



# ACS | COBHAM

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

*A passion for achievement*

London, England

Boarders Handbook  
2009 - 2010

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# 1. Introductory Information

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Dear ACS Boarding Students,

I should like to welcome you to your new home at ACS Cobham International School. There are many unique and wonderful opportunities for you to experience as a boarding student in our international setting. Perhaps of most significance is the chance you will have to meet students from different cultures and parts of the world who, like you, will gain so much from the special friendships with other students and staff members. The boarding students and staff make up a very close and supportive family. I am sure that you will experience all the benefits and pleasures of being a part of this special community.

One of our most important aims is to create an environment which will provide you with a positive, productive experience at our school. The Administrators, Faculty and Houseparents are all dedicated to fulfilling this aim. We want to ensure that your academic experience is as successful and meaningful for you as possible. We also want to provide you with enjoyable social activities. Our staff hopes to develop a relationship with you based on trust and understanding, as your emotional needs are very important to us.

The Handbook for Boarders has been prepared to give you and your parents information about boarding at ACS. We have tried to include all relevant and important topics in an effort to prepare you for living with us. I am sure that there are questions which you may have. Our Houseparents will be happy to discuss these with you.

The High School and Middle School also publish handbooks for the students and families in their respective divisions. Please read through the handbook for your particular division with great care. A great deal of very important information regarding the school programme, our regulations and our expectations for students is contained in this handbook. All staff members throughout the school are prepared to assist you in understanding this information.

Each student who is part of our family of boarding students contributes to the spirit and success of the whole community. We rely on your willingness to show concern for all others within our special community and within the school at large to help in maintaining a positive, enjoyable, academically stimulating environment for everyone.

Again, may I welcome you to your new home,

Sincerely,



TOM LEHMAN

HEAD OF SCHOOL

## History of the School

ACS Cobham International School, which opened its doors in 1975 with an enrolment of 175, now has over 1300 students between the ages of 2 and 18 in its three separate divisions. Even though the majority of students are American, over 50 different nationalities are represented.

The school is located on a beautiful 128 acre estate. The history of this interesting property goes back nearly 800 years to 1206 when a family named "Heiwude" held the land. "Heiwude," or "Heywood" as it is known today, means a "preserved or enclosed wood". Records show that by the 14th Century the estate was owned by William de Horwode. His name was probably a derivation from the original "Heiwude."

The main house, Heywood Manor, is a fine example of Palladian-Georgian architecture and dates from 1804. In 1820, the house and estate were sold to Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg who later became King Leopold of the Belgians. There were many distinguished owners of the Heywood Estate throughout the next 150 years.

ACS has continued to respect the original beauty, character, and history of the extensive property throughout its years of ownership. Heywood Manor, centrepiece of the school campus, is complemented by an Early Childhood village and three additional buildings: the Middle School (1990), the High School (1992), and the Lower School (1995). Other facilities include a modern, well-equipped sports centre with swimming pool, an Olympic-standard running track, tennis courts, fields for soccer, rugby, hockey and baseball, and a golf course. A cafeteria-auditorium complex and our purpose-built boarding division complete the excellent range of school facilities at ACS Cobham.

## Boarding Division Facilities

The ACS Boarding division was established in 1988 to provide greater flexibility for mobile families facing new overseas assignments and to cater for families who want a boarding experience for their children. This division, for students in grades 7 – 12, combines excellent modern accommodation with a family-style atmosphere. A total of 110 students (66 boys and 44 girls) can be accommodated in the two separate wings which are connected by a spacious entrance reception area. Both seven-day and five-day boarding programmes are available.

All study bedrooms are designed to be occupied by two students, and each room has a private bathroom. Upstairs rooms incorporate split-level bedroom areas allowing students in these rooms their own private area. Furnishing for all rooms is to a very high standard and includes wall-to-wall carpeting, beds, built-in wardrobes (closets), desks, lamps, bookcases, bedside units, and dressing tables.

Each wing has comfortable lounges with colour televisions and DVD players, laundry facilities, and kitchenettes where snacks can be prepared. Meals are provided in the school's modern dining hall next to the Dormitory block.

Boarders may use other school facilities after classes finish in the afternoon, in the evenings, and on weekends. These include the Sports centre with swimming pool, tennis courts, running track, and golf course.

## ACS International Schools Statement of Philosophy: Dormitory Addenda

Our programme encourages continuous learning. It requires students to develop the fundamental skills necessary for independent learning and successful problem solving. Teachers provide learning experiences which are appropriate to a student's age, learning readiness, and stage of development. We take a developmental student-centred approach to instruction which capitalises on each student's strengths and minimises each student's weaknesses.

An essential function of our school is to prepare the student for the next step in formal education. We maintain a thorough awareness of education programmes throughout the world so that our students and families have the maximum opportunity to exercise choice.

The following aims (with Dormitory addenda in bold print) will contribute to the development of an optimal learning environment. The school community will:

1. Prepare students to be independent learners.  
**Dormitory students are expected to work independently during study hall periods and to manage their own time, money, room clean-up, and laundering.**
2. Emphasise creative thinking, the acquisition of critical thinking skills, and problem-solving experiences.  
**In a community such as the dorm, many opportunities arise for the practice of conflict resolution skills. Students are also encouraged to suggest solutions to collective problems and participate in decision-making processes involving their lives in the dorm when appropriate.**
3. Develop a proactive responsibility for and a sensitive awareness concerning our environment.  
**Boarders are expected to take responsibility for the care of their "home away from home." The dormitory participates in school recycling programmes and encourages boarders to use materials and energy wisely.**
4. Encourage and nurture an abiding sense of personal integrity.  
**Dormitory students are expected to honour the truth in their dealings with others and with themselves.**
5. Develop an understanding of different philosophies and cultures, and instill respect for people, their work, their beliefs, and their experiences.  
**Dormitory students are expected to show respect for other people and their beliefs even if they do not understand or agree with them. As a result of living and working together, dormitory residents have a unique opportunity to grow into tolerant, well-rounded individuals.**
6. Encourage resolution of problems within a framework of openness and fairness, with due consideration and respect for differing views.  
**Dormitory students are encouraged to resolve personal and community problems with civility, fairness, and honesty.**

7. Facilitate participation in the arts, developing an understanding and appreciation of the aesthetic aspects of life.

**Dormitory students develop an understanding, appreciation, and enjoyment of the arts through an on-going schedule of evening and weekend outings in and around the culturally-rich London area.**

8. Facilitate participation in organised sports programmes, encouraging a lifelong enjoyment of physical activity.

**Dormitory students are encouraged to maintain a full physical activity schedule, often including participation in school sports. Students are given the opportunity to learn the skills needed to play sports which they can use all their lives.**

9. Encourage self-expression as well as a sensitive and considerate response to the expression of others.

**Dormitory students participate in dorm activities such as Student Council, International Nights, and talent shows which broaden their perspectives, increase their confidence, and give them practice in appreciating the efforts of others.**

10. Foster respect for property, both personal and communal.

**Dormitory students are expected to treat both dormitory and the personal property of others as they would wish their own to be treated.**

11. Provide appropriate opportunities for social and emotional growth e.g. Outward Bound and Leadership challenge.

**The give and take of dormitory community life and the wide variety of school activities both during and after school hours provide many opportunities for social and emotional growth.**

12. Promote the values and teach the principles associated with healthy living e.g. Habitat for Humanity.

**Dormitory students participate in a variety of leisure activities which teach them to be aware of nutrition, the value of exercise, the need for rest and stress management, and the dangers of smoking and substance abuse. Information and counselling regarding health matters and hygiene is always available.**

13. Fulfil our role as a responsible, contributing member of our local community.

**Dormitory students learn that with the privileges come responsibility for its welfare, such as keeping tidy, offering help when it is needed, and participating willingly in its activities. Students extend this awareness by involvement in community activities, such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award, charity sponsorships, baby sitting, and community service.**

14. Will provide opportunity to fulfil our roles as a responsible, contributing member of our international community.

**Dormitory students have an opportunity to participate in international activities, such as, World Challenge, ORBIS Programme and Model United Nations.**

## **ACS Cobham International School Dormitory Philosophy**

Unity with Diversity - A Home Away from Home

In our diverse and shrinking world society, the ACS Dormitory strives to provide a pleasant, secure home for students from a variety of cultures who must live apart from their families. The Dormitory aims to make students aware that they are important, thus encouraging their development as mature and responsible citizens of a global community.

The Dormitory promotes and exemplifies the general philosophy and aims of ACS through its study, activity, and leisure programme. In so doing, the Dormitory operates within the Mission Statement of ACS International Schools.

The Dormitory has a unique residential status and must fulfil the role of "in loco parentis". In conjunction and co-operation with parents, the Dormitory and its staff exist to meet the needs of the whole student (academic, physical, personal, and emotional) in order to support growth and maturity. The Dormitory strives to meet the needs of the students by pursuing the following specific goals:

The Dormitory provides a programme and an environment which

1. Encourages students to understand and appreciate that 'Our true nationality is mankind' - H.G. Wells.
2. Encourages students to observe the Dormitory's motto: 'Remember who you are, where you come from and don't let yourself down'.
3. Encourages students to accept the personal responsibility that comes with personal freedom.
4. Accentuates the best in each student and maintains high expectations to help them realise their full worth and potential.
5. Communicates with parents in order to encourage their support and involvement.
6. Maintains and encourages a qualified support staff prepared to meet the needs of the students.

## 2. Dormitory Requirements

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### Before Arrival Requirements

Although the Dormitory staff act “in loco parentis,” the expectations and permission of parents need to be known when decisions about health, travel, and visiting off campus are made. For this reason, the Dormitory requires the following information (2 weeks before arrival):

- Student Data Form (pink) is especially important if emergency contacts are required.
- Permission Form (blue) gives the Dormitory staff direction on parental wishes regarding travel and visits off campus.
- Passport/Visa Information Form (green) outlines parental/guardian responsibilities regarding all matters involving the legal residence of non-UK and EU boarders.
- A photocopy of relevant pages of the passport.
- Designation of Guardian Form (gold). Parents who live outside the United Kingdom must designate a guardian in the UK before their children can be admitted as residents in the dormitory (see below for further information).
- Travel Arrangements Form (yellow) gives an indication of who is arriving when and which meals need to be ordered.
- Dormitory Health Forms (white) (envelope) containing Health Forms and Medical Permission to be completed by the parent or guardian and doctor. Please note that students will not be permitted to enrol into the Dormitory without a completed health form which has been approved by the school doctor.

### Guardian Designation

Parents who live outside the United Kingdom must designate a guardian in the UK before their children can be admitted as residents in the dormitory. A guardian should be able to provide the following:

1. accommodation during periods in which the dormitory is closed (e. g., school recesses, and the periods prior to Orientation and after the school closes in June);
2. accommodation in cases of suspension;
3. accommodation for periods of extended convalescence after hospitalisation;
4. attendance at teacher/parent interviews in place of parents (if so desired); and
5. attention to matters involving passports, visas, and police registration if they have not been handled by the immediate family.

Guardians, whether, family members or friends of the family must be over 25 years of age. However, parents may wish to avail themselves of the services of an agency. The Admissions office can provide parents with the names of several such agencies.

In the absence of the availability of suitable guardianship arrangements, students may have to return home in the event of the above listed situations.

### Arrival Procedure

Boarding students coming from abroad should plan to arrive at ACS several days before the first day of school in order to prepare for the academic year. Families will be informed well in

advance concerning the opening of the Dormitory. A list of recommended local hotels for families needing accommodation is included in the final section of this handbook.

The school's security guard will greet families and give directions for parking and unloading luggage. Houseparents will welcome students and their families and show them around the boarding facilities. The following items must be handed to the Houseparents immediately upon arrival:

- Personal allowance (see page 14 for recommended amount)
- Medicines must be handed to the nurse
- Passport and visa, both valid for the academic year
- Security deposit of £100.00 per student
- A dormitory student subscription of £25
- A Senior class subscription of £25 (Seniors only).

## **Deposit**

It is required that all students deposit £100.00 as a contingency fund. If not required (e. g., to cover major breakage) this deposit will be refunded when the student leaves the school. If part or all of the amount has to be used, the deposit must be "topped up" to £100.00 by the parent or guardian. On leaving the school, the parent must apply to the Head of Boarding for a refund of the deposit in writing.

A dormitory student subscription of £25 is levied annually and a senior class subscription of £25 is also levied for seniors only.

## **Vacation Travel Programme**

The dormitory is closed during all holiday periods. During the one week mid-winter recess, a school trip is arranged for those students who wish to participate. Boarders and day students are welcome to take part in these planned trips which are offered at reasonable rates. Details of destinations will be sent to all boarders before the beginning of each school year. Students who do not wish to go on the school trip must return home or make alternative arrangements, and the Dormitory must have this in writing from parents early in the year.

During the October, Christmas and Easter vacations all boarders must travel home for the duration of the holiday period or make other arrangements. Flight plans should be organised well in advance. Vacations begin and end on specific dates and times and students should respect these dates when planning to travel to and from school. If unavoidable circumstances arise, the school must be informed as soon as possible.

The school is not responsible for obtaining travel tickets, passports, or visas (including re-entry visas to the United Kingdom). Parents should, therefore, make sure that these are in order. All such documents will be held by the school. Houseparents will help to arrange transport to and from the airport for boarders at the beginning and end of school holidays. They should be given as much notice as possible concerning flight details.

## Visa Requirements

Visa-related information is a family responsibility. Students are advised to check well in advance concerning their particular visa requirements. Once the student has been accepted to enter the school, the Admissions department will, on request, supply a letter confirming the student's status and account situation. This letter should be kept with the student's passport when entering the United Kingdom. In many cases, this is all that is necessary, but it is extremely important to check with the Embassy as requirements vary depending upon the country of residence. Unless students are in the country on their parents work permit, they must have a student visa. Contact webpage for relevant forms, [www.ukvisas.gov.uk](http://www.ukvisas.gov.uk).

Those students who are not EU members will be required to produce a letter from the school which will include our registration number. This letter may be requested from the Admissions Department. For your information our registration number is: HVHT8APP4. We will also have to produce a certificate, for which there will be a nominal cost. The certificate number will be notified to you, either by letter from Admissions or separately. **This process may take up to 3 months so it is advisable to start the application process immediately.**

When a student turns 16 years old, it is likely that his or her passport will be stamped with a directive to register at once with the Police. Watch for this and act on it immediately. If parents are unavailable to do this, notify the Dormitory Office.

Boarders should also check well in advance concerning personal visa requirements for any school trips abroad during the holidays. Sometimes it may be necessary to apply for a visa issued by a particular Embassy in London. Information concerning school holiday trip destinations will be mailed to boarders during the summer.

# 3. Boarding School Life

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## Daily Schedule for Boarders

Wake-up		7:30
Breakfast		7:35 – 8:15
School		8:30 – 3:10
Tea		3:10 – 4:00
Extra curricular activities		3:30 – 5:30
Dinner		6:00 – 6:30
Evening snack		9:00 – 9:30
In house arrangements for activities and academic study at this time. Students have a minimum two hour study hall during the day.		
Lights out (weekdays)	Grades 7 - 8	9:30 – 10:00
	Grade 9	10:00 – 10:30
	Grade 10	10:15 – 10:45
	Grades 11 - 12	10:30 – 11:00

## Care of Bedrooms

Cleaning staff are employed to look after both wings of the Dormitory facilities, but students are expected to make their own beds and to keep their rooms tidy at all times. Clothing should be put away and books and materials neatly stored.

Bulletin boards are provided in each bedroom for photographs and posters. Fire drills and Emergency procedures are published in each room and must not be tampered with.

## Clothing

### daily

- pyjamas/night-gown x 3
- dressing gown/bathrobe
- slippers
- underwear x 7
- socks, tights
- shoes - school, formal, casual
- shoe cleaning kit
- trousers/slacks x 3
- shirts/blouses x 4
- dresses and skirts x 3
- sweatshirts/sweaters x 3
- anorak/parka/hooded rain jacket
- additional casual clothes for weekends and evenings
- formal clothes for proms and parties
- suit/smart dress for representing the school.

### physical education

- Clothing for PE can be purchased from PE Department upon arrival
- Swimsuit and towel.

### **miscellaneous**

clothes for particular interest – e.g. ballet clothes and shoes

sponge bag/wash bag to include:

toothpaste, toothbrush, soap, shampoo, cosmetics, hairbrush

spare set of glasses (and replacement prescription)

trunk (for storage)

coffee/tea mug

walking boots for outdoor pursuits.

## **Complaints Procedure for Parents and Legal Guardians**

At ACS we recognise the importance of regular interaction between faculty and parents so that student learning and development can be supported consistently. In the circumstance that parents have a complaint, the school will treat it in accordance with its procedure.

### **1. Informal Resolution**

- a) It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.
- b) If parents have a complaint or concern they should, in the first instance, contact their son's/daughter's teacher. In most cases, the matter will be resolved. If the teacher/parent cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to contact the Divisional Principal.
- c) Any complaint made directly to the Divisional Principal will normally be referred to the relevant teacher unless the Divisional Principal deems it appropriate to deal with the matter personally.
- d) Teachers and Divisional Principals will keep anecdotal records of concerns and complaints on the date when they were received and reviewed. The principal/teacher will document the outcome in a letter to the parent/guardian.

Most complaints will be resolved informally. In the case(s) when this does not happen, parents will be advised that they may follow a formal procedure.

### **2. Formal Resolution**

- a) If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Head of School. The Head of School will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- b) In most cases the Head of School will speak to the parents concerned, normally within 3 days of receiving the complaint, and will discuss the matter. If possible a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- c) The Head of School may need to carry out further investigations.
- d) The Head of School will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

- e) Once the Head of School is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of This decision in writing. The Head of School will also give reasons for the decision.
- f) If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to address the issue to the Superintendent who will review the situation using the same procedure as the Head of School. Alternatively the parents may request a formal Panel Hearing (Stage 3).

### **3. Panel Hearing**

- a) If parents seek to involve Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution) they will be referred to the Superintendent who has been appointed by the Board to call hearings of the Complaints Panel.
- b) The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration. The Panel will consist of three persons, a Board member, the Superintendent and another person independent of the management and running of the school. The panel members will be appointed by the Chairman.
- c) If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than 2 days prior to the hearing.
- d) The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.
- e) If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately, without the need for further investigation.
- f) Where the investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out. After due consideration of all the facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations which it shall complete within 5 days of the hearing. The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The decision of the Panel will be final. The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing to the parents, the Head of School, the Chairman and where relevant, the person complained of.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except in so far as is required of the school by paragraph 6(2)(j) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2003, where disclosure is required in the course of the school's inspection or where any other legal obligation prevails.

### **Computer Network**

We have a computer room (with three machines) and all the study/bedrooms are connected via a wireless network. Should you have a computer, all you will need is wireless compatibility. Most computers come with Internet software and on arrival the students will be issued with the necessary addresses to be connected to the World Wide Web. The network will close down each night. The use of computers is subject to the School Code of Conduct.

## **Discipline**

The school has an obligation to its parents and students to see that an atmosphere conducive to learning is maintained at all times. ACS, therefore, reserves the right to remove, at its discretion, without refund of fees, any student whose conduct disrupts the academic programme or exerts a negative influence on other students.

ACS is concerned about student conduct off campus. Most of us are guests in the United Kingdom, and we need to be aware of our special responsibilities in that regard.

If our students behave poorly in a public place, they bring disrepute on themselves, their school, and the larger expatriate community. Consequently, we shall certainly consider disciplinary action whenever ACS students behave in ways that may damage the reputation of the school and, by extension, the larger community.

## **Dormitory Rules**

ACS expects all boarding students to have a general respect for and a sensitivity to the rights, comfort and well-being of other residents, including staff. Proper language, reasonable noise levels and careful movement about the building promote a pleasant atmosphere. When co-operative spirit and understanding prevail among students and faculty residents, dormitory life becomes a centre of academic and social growth and the source of meaningful and lasting friendships.

Boarders may not go into another boarder's bedroom unless they are specifically invited. Girls and boys do not go into each other's wings but may meet in the main lounge area. Day students may not visit boarders' bedrooms at any time, but may, with permission, be entertained in the common rooms. Friends and relatives are normally entertained in the main lounge.

Boarders may not return to the boarding division during the school day except with permission from the Houseparents and the Divisional Principal. Students should have all the books and school supplies they require for the school day when they leave the Dormitory at 8.30 a.m. to attend homeroom. They will be provided with lockers for their day time use.

## **Dress Code**

The personal appearance of ACS students should reflect a respect for their school and the international community. Appropriate dress is neat, clean, and in good repair. Outfits that do not meet the general expectations of appropriate dress for school will not be permitted. Hairstyles are expected to be similarly appropriate. Male students must be clean shaven.

## **Electrical Appliances**

Appliances brought in from overseas must be adaptable to the local current of 220 - 240 volts and be fitted with a square three-pin plug compatible with U.K. sockets.

The use of audio equipment, hair dryers, shavers, and computers is permitted in the bedrooms if properly fitted for 220 - 240 volts. It is worth checking with an electrician about the feasibility

of adapting particular overseas appliances before bringing them in to the country. NO cooking appliances, refrigerators, televisions or large flat screen displays over 23in. are allowed in bedrooms. Small mini-coolers are permissible. Well equipped kitchenettes and a lounge and three common rooms with televisions and DVD players are provided.

### **Extracurricular Activities**

Students are encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities offered by the school (sport, drama, choir etc.) otherwise, the dormitory will arrange after school activities for boarders to follow. Any boarder who drops out of a school sponsored team or activity must notify the Houseparents so that he or she may participate in the dormitory after school activities programme.

### **Faxes**

Dormitory residents have access to a fax machine for both sending and receiving messages. The Dormitory fax number is (01932) 869 787 (within the UK) and 44 1932 869 787 (outside the UK). Please do not send faxes intended for your students to any other school fax number.

### **Health Care**

The health of boarders is looked after by a trained registered nurse, and the school doctor is on call at all times. All boarders (both 7 day and 5 day) are registered with the School doctor and use the British National Health Service. Some parents may wish to supplement the National Health Service with their own private medical insurance.

The Health Room is open during the week, and the nurse makes referrals to other qualified personnel and facilities when necessary. She is the person to contact for medical appointments, and she must be told of any specific medical or physical limitation.

Students should only bring prescribed medication to school. "Prescribed medication" refers to that which has been dispensed by a pharmacist at the request of a doctor and should be accompanied by explicit instructions as to length of treatment and dosage required in labelled, named containers. Please give the generic name of drugs in English, not the trade name.

All medication **MUST** be handed into the nurse

Medical, dental and eye check-ups should always be carried out during the school holidays.

### **Laundry Facilities**

ACS provides all necessary linen - including sheets, pillowcases, bedspreads, duvets and towels - which is laundered regularly. The Dormitory also provides two laundry rooms containing washing machines, dryers and laundry detergent for students' use. Young students will be given help with their laundry. All clothing should be clearly marked. Boarders will do their washing on a rota basis.

### **Meals**

Meals are provided in the school's modern dining hall. Boarders and day students lunch together. Boarders may invite their relatives and day student friends to join them for an evening or weekend meal, subject to the permission of the Houseparents.

Students may not take food from the dining hall nor may they take any special food to the table. Snacks will be provided at tea time and after the study period each evening.

Boarders should be appropriately dressed for dinner in the evenings and good manners must always be observed. Formal dinners will be held periodically. Attendance at all meals is compulsory.

### **Permission to Leave Campus**

All boarding students receive a Permission Form which must be completed and signed by their parents or guardians. This must be returned on or before the first day of school or boarders will not be allowed to leave the school grounds. On the Permission Form parents indicate the freedom or restrictions they wish to be applied to free time, and these will be strictly followed. Seven-day boarders may leave school on the weekend for an overnight stay provided they have completed a Weekend Plan form which has been approved by the Houseparents.

Five-day boarders are expected to leave school after their classes and extra curricular activities have ended on Friday and return on Sunday after the evening meal but before 9.30 p.m. Five-day boarders have the option to remain on campus for five weekends per semester without additional charge. They may also request permission to remain at school for additional weekends and will be charged accordingly. Five-day boarders returning between 7.00 p.m. and 9.00 p.m. will be required to attend study hall.

Provided that it does not conflict with any school commitment, boarders may leave campus in groups during weekday afternoons with permission from Houseparents. Boarders are actively discouraged from travelling in a car driven by a fellow student.

### **Personal Allowance**

The personal allowance for boarders should be determined by the parents. Houseparents, however, suggest £30.00 per week (£720.00 per semester) as an appropriate amount based on student needs and the economy of the country. The allowance for the semester should be deposited with Houseparents who will keep charge of student accounts and distribute the money weekly. The school is not responsible for the loss of money or other valuables held by students. Cheques should always be made payable to ACS and signed receipts will be issued with each withdrawal made by boarders. The money will be converted into pounds sterling at the current bank rate.

Non-UK cheques have a charge levied on them by the bank - please allow for bank charges.

Before arriving at ACS, boarders should discuss with their parents exactly what the weekly allowance is meant to cover. Careful thought and preparation can avoid misery. Extra funds will be needed if they plan to purchase such items as clothes, shoes, presents, etc. Parents can help by providing adequate funds with clear instructions well in advance for any extra expenditures authorised.

The cost of clothing and food varies tremendously in England and may differ substantially from costs in your home country. Houseparents are happy to give advice about appropriate amounts of money for particular purposes.

## **Religious Services**

The school is non-sectarian and therefore has no compulsory religious services or attendance. If parents wish students to attend a particular local (Cobham or Esher) religious centre, transportation will be provided. Information on alternative religious services, outside the local area, is provided in the students' welcome packs.

## **Smoking/Drinking/Drugs Policy**

ACS has a strict no smoking/drinking/drugs policy for both day students and boarders. Students who are not willing to adhere to this policy should not apply to the school.

No boarder is allowed to smoke on or off campus. Boarders who persist in breaking the no-smoking rule may be asked to leave the school.

Possession, purchase, sale, passage, or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs at any school activity (including school trips, at parties, or at any time while a boarder at ACS) is strictly prohibited. Any student who breaks the rules concerning drinking or drug taking may be asked to leave the school immediately.

## **Stationery**

The Dormitory will supply a basic starter pack of stationery for all seven-day and five-day boarders. Those students who are following specialised courses, such as art and photography, will be expected to supply their own materials. Further supplies of paper, pen, and pencils will be provided monthly as the semester progresses.

## **Student Property**

ACS is not responsible for student property either during the academic year or during vacations. Students are advised to make their own arrangements for property insurance coverage.

All bedrooms have locks on the doors and built-in storage units. Boarders will also be assigned a locker for storage of books and personal items during the school day in their particular school division. Valuables may be kept in the school safe.

A security officer is on duty on the school campus at all times.

## **Study Periods**

There is a minimum study period of 2 hours each weekday evening (Sunday - Thursday) (1½ hours for Middle School students). Middle School 9th and 10th Grade students and those having academic difficulty are required to study under direct supervision. All other students are permitted to study in their bedrooms.

## **Telephones**

A pay telephone is located in the Dormitory from which boarders may make calls during their free time. It operates with phone cards (which the dormitory sells) and with coins.

Students may not receive telephone calls during the academic day or during study hall. Mobile

phones are to be switched off and may not be used for any purpose during designated study hall periods or after lights out in the dormitory. Unauthorised use of mobile phones will result in disciplinary action. In case of emergency, parents can speak with the Houseparent on duty if the student is not available.

Whenever possible, it is advisable to arrange in advance the day and time of long distance telephone calls to students. Time differences between countries should be taken into consideration, especially in October and March when clocks change in England.

The Dormitory telephone number is 01932 866 733 (from within the UK) and 44 1932 866 733 (from outside the UK).

In cases of emergency when you are unable to reach the Dormitory, you may phone Security at 01932 869 707 (from within the UK) and 44 1932 869 707 (from outside the UK).

## **Vehicles**

Boarding students are allowed to have and ride bicycles in accordance with their off campus permissions. They are not allowed mopeds, motorcycles or cars. Boarding students are discouraged from riding in cars driven by other students. Specific permission for exceptions will be considered only where written requests have been received from both the passenger's and driver's parents.

## **Visitors**

ACS recognises the importance of visits from parents and relatives of boarders. Boarders should notify Houseparents of expected guests well in advance and introduce all visitors to the person on duty.

As mentioned previously under the Dormitory rules section, parents, other relatives, and day student friends are normally entertained in the main lounge and not in the bedrooms. Boys and girls have their own separate common rooms but may meet in the two mixed common rooms or the reception area on the ground floor at certain specified times.

## **Weekend Activities**

Sports activities, social functions, dances, films and field trips are organised for boarders on weekends. Students also visit a variety of museums and art galleries in London and attend theatre and concert productions.

The location of ACS not only offers proximity to London - one of the greatest cultural centres in the world - but also to many other places of historic interest such as Windsor Castle, Hampton Court Palace, Westminster Abbey, Winchester Cathedral, Cambridge, Oxford and Stonehenge.

Many students take advantage of boating trips on the River Thames, walking in the country, and special visits to leisure parks. The flexibility of the school's programme certainly allows for intensive use of England's abundant resources, and the wide variety of activities and excursions offered at ACS helps to involve students constructively during their free time. The cost of weekend activities arranged by the school is included in the seven-day boarding fees.

Saturday excursions are compulsory for all except team players and seniors.

## 4. General Information

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### Living in England – Helpful Hints

**Climate** – British weather is very changeable and unpredictable. Students are advised to be prepared for all eventualities and to take note of the recommended clothing list in order to be suitably dressed for every occasion.

### Currency

100 pence (p) = £1 (pound)

coin values: 1p, 2p, 5p, 10p, 20p, 50p, £1, £2

note values: £5, £10, £20, £50

**Weights and Measures** – Both Imperial and Metric units are used in England. The following conversions may be of help:

1 pint = 1/2 litre

16 ounces (oz) = 1 pound (lb)

1 pound = approximately 500 grams (gr)

2.2 pounds = 1 kilogram (kg)

12 inches (in) = 1 foot (ft)

1 foot = approximately 30 centimeters (cm)

3 feet = 1 yard (yd)

1 yard = approximately 1 meter (m)

1760 yards = 1 mile (mi)

1 mile = approximately 1.5 kilometers (km)

**Clothing** – The following clothing and shoe size conversions may be helpful:

### Dresses / blouses / knitwear / lingerie

UK sizes	10	12	14	16	18	20
USA	8	10	12	14	16	18
To fit bust	32	34	36	38	40	42
Europe (in cm)	81	86	91	97	102	107

### Shirts (by men's collar sizes)

UK & USA	14	14½	15	15½	16	16½	17	17½
Continental	36	37	38	39-40	41	42	43	44

### Shoes

UK	3½	4	4½	5	5½	6
USA	5	5½	6	6½	7	7½
Continental	36	37	37½	38	38½	39
UK	6½	7	7½	8	8½	9
USA	8	8½	9	9½	10	10½
Continental	39½	40	40½	41	41½	42

## Hotel Accommodation

The following hotels are located near the school area:

The Hilton National Hotel Seven Hills Road South Cobham, Surrey Tel: (01932) 864471	Bookham Grange Hotel The Common Little Bookham, Surrey Tel: (01372) 452742
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The Ship Thistle Hotel Monument Green Weybridge, Surrey Tel: (01932) 848364	Oatlands Park Hotel 146 Oatlands Drive Weybridge, Surrey Tel: (01932) 847242
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Woodlands Park Hotel Woodlands Lane Stoke D'Abernon, Surrey Tel: (01372) 843933	Cobham Lodge 46 Portsmouth Road Cobham, Surrey Tel: (01932) 862015
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The Fairmile  
Portsmouth Road  
Cobham, Surrey KT11 1BW  
Tel: (01932) 868141  
Fax: (01932) 866478

Please contact the hotels direct for all charges and reservations.

## Calling from Abroad

When dialling from abroad, use the correct international code and country code and remove the zero from the British area code. For instance, when calling the Dormitory from the USA, dial 011 (international code) 44 (country code) 1932 (area code with 0 removed) 866 733 (local number). When calling within England, dial the national code (01932) and local number (866 733).

## Transport to and from Heathrow and Gatwick Airports

Parents are responsible for getting their children to school from the airport. The Dormitory will be happy to arrange a taxi to pick students up or transport them to the airport should we have adequate warning (at least one week prior to travel). The cost will have to be borne by the student and charges vary depending on time of day or night and the amount of waiting required of the driver. There are also extra charges for unaccompanied minors needing special attention. We share taxis when possible, and this arrangement reduces the cost somewhat. Local Taxi firms are:

Just Us (John Turner)	Tel: (01932) 772500	Fax: (01932) 785081
Esher Cars	Tel: (020) 8398 7676	
Fairmile Cars	Tel: (01932) 862 744	
Cobham Station Cars	Tel: (01932) 863 335	

## **A Final Note to Parents**

The boarding school experience and the educational programme at ACS International Schools do not end when classes are dismissed for the day. They continue with activities, eating together at dinner, evening study periods, plays, concerts, and weekend outings. Many of these activities are not just options but expectations and requirements of the school, as houseparents, teachers, and administrators assume responsibility for helping every student fulfil his or her potential. The adjustment to boarding school is a big challenge and an exciting one.

Houseparents make a special effort to keep in touch with parents on a regular basis and to reassure those parents who live a long distance from the school. They encourage boarders to keep in touch with relatives and friends through letter writing, and email. We suggest that parents write to their children as frequently as possible and also encourage grandparents, aunts and uncles, and friends to do the same. In order to ensure that boarders receive their letters without delay, it is essential to include "Boarding Division" in the school's address. Keeping letters coming is an extremely important morale builder for boarding students. Telephone calls may trigger emotional reactions, especially during the first few weeks of the semester, but letters are always uplifting.

We hope that the information provided in this handbook will help new boarders and their parents become familiar with our specific boarding programme and our rules and regulations. ACS International Schools is committed to working with every family towards the goal of a happy and rewarding boarding school experience.

## NOTES

## NOTES



## ACS International Schools Mission Statement

ACS International Schools based in London, England were founded in 1967. We serve international and local communities. The schools are non-sectarian and co-educational (day and boarding) for students from 2 to 18 years of age. We educate a multinational student body in accordance with American and internationally recognised educational principles and practices.

We inspire our students to become successful lifelong learners and responsible global citizens. We promote high standards of scholarship and challenge all members of the community to fulfil their potential.

## Our Vision

ACS International Schools will achieve global recognition as the centre of excellence in international education.

And:

- We will provide the opportunity for all to achieve more than they believe they can
- Each campus will receive international recognition for a relevant aspect of education
- We will use opportunities consistent with our values to promote internationalism on a local and global stage
- We will source, recruit and develop leading people in their respective fields
- We will create an environment in our schools where all feel safe and secure and can thrive.

Our energy, innovation and dynamism will take us there.



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Email: [cobhamadmissions@acs-england.co.uk](mailto:cobhamadmissions@acs-england.co.uk)

Part of **ACS** INTERNATIONAL  
**SCHOOLS**  
*Cobham Egham Hillingdon*