times. Manners, courtesy and respect for others are essential to ensure the smooth running of the Boarding House and the happiness of all our boarders. We insist on adherence to the Boarding rules including general behaviour and bad language.

Children are monitored on a variety of topics including manners, attitude, organisation and social skills.

Unacceptable behaviour will be punished through a variety of sanctions according to the severity of the offence and the behavioural history of the student concerned. The first level is a quiet word from a member of the Boarding Staff and this is usually effective. If there is a continuation of unacceptable behaviour, various levels of punishment include, but are not exhaustive to, going to bed early, removal of privileges, removal of computers, exclusion from weekend activities, not being allowed out from school for 3, 5 or 7 days. For serious or continued breaches of behaviour and other incidents, pupils may have a formal meeting with the Head of Boarding and/or the School Director who will decide upon a course of action that may ultimately include temporary or permanent exclusion.

In cases such as this, parents will be informed by e-mail or by formal letter. We also look to encourage good behaviour and successes. Special achievements or positive efforts will be rewarded by the Boarding Staff. Helpfulness, kindness and good behaviour will always be acknowledged!

Homesickness

Inevitably, there will be times when a boarder will miss their home and parents. This is completely normal and our Boarding Team is extremely experienced in dealing with such situations. However, if you are worried please contact a member of the Boarding Staff to discuss the best way to manage the situation. We run a friendly, family-orientated Boarding House and ensure that each and every boarder's needs are met.

Security

Although Château d'Oex is a particularly safe place, we take steps to ensure the security of your child, since it is of paramount importance to us.

We inform students never to approach someone that they do not recognise and to inform a member of staff immediately. We hold fire drills and briefings at least once a term.

Pupil Communication

The Boarding House has a telephone which is available for children to take incoming calls. These phones can also be used to contact Boarding Staff. Boarders have the opportunity to keep in contact with their parents via their mobile, Skype or email, although this must be done within the specific timings allocated for use of electrical items.

Any problems will be reported to parents immediately so 'no news is good news'. However, if you are concerned please contact a member of the Boarding Team and we will be happy to reassure you. We ask that you do not try to call your child after 20h30 as it disturbs their bedtime routine and the rest of the House. For any urgent matters after this time please contact a member of the Boarding Staff.