



Durham School

INTERNATIONAL PUPIL POLICY

1. Policy Aim

- 1.1 It is of great importance that Durham School has pupils from overseas, that they are welcomed into the way of School life, that both the pupil and all other members of the School are able to communicate with each other, and that the pupil feels safe and well-cared for while away from home.

The aim of this policy is to ensure the awareness of the School's International Students, and to make clear the requirements of both the Student and the Staff.

The School commits in this policy to observing the principles of the Equality Act 2010 and does not discriminate on any grounds.

2. Relationship to Guidelines, Procedures, other Policies and Legal Requirements

- 2.1 English Language Ability Requirements: Although we offer expert tuition in English as an Additional Language (EAL), some ability to communicate in English is needed if the applicant is to cope with the demands of full-time education in this country. This is particularly important for those applying for admission into the Sixth Form. **The minimum score on the IELTS required for admission into Durham School is 5.5.** Most universities in the English-speaking world require a score of 6.0 or higher, depending on the course. More selective universities set a 7.0 as a minimum for application.

If, during routine re-test, a pupil does not achieve the minimum requirement, his/her place at Durham School could be revoked, or we may require the pupil to re-sit the year.

3. Policy Statements

- 3.1 **Native Language Usage:** Reading, writing, speaking, and listening to English all the time can be tiring and overwhelming for a non-native speaker. We want our overseas pupils to be able to use their native language with friends and family and to continue to stay connected with home life and culture. However, during the school day, Durham School requires pupils to use only English in public areas of the School.

From the time they wake up until after prep (usually 7 a.m. – 8 p.m.), pupils will be expected to use English with everyone, including other international pupils who may speak the same language. We want our pupils' English to improve very quickly and this policy will help them make friends with British pupils, excel in their studies, and make the most of life in the UK.

- 3.2 **Airport Transfers:** Parents of international pupils are advised not, under any circumstances, to allow their underage child to travel internationally alone from their home country to Durham School. He/she **must** be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Each airline has its own policies on how old a child must be before travelling alone (usually between 12-16 years old), and parents are responsible for checking relevant policies before booking a flight.

Transport to and from the Newcastle Airport (NCL) for international pupils can be given by the School if two conditions are met:

- 1) Pupils are leaving the day term ends and/or returning the day before term begins.

- 2) Pupils give at least one week's notice to Mrs. Fordyce to enable her to make arrangements.

If both of these conditions are not met, school transport to and/or from the airport will not be available and pupils will need to make their own transport arrangements.

- 3.3 **Arrivals & Departures:** While they are in our care, Durham School must know where all international pupils are located at all times. Therefore, it is imperative that parents and guardians inform us of arrivals and departures as soon as the details are confirmed. Pupils will not be allowed to sign out of their Houses for half-term holidays or between term holidays until they have filled out an 'Arrivals and Departures' form. Forms are located in Houses.

International pupils are also required to be at school by the time term starts until term is finished. We understand that sometimes emergencies and travel mishaps occur, but it is not acceptable to plan to leave school early and/or return late. If there are exceptional circumstances (for example, a family bereavement), permission must be sought by the parent or guardian of the pupil and be granted by the Housemaster/mistress and the Headmaster of the School.

It is very important that international pupils arrive and depart on the correct date. Missing lessons, especially at the beginning and end of term, causes many problems and is not permitted. Permission for any absence from school during term dates must be sought by parents from the Headmaster in advance.

If pupils book flights that leave before School ends and/or return after it resumes, they are in violation of their visa agreements, and their places at the School may be revoked.

- 3.4 **Guardians:** Guardians for overseas pupils are a key part of the pupils' experience in British education. Many of our full boarders live overseas and have a guardian living in the UK who can act as a first point of contact with the School when necessary and with whom pupils can spend the holidays when the School is closed.

Being a guardian is a considerable responsibility, and it is not a role to be taken lightly. Guardians perform the role of the parent and must act in the best interests of the pupil at all times.

In addition to abiding by all of the laws in the UK, guardians of Durham School pupils must:

- 1) Be within reasonable travelling distance of the School;
- 2) Be at least 25 years of age;
- 3) Be finished with full-time education;
- 4) Be fluent in English and, ideally, the pupil's native language;
- 5) Be a guardian for three pupils or fewer;
- 6) Be available to contact at any time;
- 7) Be available to take pupils to appointments outside school, if necessary;

Durham School expects a guardian to come to parents' evenings to represent the pupil's parents and be in communication with teachers, house staff, the English as an Additional Language department, as well as the pupil's family.

When a pupil is staying with his/her guardian, the guardian must provide an unshared bed, three meals a day, adequate supervision, and transport to and from school.

Please note that if parents are unable to appoint a relative or friend in this country who can act as a guardian, the School can put them in touch with a guardian agency, but the School's policy stipulates that we do not recommend individual guardians.

4 Oversight

This policy is overseen by the Education Committee of the Governing Body and will be reviewed at least annually.

Policy reviewed 03/03/2017

K J McLaughlin [Headmaster]

Policy reviewed 06/03/19

J M Burns [Deputy Head Pastoral]