



**BOARDING POLICY
AND GUIDELINES**

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1. School Organisation

The premises of South Devon Steiner School (short: 'South Devon' or 'the School') are owned by Rudolf Steiner School (South Devon) Limited, a company limited by guarantee, governed by its memorandum and articles of association. It is registered as a charity with the Charity Commission.

It was founded by parents in 1981, inspired by the educational insights of the Austrian philosopher Rudolf Steiner, and of teachers and parents worldwide who have worked with his ideas. As a member of the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship, the school is part of a movement applying a model of education tried and tested in over a thousand schools in sixty countries across the world.

Located on a 6 acre site, in an old manor house (Hood Manor, our main building) and a range of new and old buildings, to the east of Totnes, we are a small educational charity dedicated to providing practical child centred education regardless of the child's ability or background.

The Steiner curriculum recognises that physical, emotional, social and artistic development precede, and are the foundation of, intellectual skills, supporting the child in each stage of his or her growth as an individual. This helps to build the child's motivation and creativity, launching a life-long journey in learning while preserving the precious gift of childhood.

Governance

The Charity Trustees and Directors of the company (the School council) are drawn from current and former parents, and current and former Steiner teachers with relevant professional expertise.

The role of the School Council is to oversee the systems and processes concerned with ensuring the overall direction, effectiveness, supervision and accountability of the school. They delegate the day to day running of the school to various groups and employees who each have a mandated area of responsibility.

As a charity we regularly review our governance arrangements, which rely upon a regular termly reporting cycle from the school's administrative tier (the mandate circle) to the charity's trustees (the school council).

Management

The school has been established for thirty years and is staffed by a substantial team of full and part time teachers, the majority of whom have specialist training in Steiner education and/or are specialists in their subject fields. As in most Steiner Schools there is no Headmaster at South Devon.

Over the past few years the school has substantially built up its administration team, which now includes professional experience in organisational management, care and management of human resources, risk management, child protection and health and safety and finance.

Acceptance of overseas students into the school is the responsibility of the Overseas Student Coordinator, who is also responsible for finding a suitable boarding family (known in the school as a 'Host Family') and implementing and supervising all necessary boarding arrangements. We do not discriminate against students on grounds of gender, race, nationality, language, religion or disability: in the case of students with particular learning or other disabilities, advice may be sought from the teachers, on whether we can offer that student a positive experience at our school.

2. Purpose of Boarding Facilities

South Devon Steiner School offers boarding placements to enable students from our sister Steiner Schools abroad to study for a term or longer at our school to improve their English.

Boarding students at South Devon Steiner School are of either gender and vary in age between 14 and 17 years.

3. Remit of Boarding Policies and Guidelines

These Policies & Guidelines apply to all “Boarding students” at South Devon School, irrespective of age, whose attendance at South Devon exceeds 28 days.

4. Overseas Student Coordinator

The Overseas Student Coordinator carries day-to-day responsibility for all aspects concerning the boarding of students within the School.

The tasks of the Overseas Student Coordinator are to:-

- ◆ Recruit new Host Families and ensure all Safe Recruitment procedures are completed.
- ◆ Inspect current Host Family homes.
- ◆ Place boarders with Host Families.
- ◆ Advise and assist Host Families as to their responsibilities. Liaise with Boarders, their parents and Host Families. Ensure that all Boarders, parents of boarders and Host Families receive and are aware of the relevant information regarding responsibilities, emergency and complaints procedures, personal records etc. Receive concerns and complaints from Boarders, their parents and Host Parents and deal with them as necessary.
- ◆ Be responsible for any emergencies arising as a result of a boarding situation, and, if necessary, refer the situation to other members of school staff or outside agencies as appropriate.
- ◆ Initiate the statutory checks for relevant convictions of members of Host Families.
- ◆ Liaise with Social Services as appropriate regarding any relevant statutory regulations and attendance of students under 16 years of age.
- ◆ Receive inspection reports from Ofsted, review them with the relevant Host Families and report to the school coordinators.

5. Recruiting new Host Families

Host Families must be current parents at the school. Each year a meeting is held for families who wish to be considered as Host Families. Information is supplied about all that being a Host Family entails.

Potential Host Parents must complete an application form provided by the school, and give details of 2 referees who will be asked to provide a reference of suitability. The Overseas Student Coordinator supplies a copy of the detailed policy & guideline documentation to the prospective Host Parents for implementation of the relevant facilities (accommodation, health & safety, insurance, telephone).

The prospective Host Family home is inspected by the Overseas Student Coordinator, who must satisfy herself that the Host Family understand their welfare responsibilities. Written records are kept by the Overseas Student Coordinator of all stages of this process.

If the family and their home are deemed to be suitable, the Overseas Student Coordinator initiates the necessary statutory checks, which are then handled by the Personnel Assistant. Safer Recruitment procedures are followed at all stages.

Successful applicants will be asked to sign a contract, detailing the tasks and responsibilities involved in this role.

6. Accommodation, Health & Safety, Insurance

All boarding homes should be maintained to a reasonable standard of decor, hygiene, cleanliness and safety. The following minimum requirements and standards must be available and maintained:

6.1 Accommodation

- ◆ Single bedroom, should be well lit and heated. (Occasionally two students of the same gender, but different nationalities may share a large room).
- ◆ Adequate storage facilities for personal clothes and belongings.
- ◆ Adequate facilities for personal hygiene.
- ◆ Adequate space for doing homework, and a desk or table and chair in the bedroom or other quiet room.
- ◆ Use of a telephone located in such a way as to enable the boarder to make and receive calls in private.
- ◆ In general, boarders should be able to enjoy all facilities of the house within the limits of respecting everyone's need for privacy and quiet.

6.2 Fire

- ◆ Smoke detectors should be in place in hallways and landings.
- ◆ A fire blanket should be available in the kitchen.
- ◆ Emergency torch(es) in hallways are strongly recommended.
- ◆ Fire detecting and fighting equipment should be regularly tested.
- ◆ Alternative fire exits should be pointed out.
- ◆ Boarders and other new members of the household should be instructed on the fire procedures and the handling of the fire blanket within the first days after arrival.

6.3 Gas & Electrical

- ◆ All gas installations in the home should be regularly serviced by qualified persons.
- ◆ Installation and maintenance of main electric systems must be carried out by a qualified person.
- ◆ Any signs of unsafe electrical equipment must be followed up and, if necessary, rectified (worn cables, loose connections, contact problems, overloaded sockets etc.).

6.4 Flooring

- ◆ Any loose or protruding floor tiles are to be rectified.
- ◆ Carpets (particularly stair carpets) must be well secured.

6.5 Medicines and Hazardous Substances

- ◆ There must be a First Aid box in the home, which is kept out of the reach of young children. The boarder must know where it is located.

- ◆ Hazardous substances (such as fuels, bleach, toilet cleaners, disinfectants, detergents, laundry cleaners, paint and paint thinners, etc.) are to be stored in safe locations, away from fire and out of reach of young children.
- ◆ Emergency telephone numbers (999 for Fire and Ambulance, GP, School, Host Parents' work and mobiles etc.) must be readily available by the telephone.

6.6 Insurance

The School's liability insurance only covers the boarder's time at school. Host Parents should, in their own interest, check with their insurers that their policy also provides public liability cover for the boarder outside school hours. Optional medical and/or accident insurance for the boarder is the responsibility of the boarder's parents.

7. Placement of Boarders

When arranging boarding placements, gender, age, culture, religion, language and the boarding student's own family composition are all taken carefully into account to find the most appropriate environment for the student. The basis for the matching of a boarder with a Host Family is:-

- ◆ The Overseas Student Coordinator's familiarity with type and life style of the approved Host Families.
- ◆ Information on the student gathered through the Enrolment Form, Parental Consent Form, teacher's recommendation and the health statement from the student's doctor.

Students are usually placed singly in families, but sometimes a family will have two students of different nationalities if their circumstances allow this. Two students of the same gender may be asked to share a room.

The Overseas Student Coordinator ensures that all Host Families have sufficient detailed information on the student to enable them to fully meet the needs of the student they are proposing to accommodate. Similarly, the Overseas Student Coordinator ensures that the student and his/her parents have a sufficiently detailed picture of the Host Family where the student will stay, through a Host Family Profile sent out approximately six weeks before arrival.

At least once per half-term following the initial placement review, boarding students are to be interviewed individually on the school premises by the Overseas Student Coordinator to ascertain their view on their boarding placement and to address any concerns they may have concerning any aspect of their accommodation or care.

Written records will be kept of all phases of the placement process and its subsequent reviews.

8. Inspections

Ofsted will carry out an inspection of South Devon Steiner School's boarding arrangements every three years. Visits to all Host Families form part of their inspection procedure.

9. Care Practice

9.1 General

For many aspects of a boarder's living situation in the Host Family only guidelines and minimum requirements can be laid down. Parents and Host Parents will often need to negotiate together specific practices appropriate for the particular boarder and the Host Family.

It is expected that a boarder be welcomed into the Host Family's home as a member of the family. It is hoped that the boarder reciprocates this by showing his/her respect for the Host Family's way of life. The relationships, which thus develop, can prove to be mutually enriching.

It is essential that all Host Parents uphold and support the educational and social aims of the School (punctuality, homework, dress etc.). Boarders should not be allowed to attend parties without the permission of the Host Parents, who should at all times know the whereabouts of the children they have in their charge. Should an accident befall a young person at the Host Family home, the Host Parents are held responsible. Therefore, appropriate adult supervision at the Boarding home is essential. Boarder's friends who are under 16 also are the responsibility of the Host Family.

We recognize that boarders are sometimes placed in one-parent families. Nevertheless, a high standard of adult interaction is expected in all boarding situations.

Should boarders wish to visit other homes and stay overnight, the Host Parents must satisfy themselves about such arrangements and are responsible for them. If appropriate, they should get the permission of the boarder's parents. Generally, no visiting is allowed during the school week, i.e. Sunday to Thursday.

9.2 Educational

Host Parents should contact their boarder's class teacher or sponsor over any pedagogical matters in the same way as they would for their own children. Host Parents are invited to the parents' evenings for the children in their care.

The Host Family needs to provide an environment, which is conducive to fulfilling the demands of school homework. As most boarders are students of the Upper School, it is to be expected that there is some homework every evening during weekdays.

9.3 Bed times & coming-in times

Members of Class 10 are expected to be in their Boarding homes by 10pm on any night before a school day, and 10.30pm on a night which is not followed by school or a time that is mutually agreed with the Host Family, student and their parents. The boarder must be clear that school homework is a priority and must not be allowed to suffer from too active a social life. Boarders may stay out later on specific occasions with prior arrangement with their Host Parents who will need to be reassured of their whereabouts and means of transport home. Host Parents cannot be expected to stay up late regularly waiting for boarders to return.

For boarders of class 9 and below, parents and Host Parents should negotiate acceptable bedtimes. Boarders should be in the Host Family home at least a quarter of an hour before that time.

The Overseas Student Coordinator is available to contact if there are any concerns about the social life of a boarding student.

9.4 Television, Video & Computer use

Given the ethos of the school, it is expected that TV and video viewing be minimal. In particular videos/DVDs must only be for the appropriate age and, should the boarder have

guests under 16, permission from the Host Parents or parents of the guest obtained before allowing the viewing to take place. For those over 16 years of age the Boarding Parent is expected to exercise responsible judgment.

If the family has one, students should be allowed reasonable access to a computer to receive and write emails, but should not expect to spend all evening on social networking sites, gaming sites or SKYPE.

9.5 Health and Welfare

The school expects that any dental, optical and medical checks are completed before students leave home.

While we expect the student to arrive and remain in good health, if a boarding student needs medical treatment he or she has access to a local N.H.S. practice and may be treated as a temporary resident.

The Overseas Student Coordinator requires all medically and socially relevant information concerning a student in order to place the student with an appropriate family. This includes special dietary needs, allergies, medication etc. Prospective boarders and their parents are required to complete a Parental Consent form detailing these aspects before they can be accepted into the school's care.

The school is not responsible for general welfare such as check-ups. But the Host Parents are expected to display the same concern for the general health of the child as for any other member of the family. Regular visits to the doctor and dentist should be made outside school hours.

It is made known to the boarding student that they can take any personal or welfare concern to any member of staff at the school, in addition to the Overseas Student Coordinator and Child Protection Officer.

9.6 Smoking

Smoking is discouraged and boarders of 16 and over who do smoke may only do so by individual arrangement with their parents and the Host Parents. It must, however, be noted that none of our Host Parents allow smoking at all in their house. South Devon Steiner School is a no smoking zone and smoking is also not allowed within 300 metres of the school grounds.

9.7 Drugs Policy for Boarding Students

The use of alcohol, tobacco and any illegal drugs is banned during school hours for all South Devon students, but in the case of home students the school takes no responsibility for drug use outside school time but reserves the right to intervene if this drug use has a significant adverse impact on the student and/or his peer group.

However, in the case of boarding students use of illegal drugs is totally prohibited both in and out of school, and a breach of this rule would regrettably lead to the boarding student having to leave South Devon and to return home. We are aware of the fact that this could be viewed as less than even handed but it would be totally unreasonable to expect our Host Parents to shoulder the additional problems and responsibilities associated with illegal drug use.

9.8 Meals and nutrition

It is expected that all evening meals are taken as a family with adequate adult supervision and companionship. It is recognized that on rare occasions it may be necessary for the

boarder to eat alone but these must be the exception. There should be a good standard of nutrition and allowances should be made for a boarder's individual diet.

9.9 Privacy

The School recognizes that there is a need for privacy for all students and students staying with Host Families as well as for the members of the Host Family.

All personal mail addressed to boarders is their own property. It must not be opened by anybody except the boarder. The same applies to mail addressed to members of the Host Family.

Valuables which have more than sentimental value are the responsibility of the Boarding Student. While the Host Parents will have adequate insurance and are trustworthy, we advise that students minimize any valuables brought. If the Boarding Student is concerned about valuables, we recommend that the Boarder's parents take out appropriate personal insurance.

If the boarder wishes to keep sentimental but not valuable possessions in a locked box or cupboard then the boarder has to provide such a facility.

There must be a room in which the boarder can meet with his family, relatives, or friends privately. In most instances the boarder's bedroom will be adequate. At times a room such as the lounge or sitting room will be appropriate; however, the boarder will need to acknowledge that such a room is also part of the communal space and it is not the right of the boarder to demand that space under any circumstance.

All boarders must have the privacy to dress, undress and attend to personal hygiene in private. No member of the Host Family may enter the boarder's room uninvited. However, the Boarding Parent reserves the right to access the room as necessary.

9.10 Relative & Parental Contact

It is essential that parents maintain regular contact with their child and that Host Parents encourage such contacts.

It is expected that boarders receive a number of phone calls during a term from parents, relatives and friends. The School requests that families and friends do not ring the boarder between 10pm and 8am (9am at weekends). This is out of consideration for the rest of the family. Too frequent calls can be disruptive.

Phone calls by the boarder from the Boarding home are to be negotiated between the boarder and the Host Parents. The boarder is responsible for the cost of these calls.

9.11 Religious observance

The School upholds the right of all children to practise and observe their religious beliefs. If there are any serious dilemmas arising out of a student's religious practices or beliefs and the general ethos of the School this question should be referred to the Overseas Student Coordinator.

The Host Parents must ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to allow the observance of their boarder's religion. If the student has a different religion to the Host Family, this question will be discussed at the time the placement is made.

9.12 Sanctions & Discipline

All efforts must be made by the boarder and the Host Family to share an attitude of co-operation and goodwill so that difficult behaviour and the imposition of punishment do not arise. This means that the boarder is clear from the start that he is joining a family home

with its particular routines, mealtime rhythms and daily duties. The Host Family needs to display an attitude of openness and flexibility to allow for necessary adjustments. The following disciplinary measures are not permitted:-

- ◆ Any form of corporal punishment.
- ◆ Any deprivation of food or drink.
- ◆ Restriction of contact to parents or adults with parental responsibility.
- ◆ Any requirement for the student to wear distinctive or inappropriate clothing.
- ◆ The use or withholding of prescribed medication, or medical and dental treatment. Regular dental treatment should take place during the vacations. Only emergencies should be dealt with in term time.
- ◆ The intentional deprivation of sleep.
- ◆ The imposition of fines (except in the case of reparation of intentional damage caused).
- ◆ Any intimate physical examination of the student.

The boarder must be aware that entertaining friends in the Host Family home is a privilege, not a right. The same is true for a boarder's access to friends' homes. Restricting access to or by friends as a disciplinary measure may at times be appropriate. Disciplinary guidance by the responsible Host Parents is to be exercised with the cooperation of the boarder's parents and, if appropriate, with his class teacher or sponsor.

9.13 Out of School activities

Such activities are to be encouraged inasmuch as they are in tune with the general ethos of the school and do not create a conflict with required homework (see bedtimes & coming-in times). Should the Host Parents have difficulties or questions in this area, they should see the Overseas Student Coordinator.

9.14 Musical instruments and music lessons

Should the boarder bring his own instrument, his parents are responsible for its insurance. Practice times can be arranged either in school or at the discretion of the Host Parents. There are possibilities for certain instruments to be hired through the school

9.15 Travel arrangements

Travel arrangements to South Devon are the responsibility of the boarder's own parents, although the Overseas Student Coordinator can advise on these. Host families are expected to pick up students from Exeter Airport, Newton Abbot or Totnes coach stops or Totnes rail station.

9.16 Financial responsibilities

Fees for overseas students for both school and accommodation are set out in the document 'Dates and Costs 20XX-XX' which is always on our website. School fees include the cost of any trips and activities in that term, and they are weighted to reflect the number of weeks in the term (so each term is a different amount). School fees must be paid in full to the School before the student arrives. We regret that refunds cannot be made where a student does not complete the term. Accommodation fees should be paid directly to the Host Family on or before arrival.

The Host Parents are responsible for declarations of income to the Inland Revenue, and for adequate insurance cover against third party risks involving their boarders.

Host Parents are financially responsible for heating, meals, lighting and laundry and transport to and from school. The boarder's parents are responsible for expenses such as bus fares to see friends, pocket money, haircuts, medication, medical and dental expenses, dry cleaning, personal toiletries and telephone calls.

The accommodation fees cover the half-term holidays, but if the student goes away during this time, the sum of £7 per day is refunded to the student. Similarly, if the student is away on a class trip, the Host Family pay £7 per day to the school as food money for the trip.

9.17 Complaints Procedure

Difficulties arising in the boarding situation should, if appropriate, first be addressed by the boarder, the Host Parents and the boarder's parents. If further assistance is needed, boarders, Host Parents or parents should contact the Overseas Student Coordinator .

Any member of staff of South Devon Steiner School receiving a complaint about boarding arrangements or boarding facilities from the boarder, his parents, the Host Parents etc. must report this to the Overseas Student Coordinator.

Any serious complaint reaching the Overseas Student Coordinator will be entered immediately into a complaints file. The school will investigate the complaint without delay and any action taken will be reported to the Council of Management. In exceptional circumstances another party such as Devon Children and Young People's Services may be asked to investigate further.

If the person making the complaint or the person who was the object of the complaint is not satisfied with the action taken they may approach the Chair of the Coordinators meeting (who can be contacted through the school reception).

9.18 Child Protection & Emergency Procedures

The Overseas Student Coordinator will deal with any reported emergencies. The following are defined as emergencies:

- ◆ Serious accident, illness or death of a boarder.
- ◆ Serious accident, illness or death in the boarder's family.
- ◆ Any situation involving the attendance of the Emergency Services at a boarding home.
- ◆ Any absence of a child without authority from school or the family home.
- ◆ Any suspicion or case of child abuse within the Boarding home.

In case of an emergency hospitalization the Overseas Student Coordinator will co-ordinate the necessary actions and be available to liaise with the relevant persons and authorities.

Devon Children and Young People's Services is to be notified without delay by the School of any of the following:

- ◆ Any referral of suspected child abuse made to in respect of a boarded student.
- ◆ Any accident, which involves a boarding student requiring hospital treatment.
- ◆ Any serious complaint made by a boarded student of ill treatment of any kind.

All members of a Host Family over the age of 16 must have a statutory check for relevant convictions. The Personnel Assistant will receive the results of these Criminal Record checks. If there is cause for serious concern arising from such checks the Overseas Student Coordinator will arrange the immediate withdrawal of the boarding student from the Host Family concerned.

The School ensures that Host Parents are aware of the indicators of child abuse and the procedures for responding appropriately to it. The Overseas Student Coordinator is to have responsibility for child protection and welfare issues and for liaison in these matters with the Social Services Department.

10. Records

10.1 Inspection Reports

The Overseas Student Coordinator will inspect each boarding home at least once a year.

The Overseas Student Coordinator, on behalf of the Mandate Circle, will receive reports from Ofsted. These reports will be discussed privately with any individual(s) deemed appropriate.

10.2 Personal Records on Boarder

In general boarders and their parents have the right of access to any records that are kept relating to them. The School keeps the following records:

- ◆Details on boarder's home family (family constellation, siblings, parents' work, religious persuasion etc.)
- ◆Medical and dietary records provided by parents or student's doctor.
- ◆Current photograph of the student provided by the parents
- ◆Records on boarders' interests and hobbies.
- ◆Recommendation provided by one of the student's teachers.
- ◆Notes on reviews with the boarder.
- ◆Records of particular events concerning the boarder at the Host Family home (arrival and departure dates; fire drills, tests, and instructions; reviews; inspections of the Boarding home; medical and dental treatments; accidents and illnesses; date and circumstances of disciplinary measures imposed, etc.). These events are recorded by the Host Parents at the Boarding home and are regularly transferred to the boarder's personal file kept by the Overseas Student Coordinator.

10.3 Records on Host Family

The Overseas Student Coordinator keeps a file for each Host Family with information relating to the recruiting procedure, and containing details of the Host Family, of inspections and reviews. The Host Parents have the right of access to any such information held.