



# Boarding and Homestay Principles and Practices

## Guiding Statements

The school has a large number of international students who move to Singapore to seek an international school with strong academic rigour. These students need a place to call 'home', where they feel safe and secure, and are able to develop and flourish. ACS (International) does not provide accommodation for these students, but instead has a model where it supports families as they seek local accommodation. The accommodation options for international students are:

- Living in a Boarding Hall that is operated by the Ministry of Education:
  - Boarding at Oldham Hall.
  - Boarding at ACS (Independent)
- Sourcing private accommodation from a Homestay Provider
- Living with a close family member e.g. Parents who have moved to Singapore.

Making the right accommodation choice for children is very important and so the school will assist and support families whenever needed. As a school we have made the following commitments through two of our Guiding Statements:

## Student Well-Being

To provide a safe, welcoming and affirming environment reflecting the school's child protection and safeguarding guidelines, to develop students socially, physically, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually.

## Home and Community

To develop strong partnerships with all stakeholders to ensure the safety, well-being and holistic development of all students, including those in Boarding and Homestay arrangements.

These statements are made so that the staff at ACS (International) prioritise the safety and healthy development of each child that comes to Singapore. While the school is not responsible for the private accommodation sourced for its students, the school will partner with families, students and guardians to assist in finding suitable private accommodation.

## ACS (International) Limitation Statement

It is important that families understand that they enter into private arrangement with Accommodation providers such as Homestay Providers and Boarding Halls. These arrangements are separate from ACS (International) and the school has no legal responsibility in those arrangements.

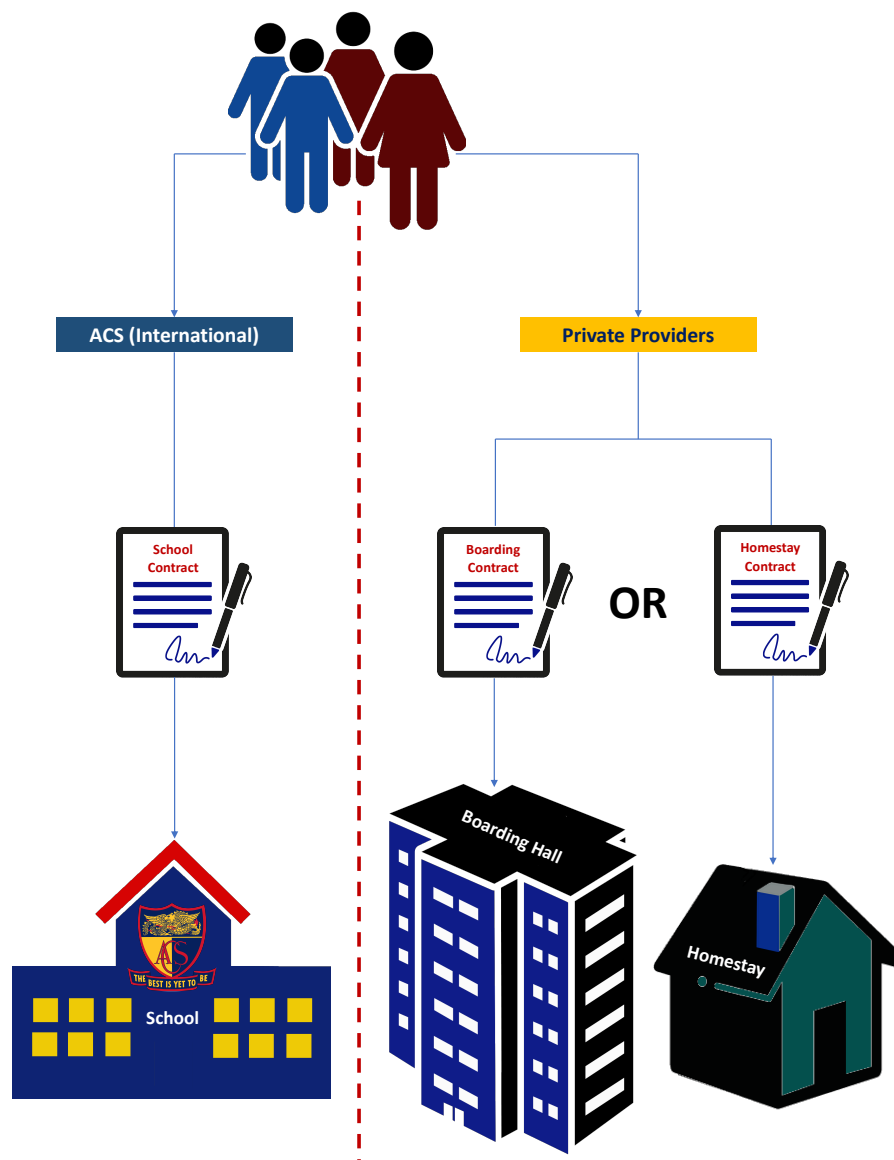
The two Boarding Halls that are used by ACS (International) bear the ACS name and share the same logo as the school. Due to this, it would be reasonable for international families to assume that therefore the Boarding Halls are part of ACS (International). However, this is not the case as the Boarding Halls are overseen by the Ministry of Education and ACS (International) has no legal, governance or operational involvement with these facilities.

In relation to Homestay, it is also important for families to understand that they enter into contractual agreements with the Homestay Provider and ACS (International) has no legal responsibility in those agreements.

It is also important for families to understand that the family appointed Guardian is legally responsible for the child. (ACS) International is not legally responsible for the child.

<i>Prepared By</i>	<i>Approved By</i>	<i>Review and Revised</i>	<i>Reviewed by</i>	<i>Next Review</i>
SLT	SLT		SLT	T4 2022

The diagram below is a visual representation of the relationship between families, ACS (International) and private accommodation providers.



### ACS (International) Service Statement

The Limitation Statement sets out the legal arrangement and the difference between the education services the school provides and the accommodation services that private providers provide.

However, the school does use its *Student Wellbeing* and *Home and Community* to provide services to students and families in order for the school to be satisfied students are being cared for as they should be. The list below demonstrates some of the ways the school assists families

#### *Inducting New Students*

- Help students with Boarding and Homestay arrangements.
- Assist with the induction programme to ACS (International).
- Provide support as they adjust to life in Singapore.

- Organise and run Welcome To Singapore Orientation Programme.
- Provide support with visa issues
- Make insurance needs clear to all families and to ensure that all new students have insurance.

#### *Annual Activity Programme*

- Organise Termly events for international students to be involved in.
- Liaise with Boarding Halls to provide special events, such as CNY and monthly birthday celebrations.

#### *Boarding House*

- In conjunction with the Admissions Department, provide advice to families and students about Boarding options.
- Act as a liaison between the school and the Boarding Houses.
- Visit Boarding Halls regularly to check on students.
- Liaise with the Boarding Halls on welfare issues.
- Receive feedback from students regarding Boarding experience.
- Maintain a register of students staying in Boarding.

#### *Homestay*

- Maintain list of registered Approved Homestay providers.
- In conjunction with the Admissions Department, provide advice to families and students about Homestay options.
- Act as a liaison between the school and the homestay providers.
- Conduct Homestay visits annually and as required.
- Point of contact for student experiencing issues with Homestay.
- Receive annual feedback from students regarding Homestays.
- Maintain a register of students staying in Homestay.

#### *Guardians*

- Liaise and work with guardians as required.
- Assist families to appoint guardians as necessary.
- Assist students and families if issues arise with the guardians.
- Maintain a list of approved guardians.
- Administer and keep accurate records of guardians signing our Statutory Declaration in accordance with Child Protection Policies.
  - Monitoring of their child's progress in Singapore
  - Staff such as International Student Counsellor, School Counsellor and Heads of House available to provide any pastoral support as necessary.

#### **ACS (International) - Boarding in the First Year**

All new international students who are residing in Singapore without their parents must commit to staying in either ACS (Independent) Boarding School or Oldham Hall for a minimum period of one year in order that they enjoy the rich benefits that come from boarding experience while studying in an overseas country. The school's experience with students moving to Singapore and moving to Homestay in the first year is that they do not have the adult supervision and support services that many students need when they move to an unfamiliar environment for the first time.

#### **ACS (International) - Homestay**

It is the school's preference that students remain in Boarding due to the higher standard of care provided and the high level of adult supervision from trained staff.

However, the school recognises that for some families and students that Homestay offers a different experience from Boarding and one that in positive experiences can be more homely for students.

#### *Approved Homestay*

The school promotes Approved Homestays as they meet a set of standards set by the school. For a list of Approved Homestay Providers families can contact the International Student Coordinator.

Even though ACS (International) uses the term 'Approved Homestay Provider', these providers are still not in a legal relationship with the school. ACS (International) offers no guarantee that an 'Approved Homestay Provider' will adhere to the conduct expected of the school. All risk associated with Approved Homestay Providers is on the family, and the school accepts no liability in cases where issues arise.

While families may appoint a Homestay provider that is not on the Approved Homestay list, the school advises against this.

#### **Accommodation Handbook**

The school has an Accommodation Handbook which serves as the main document that outlines to families accommodation matters at the school. The Accommodation Handbook is provided to relevant families upon enrolment and can also be found on the school website.