



The Abbey College
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Abbey College

Statement of Boarding Principles

The Abbey College is a boarding school and combines education with residence. It does so for two reasons:

- a. The management believe in the intrinsic value of a boarding school education, where students can mix with each other seven days a week, in the international community within the College, and that this mixing of students and staff produces a cultural, social and educational enrichment.
- b. The majority of our students come from overseas, and their parents require a British-style education for their children. This also implies that they need safe and secure accommodation during the period of their stay and it is our duty to ensure that this accommodation is offered.

One of the main advantages of life in a boarding community is that it enables a young person to develop an appreciation of the rights and beliefs of others. Students are not grouped according to national and religious affiliations, but rather the intention is to produce a genuinely international and multi-cultural mix. The role of the residential staff is not only one of supervision, but also one of instruction, leading by example, and care is taken in selecting staff who must at all times remember that they are dealing with impressionable young people, and take care to set a positive example.

At the Abbey College, students can join at any time during a course, and therefore the role of residential staff in inducting new boarders is critical. This is done in conjunction with welfare staff, who go through the rules and regulations, mealtimes, class-times etc as soon as a student has arrived - after a period of sleep if necessary! The academic induction is done by a member of the academic staff, in conjunction with the Principal and this will usually include a period of assessment of language and/or academic capability and the production of an appropriate timetable. Heads of Department and teachers are consulted where appropriate before a timetable is finalised.

The College has no fixed policy on the balance between the sexes, nationality, religious or ethnic origins. However, in a school which concentrates a large part of its time on teaching English language, there would be obvious disadvantages if too many speakers of any one language were enrolled, and thus a constant eye is kept on enrolments to ensure that there are never too many non-native speakers of English from any one country in the school - it is considered that somewhere between twenty and twenty five per cent of the total population would be an acceptable maximum.

One of the benefits of living in a multi-cultural community comes from the cross-fertilisation, which can result, and it is the College's policy to foster this. However, the College must always have regard to the parents' wishes at the same time as teaching students to understand and respect the culture and religion of others, students must be encouraged to develop their own particular culture, language and religion by positive means. Given the limited resources in any school, this means that we must take advantage of religious and ethnic communities within the neighbourhood, and students who wish instruction in their own religion are helped by, inviting to the College, representatives of suitable cultural groups, and/or by taking the student to visit community groups and religious centres as far away as Birmingham or London. Although The College itself is non-denominational students are positively encouraged to practice and celebrate their cultural and religious traditions and ceremonies such as Ramadan or Chinese New Year.