



INFORMATION FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Downe House welcomes girls from all around the globe and provides special support and care for its international pupils, starting with advice to guide you through the admissions process. Overseas girls who enter the School receive individual support (if appropriate) with English as an additional language, flights, travel and all aspects of School life, both pastoral and academic. In addition, the School's Global Ambassadors (current pupils whose home is often overseas) lend special support to new international students, as do pupil mentors and buddies, who are on hand to help new girls to adjust and settle in.

If applying from overseas you will need to apply for a visa from the British Consulate in your country. To complete your application, Downe House will provide you with a supporting Certificate of Application to Study (CAS) number which will be supplied to you in support of your visa application. A Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) will be issued and will be sent directly to the School for your daughter to collect once she starts in September.

Further information regarding the application process can be found on the UK Border Agency website:
www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk

Frequently Asked Questions for International Students

How do I get to and from the airport to catch my flights?

Downe House can help with travel to and from the airport. This is usually arranged with other international students who are catching flights on the same day. We can also organise for you to travel as an unaccompanied minor with an airport car service which will take you to the airport and sign you in at the airline desk.

Can I order my School uniform in advance?

You can buy your uniform and sports kit at the School shop and you need to contact the Shop directly about this. You can also organise for your uniform to be labelled for an extra cost, as all items need to have a name label.

When can I speak to my parents?

Special times are set aside for pupils to contact parents. Housemistresses can always help with this and Skype is easily arranged.

What essential items do I need to bring?

A comprehensive list will be sent to you in the Summer term before you join, in the New Girls' pack. It includes information about bringing clothes for all weathers, bedding, personal items such as a teddy or family photographs. You can send luggage ahead and other items can be bought online or at shops in Newbury or Oxford. Girls from the UIV (13+) upwards will find it useful to have a laptop (although the School has an ample supply of computers) and if you play a musical instrument, you may

wish to bring this so that you can join in musical activities.

What happens if I can't fly home for the holidays (e.g. for a Short Exeat)?

All our international students have a UK guardian for those occasions when time is too short to fly home. This arrangement can be set up by your own parents or guardians with a UK guardianship service.

How can I get extra English language support?

All pupils applying to Downe House are expected to have a high degree of fluency in English. However, we do support any girls who require English as an Additional Language (EAL) and we have teachers here to support international students, should anyone need extra help.

Where do international students come from?

Downe House has pupils from all around the world including Europe, Africa, Asia and America, plus exchange students from 11 countries visiting throughout the year, so there is a global outlook in all its activities.

How will I integrate with other girls and into School life?

For girls arriving in the Lower School, the Housestaff will take care of you as soon as you arrive. You will be allocated an academic buddy and a House buddy who will look after you, show you around the School and help you get to lessons on time.

As well as a buddy, each girl is looked after by her Housemistress, Assistant Housemistress, Matron, her Tutor and teachers. There are many activities during the week and at weekends to keep everyone busy and help girls to get to know each other. At each entry level every effort is made to help girls settle in fast and feel at home.

Who is the Housemistress?

The Housemistress is in charge of the House where you live and she looks after the girls with help from the Assistant Housemistress and Matron. She lives in her own accommodation in the House and can help with absolutely everything! She will help you with laundry, your phone calls home, trips and travel, organising your time, sorting out problems and worries. She is very much the 'mother' figure in House and will help you to settle into School life.

What happens if I get ill or homesick?

There is a fully staffed Medical Centre at Downe House which is manned 24 hours a day throughout term time to look after girls who are ill. All girls are also registered with a local GP (doctor). Housestaff and pastoral staff are experienced in helping girls deal with the pressures of being away from home and family.

an adventure in education



Downe House

Cold Ash, Thatcham, Berkshire RG18 9JJ

t: 01635 204701

e: registrar@downehouse.net

www.downehouse.net