



ALDENHAM
— SCHOOL —

**OVERSEAS AND EAL
STUDENTS
EDUCATION AND
WELFARE POLICY**

**Reviewed September 2024
By Head of Boarding**

Introduction

Aldenham recognises and welcomes the unique value that pupils from overseas and indeed all pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) can bring to the community. We also recognise that pupils with a different language and culture may face challenges that require support and understanding. The aim of this policy is to encourage full integration with all aspects of school life.

In welcoming overseas and EAL pupils to Aldenham, the School seeks to provide a protected environment in which overseas and EAL pupils can enjoy the advantages of education at a British school. The emphasis is on encouraging pupils to join in the maximum number of academic and co-curricular opportunities within the School. For EAL pupils particularly (English as an Additional Language), the School aims to do this by encouraging the pupils to advance their verbal and written communication skills in English by interacting as much as possible with other pupils at Aldenham.

Recruitment

The School seeks to ensure that every overseas pupil coming to Aldenham will have been:

- interviewed by an Aldenham member of staff, either in person or online. Ideally, they would also have the opportunity to visit the School and meet the Head of Senior School and their Housemaster/mistress (HSM);
- provided with a detailed explanation of life at Aldenham School and provided with the opportunity to ask questions in order to feel comfortable and supported in making their choice to join our community;
- carefully assessed to ascertain their current academic level in Maths, English and other relevant subjects; and
- provided with all details relating to admissions, including guardianships and other relevant information concerning visa applications.

Preparation for arrival

All of the following procedures must be completed before overseas pupils arrive at Aldenham.

- The deposit must have been paid.
- A guardian should have been appointed by the family or agent. The guardian has academic and welfare responsibilities including the provision of overnight accommodation when needed. The educational Guardianship policy form must have been completed and the HSM will conduct an in person check that the role is understood and the guardian is suitable.
- Home-stay arrangements for half terms must have been made.
- Subject choices must have been agreed.
- Joining instructions must have been sent to pupils and their families, including induction information.
- Travel arrangements must have been made by their family or agent.

Allocation to a House

- House allocations are made during the term before arrival.
- To enable a successful community atmosphere to exist amongst overseas pupils, all full boarders are currently allocated to two Houses, one for boys and one for girls, where they will live alongside many UK boarders. The overseas boarders at Aldenham have a range of nationalities and make up a relatively small cohort of pupils in the School. This encourages overseas pupils to make good progress in development of their English language skills.
- HSMs will make contact with the family/guardian/agent during the holiday to welcome the new overseas pupil to the School. The HSM is a very important point of contact for all parents and guardians and ultimately responsible for the wellbeing of overseas boarders in their care.

Arrival and Induction

Aldenham provides a thorough induction programme for overseas and EAL pupils during their first week in the Christmas Term to ensure that they, and their parents, feel they are settled and secure in their new environment.

There is a strong focus on supporting overseas boarders to feel welcome and at home from the start. The HSM acts as a parent and will support the pupils in their care with all social, emotional, academic, and practical matters. In the first instance, this will include helping the pupils orientate themselves on site and checking they have all the required equipment and uniform. Opportunities are provided for pupils to visit the School shop and local shops to buy any items that may have been forgotten.

Additionally, HSMs will plan day trips at the weekends to London and other nearby cities e.g. Oxford and Cambridge, theme parks, cultural visits and shopping trips. On most weekend an in-House activity or local trip will be arranged for overseas boarders which may include a visit to the cinema, bowling, crazy golf or a BBQ, film night or boarders' supper.

Use of English

- All pupils are expected to use English as much as possible in their lessons, in collaboration with the EAL support where necessary.
- The School recognises the strain of using a second language throughout the academic day and therefore overseas pupils may choose to use their own language in their social time if they wish. The importance of giving pupils the opportunity to express themselves in their own language is recognised by House staff.
- The School strongly encourages overseas pupils to become involved in as many House and school-based activities as possible as this is an excellent way to integrate and build friendships.

Communication

The School recognises the need for overseas pupils to maintain regular contact with their family and guardian.

- All pupils are provided with a school email address during their first induction day. Excellent internet facilities are provided throughout the School which allow for full social media contact with parents. Overseas boarders can use their school issued device and should have a mobile phone to remain in regular contact with their parents while at School.
- House staff also maintain regular contact with the parents of overseas pupils by email and phone, keeping them informed of both potential issues and successes achieved by their son or daughter.
- Parents' Evenings take place either in person or online according to the academic calendar sent to all parents at the start of the year. It is expected that either the parent or guardian will attend as allowable. If a parent or guardian is unable to attend, they may request a summary of their son or daughter's progress by email in addition to the usual reporting and grading information.

Health

- The School has a Health Centre staffed by a fully trained medical team who provide both physical and mental health services.
- If a pupil falls ill, they may be looked after by their guardian, in House or in the Health Centre depending on the nature of the illness.
- The School provides free consultations with a fully qualified doctor on a weekly basis. Consultations can also be arranged at the local surgery if needed.
- Any pupils who need to attend hospital are accompanied by either a guardian, the HSM or a member of the Health Centre team (unless they are over 18, in which case they may choose to go alone). The nearest hospital is only ten minutes away by car.
- The School can also arrange appointments with local dentists and opticians on request.
- On arrival at the School, pupils are required to comply with the terms of the School 'Medicines' Policy'. All medicines brought by pupils must be declared and most will be kept by either the Health Centre or the House matron to ensure the proper supervision of medicines. There must be clear labelling of all medicines in English.
- The School has a healthy eating policy and the House team will check with overseas pupils on the state of their general health. Pupils are encouraged to take regular exercise as part of the School games and activities programmes.
- Discreet counselling sessions are provided by a School Counsellor for any pupils who feels they need to discuss private stresses or issues.

Culture

Every effort is made by the School to ensure overseas pupils appreciate and enjoy the different cultural experience that living away from home provides. We also acknowledge the importance of overseas pupils being able to express and share their own culture within the school environment.

- Pupils are encouraged to celebrate their own religious and cultural festivals. The School provides support wherever needed, such as special food provision during Ramadan.
- Houses will often celebrate the culture of overseas pupils by running special events on occasions such as Chinese New Year or Germany Day.
- The school kitchens provide a wide range of foods from around the world and will often prepare meals with a focus on food from one country.
- There is an opportunity for pupils to cook for themselves in House kitchens.
- A programme of cultural enrichment is provided through trips to museums, theatres and local areas of interest.
- The boarding programme provides a wide range of activities that are age-appropriate and culturally diverse.

*Reviewed June 2024, by Head of Boarding
To be reviewed every two years*