



# ACS (International)

A Methodist Institution

## ACCOMMODATION HANDBOOK

### **ACS (International) Singapore**

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## INTRODUCTION

ACS (International) is owned by the Methodist Church of Singapore. Christian values and inclusivity underpin all that we do — in academic pursuits, on the sports field, in leadership and in service to others.

We cater for Singaporeans and overseas students who are interested in an international curriculum in a Singaporean context, in particular, the “ACS brand of education”. Our establishment is in line with the Singapore Government’s aim of making Singapore an educational centre of excellence that serves both local and regional students.

ACS (international) takes great pride in nurturing the leaders of tomorrow. As we continue to move forward and meet the needs of the ever-changing modern world, one thing in our brand of education remains unchanged — the sound Christian values and principles that are responsible for the matchless ACS spirit of excellence, service and loyalty.

Our international students currently represent more than 30 nationalities — they contribute richly to our school culture, and help nurture a sense of global mindedness in the school community as a whole. In addition, we cherish Singaporean values — standing alongside Singaporeans as the national anthem is played and the pledge recited during daily assembly.

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 your child is very important to you and also to us. 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 you source for your child, the school will partner with you to assist in making make your child’s experience in Singapore as positive as possible.

This Accommodation Handbook has been written to help you as you make important choices about your child’s accommodation. if you need any assistance please let us know.

We wish your child well as they live in Singapore and attend at ACS (International).

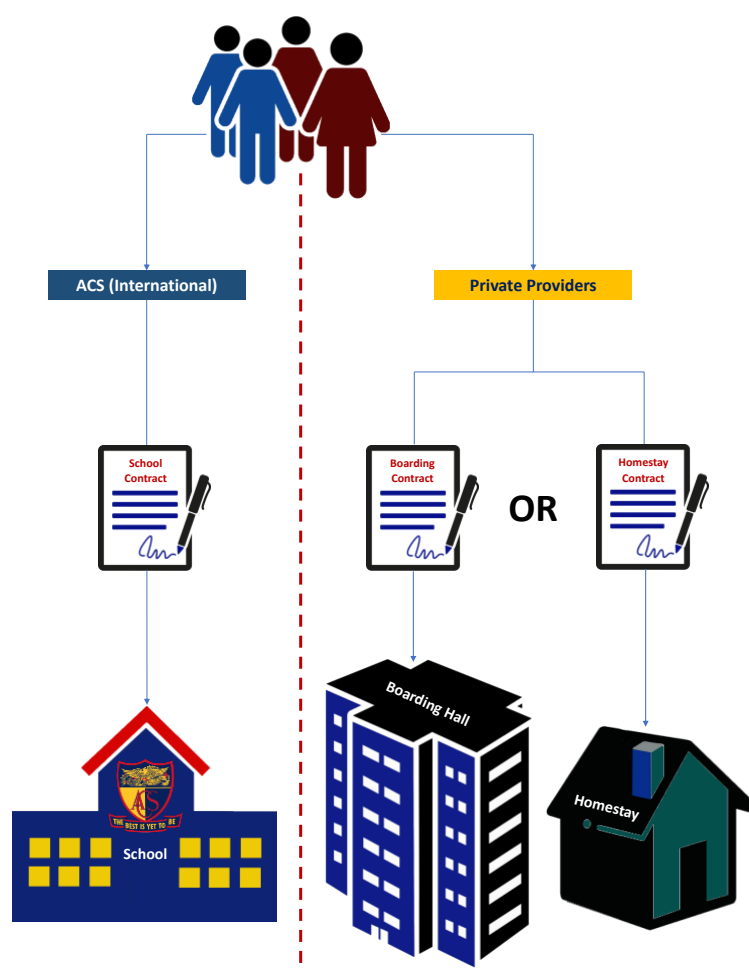
Gavin Kinch  
Principal



## RELATIONSHIP TO ACS (INTERNATIONAL) AND BOARDING & HOMESTAY

When a family enrolls a student to ACS (International) they enter into a contract with the school for educational services. The school does not offer accommodation services. Families enter separate contracts with either the Boarding Halls or a Homestay Provider for accommodation services.

**Please note that while ACS Oldham Hall and ACS (Independent) Boarding Halls have the ACS logo and the ACS name, they are separate institutions from ACS (International) and are administered by the Singapore Ministry of Education.**



The school has International Student Coordinators (ISC) who can guide, assist and support families with issues related to private providers. Family appointed Guardians may also advise families on accommodation matters, however the school recommends consulting the ISC as they provide impartial advice on accommodation providers.

It is important to note that families and students should follow the policies, procedures and expectations outlined by the Boarding Halls and Homestay Providers. ACS (International) does not have any responsibility for the policies, procedures and expectations that Boarding Halls and Homestay Providers have. These can vary between accommodation providers so it is important that families and students make sure that they understand and are satisfied with them prior to entering into a legal agreement.

While the ISC can assist families and students with Boarding Halls and Homestay Providers, neither they nor the school are legally responsible for the services they provide. The school and ISC will not get involved in contractual disputes between parties.

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENT COORDINATOR (ISC) ROLE

The International Student Coordinator (ISC) is responsible for the after-school care of international students. This typically means that they will be involved with inducting students to Singapore/ACS, providing an annual activity programme for international students, dealing with Boarding/Homestay matters, oversight of guardians and overseeing student visas and insurance. There is also an Assistant ISC who works with the ISC, particularly with Homestay. The ISC will support your child as they live in Singapore. The section below outlines how the ISC can support your child. However, it is important to note the following:

- The ISC provides a supporting role in the pastoral care towards international students. International students, like local students, should go through normal school channels for school related issues i.e. House Tutor and Head of House.
- The ISC will not mediate or get involved in contractual or legal issues between parties e.g. Homestay Providers or Boarding Halls

### 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.

## Other Responsibilities

- Work collaboratively with school staff to provide support and insights into international students.
- Oversee the International Student Committee.
- Member of the PST who oversee the well-being of 'At Risk' students.
- Advocate for improvements for the experience of international students.
- Special projects/tasks as required by SLT.
- Abide by the school safeguarding policy and keep abreast of any changes.

## ISC Division of Responsibility

Due to the nature of caring for international students, the role naturally has a pastoral component to it. In addition to this, parents and guardians of international students will often see the ISC as the 'go to' person for all issues relating to the school. This can sometimes blur the established lines of responsibilities between the House Tutors, Heads of House, Divisional Coordinators and the ISC. While each case will be slightly different, the guidelines below should be applied:

Issue	Person Responsible	ISC Role
Oversight of student progress	HT and HSM	Help parents\guardians understand school procedures.
Absences	HT and HSM	Follow up guardians if they have a pattern of not returning school phone calls.  Liaising with Boarding\Homestay to understand student absences.
Behaviour	Subject Teacher and HSM	Help parents\guardians understand school procedures.
Pastoral	HT and HSM School Counsellors	Pastoral support is the responsibility of HSMs and school staff. However, ISC is to provide HSM with student insights.  Deal with Pastoral issues relating to Boarding\homestay arrangements.
Academic Monitoring	HT\HSM\DC	Help parents\guardians understand school procedures.

It is expected that the ISC would support school staff by providing insights into students.

## CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ISC

### **Expectations of ACS (International) International Student Coordinator and any associated staff**

In arranging Homestay accommodation for international students, the International Student Coordinator and ACS staff will:

- Familiarise providers with the culture and education philosophy of the homestay program and homestay students through in-service support and individual awareness
- Be aware of the needs of the homestay students and have processes in place to support and assist them
- Identify any personal prejudices and biases and promote awareness and an adherence to ethical standards
- Accept flexibility of regulations and communication practices that may be necessary to meet the diverse and variable needs of homestay students
- Adhere to non-discriminatory practices set out by the institution based on race, age, gender, ethnicity, disability and socio-economic backgrounds
- Keep all possible communications open, honest and appropriate to the situation
- Put the best learning interests of individual homestay students above all other financial and organisational needs as without this focus the impact on the homestay experience can be extremely negative
- Act with sensitivity and discretion and enact a process of crisis management, in time of grief and trauma
- Have access to opportunities for professional development with regard to the provision of homestay care and meeting the needs of homestay students
- Maintain the confidentiality of homestay hosts and homestay students' right to privacy under the terms of privacy and anti-discrimination acts
- Have emergency contact information provided for key ACS (International) staff for use in emergencies

### **Best Practices**

In arranging Homestay accommodation for international students, the ACS (International) staff will:

- Provide ongoing support to homestay hosts and international students as necessary
- Advise homestay host and international students of the expectations of homestay by means of orientation, written documents and information, and orientation sessions if needed
- Inspect all providers and homes registered in the homestay program and provide an orientation of the expectations/requirements of the program
- Visit each homestay provider and place each student in a home which is, to the best knowledge and belief, a safe and suitable home for international students
- Ensure all international students under the age of 18 years are placed in appropriate families that meet all legal requirements
- Encourage networking contacts to ensure the quality of all providers enlisted in the program is maintained
- Monitor the number of household members to homestay student ratio
- Ensure payment arrangements are confirmed with the homestay hosts
- Follow up any complaint made by homestay students/providers in an appropriate timeframe
- Respect and be responsive to the beliefs and diversity of cultural requirements of homestay hosts and homestay students by providing alternative accommodation immediately if it is believed that the welfare of the student, or host, may be at risk
- Maintain clear communication to all parties in regard to Homestay matters
- Act openly and professionally in all dealings with other Homestay providers and institutions
- Ensure that the confidentiality of Homestay hosts and homestay students is preserved
- Schedule regular meetings with the provider and inspections of the physical property



## ACCOMMODATION POLICY

ACS (International) requires all international students who are residing in Singapore without their parents to stay in approved accommodations.

The policy sets out the expectation of the homestay/hostel provider's role and monitor the contractual relationship between the homestay/hostel provider, student and parent.

The policy consists of the following:

1. Types of approved accommodations
2. Criteria
3. Registration process
4. Sourcing of accommodation
5. Duties expected by the school
6. Monitoring
7. Monetary rewards

### Types of Approved Accommodations

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 approved accommodations are as follows:

**(a) Oldham Hall**

<http://www.oldhamhall.org/>

**(b) ACS (Independent) Boarding School**

<http://www.acsindep.moe.edu.sg/about-acs-independent/boarding-school/>

**(c) Homestay providers who have registered with the school**

The school screens potential homestay providers and conducts periodic checks on its approved homestay providers.

The fee for homestay ranges from an average of \$1,600/month for double-sharing to \$2,500 for a single room. Homestay providers provide meals, laundry and cleaning services, wifi and supervision of school work within a home setting.

Note:

For enquiry on available vacancies and locations of hostels and homestays, please contact the International Pastoral Coordinator (ICC) at [ipc@acsinternational.edu.sg](mailto:ipc@acsinternational.edu.sg)

### Criteria

- They must be 30 years old and above.
- They must be a Singapore citizen/Singapore Permanent Resident/Employment Pass Holder.
- There must NOT be a ratio of more than 1 adult:10 students.
- They must be willing to comply with school expectations.
- They must be willing to take on guardianship of students within.
- They must be willing to disclose particulars of all the supervisors/helpers.
- They must be willing to visits by the ISC on regular basis.
- All adults who live in the homestay premises must NOT have a current/history of criminal or mental illness record.
- (From 2017, ALL homestay providers must submit an official document to prove that they do not have criminal records.)
- They must be willing to have **single gender** homestay arrangement (unless siblings and ONLY siblings).
- Male homestay providers can ONLY accept male students.





- Homestay providers must NOT solicit students on their own. Requests to stay at the homestay must be made through the guardians and/or the parents. The ISC must be informed of all changes.

## **Registration Process**

Fill up the Registration Form on a yearly basis.

Sign the completed registration form including the declaration component. Declare that they:

- do not have a criminal record or are not under criminal investigation;
- do not have an existing or history of mental illness; and
- are free from financial embarrassment.

Allow the IPC to visit the premises.

## **Sourcing Of Accommodation**

Students who prefer to reside at ACS (Independent) Boarding School or Oldham Hall must fill up the Application Form and submit it according to the boarding regulations.

For students who prefer homestay, the parents/guardians must get in touch with the ISC regarding availability and are encouraged to view a few places before they commit.

### **The ISC will ask the following questions:**

- Where is the preferred location?
- Is the student willing to travel? What is the maximum distance the student is willing to explore?
- What kind of room is the student looking at, e.g., single or double-sharing?
- Does the student prefer a smaller homestay or a community-based one?
- What is the parent's budget?
- What is the preferred type of homestay providers, e.g., strict, of a particular religion?

It is in consideration of the above criteria that the ISC proposes the potential homestays. The key recommendation is to show each student at least two choices of homestay before the parents/guardians commit.

Parents, guardians and students must examine and agree with the terms of the homestay contract before they sign it (see Annex A).

## **Duties Expected By The School**

### **For Homestay Providers Who Do Not Provide Guardianship (See Annex B)**

- Check in with the student every day with regards to physical and socio-emotional well-being. Alert the guardian if any matter arises.
- Provide breakfast and dinner for weekdays; all meals on weekends
- Ensure that the student is properly attired and reports to the school on time
- Keep communication lines open with the school through email, SMS or phone
- Monitor the student's computer and internet usage
- Monitor the student's weekend activities
- Monitor the student's observance of curfews

### **For Homestay Providers Who Are Also Guardians**

### **Before starting school**

- Contact parents directly to establish personal working relationship and to understand the student better
- Check on flight details and to work on pick-up arrangement of the student
- Arrange for viewing and interview with the Hall (ACS (Independent) Boarding or Oldham Hall)
- Help the student get essential things
- Accompany the student to school for orientation and to attend briefing for new parents/guardians
- Assist with student pass matters
- Ensure that the student has international health insurance coverage

### **After starting school**

- Check in with the student at least once a week via text message
- Catch up with the student in person at least once a month
- Update the parents regularly (at least once a fortnight or as arranged with the parents)
- Sign consent forms
- Alert the school on medical issues/absences/late-coming of the student
- Assist with the student's overseas travel arrangements
- Liaise with the school on the student's discipline matters
- Ensure that the student is properly attired and reports to the school on time
- Keep communication lines with the school open through email, SMS or telephone
- Monitor the student's progress in school, both in academic and co-curricular activities
- Monitor the student's computer and internet usage
- Monitor the student's weekend activities
- Monitor the student's expenditure
- Acknowledge the receipt of communications from school through email
- Read the monthly newsletter
- Attend all Parent-Teacher Meetings with the student
- If there are changes in boarding arrangement from hostel to homestay after the mandatory one year, the guardian is to assist the student, in collaboration with the ISC, in looking for a school-approved homestay. Should guardianship be changed during the one-year transition, the school and parents must be kept informed.

### **Monitoring**

The ISC conducts mid-year review on satisfaction level of the parents and the student with regards to care and duties carried out by the homestay/hostel provider.

The ISC conducts end-of-year review on satisfaction level of the parents and the student with regards to care and duties carried out by the homestay/hostel provider.

The ISC investigates any complaint lodged against providers and where necessary, discontinues the homestay services provided by the said homestay provider.

### **Monetary Rewards**

The school does not, in any form, take monetary reward for the matching of homestay/hostel providers. No school staff member is to be paid any commission for recommending or matching of homestay/hostel providers nor should any be offered, whether in cash or in kind, to any staff in exchange for favours. The \$560 fees collected by the school for international students with student pass goes to a generic pool of school funds and not as payment for the services of the ISC directly.

The monetary aspect is a private arrangement between the parents and the homestay/hostel providers, of which the school does not concern itself with in any way.

The school nor any staff member is responsible for the fulfillment of any contractual arrangement between the parents and homestay/hostel providers.



## **ANNEX A**

### **What To Include In The Homestay Contract**

- Full legal names of the parent, student and homestay provider
- Duration of contract
- Example: 1/1/2017–31/12/2018
- The school recommends a yearly contract as it provides ample time for mutually agreed changes to terms and clauses.
- Coverage of contract
- The expectations covered in the policy guide must be included, in addition to any other terms proposed by the individual homestay provider.
- Payment matters
- Example: Mode of transfer, Date of transfer
- Amount of deposit to be collected
- Emergency contact numbers
- \*Termination of contract. Essential points to include:
- Under what circumstances
- Notice period
- Refund policy (especially the calculation of the due amount)

*\*Parents and students must be fully aware and comfortable with the clause for the termination of individual homestay contract with regards to the refund policy before they sign the contract.*

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## **ANNEX B**

### **What Homestay Providers Need To Know About The Student**

- Any food allergy?
  - Any medicine allergy?
  - Any medical condition?
  - What is the blood type of the student?
  - Does the student have an international student insurance?
  - Any relative in Singapore?
  - Any person to contact in case of emergency, other than the parents (should they be uncontactable)?
  - How do the parents want the homestay provider to discipline the student, e.g. grounding, reduction of allowances?
  - What subjects are the student weak in?
  - \*What subjects do the student require tuition in?
- \*Homestay providers must note that teachers of ACS (International) are not allowed, under the school policy, to tutor any of the students even if they are not teaching the students directly.*
- Any other matters that arise from any conversation with the parents and the student



# Boarding

## BOARDING

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.

**Please note that while ACS Oldham Hall and ACS (Independent) Boarding Halls have the ACS logo and the ACS name, they are separate institutions from ACS (International) and are administered by the Singapore Ministry of Education.**

### STUDENT EXPECTATIONS – BOARDING PROVIDERS

#### ACS (International) 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.

#### Preamble

Students of ACS (International) may choose to stay in Oldham Hall or ACS (Independent) Boarding Houses. It is important for families of ACS (International) to know that these Boarding Houses are not part of ACS (International). They are separate organisations who work under Ministry of Education Policies and Procedures. In addition to this, staff at the Boarding Houses are not appointed or employed by ACS (International). While ACS (International) has no formal oversight of the Boarding Halls, the school does maintain a positive relationship with Boarding Hall Management.

Each Boarding House has its own Policies and Procedure that all students should familiarise themselves once they become residents. ACS (International) requires its students to follow the Policies and Procedures of the Boarding House they live in. Any agreement, entered into in relation to the Boarding Houses, is with the Boarding Houses and not with ACS (International). While ACS (International) staff, such as the International Student Coordinator, can help students with issues, they will not get involved in formal disputes e.g. financial or legal disputes.

ACS (International) may from time to time place its staff in Boarding Houses to help support students. It is important to note that while there may be ACS (International) staff in the Boarding Halls, they are not employees of the Boarding Halls.

While ACS (International) does not own or operate with Boarding Hall, it has set the following expectations that students should have about the level of care that is provided to them. If a student believes that they are not getting a satisfactory level of care they should first follow Boarding Hall procedures, and if still not satisfied they are able to raise it with ACS (International)'s International Student Coordinator (ISC). However, it is important to note that the ISC is not an employee of the Boarding Hall and so can only act as a student advocate in appropriate circumstances.

#### Student Expectations for Boarding Halls

It is reasonable to expect the following from Boarding Hall Staff:

- To provide a safe and secure environment to all Boarders.
- In the event of a serious incident, accident or medical emergency involving the student, to follow to provide the necessary care and attention and to promptly notify the school.
- To develop positive relationships with Boarders which are based on mutual trust and communication.



- To acknowledge the uniqueness of each Boarder and the levels of each Boarder's strength and weakness.
- To provide a positive environment where Boarders can flourish.
- To provide for Boarders' needs such as food and drink and secure sleeping arrangements.
- To provide a safe environment with respect to Child Protection and Safeguarding, including trained staff.
- To have clear policies and procedures in place to deal with issues such as bullying and complaints.
- To support and assist Boarders to live comfortably within a foreign environment.
- To respect the Boarder's right to privacy, in accordance to Boarding House policies and procedures while realising that privacy does not equate to isolation.
- To acknowledge the significance of culture, customs, language and beliefs in the life of their Boarder and accommodate appropriately for these.
- To assist, support and nurture where needed or requested.
- To ensure that the Boarding Hall is suitable for habitation and complies with all applicable laws and standards.
- To liaise with ACS (International) staff regarding any concerns or difficulties with Boarders.
- To keep ACS (International) informed of any serious issues with Boarders and seek help and support where necessary.



## OLDHAM HALL

ACS Oldham Hall is the longest-established boarding institution in Singapore and a 'Home Away From Home' to more than 300 students studying in local and international schools. We pride ourselves in being a Premier Boarding Hall that parents, schools and MOE alike trust for the well-being of their children and students.

We focus on 5 "Cs"

1. Pastoral Care
2. Community Living
3. Living Conditions
4. Connectedness to Family
5. Christian Values

### **Pastoral Care**

Our boarding staff are selected because of their passion and dedication to work with young people. They provide loving yet firm pastoral care to boarders, and organize the many activities and events that are unique to ACS Oldham Hall for the well-being and all-rounded growth of our boarders.

### **Community Living**

ACS Oldham Hall prepares young people for life through living in a diverse community, and learning to be gracious and considerate towards one another. We are proud to have a family atmosphere in ACS Oldham Hall that supports our boarders' social development.

### **Living Conditions**

We provide a safe and secure boarding environment for our boarders, conducive for studying. A variety of facilities and amenities are provided for our boarders' comfort and convenience.

### **Connectedness to Family**

The family is the most important unit of society, and our Hall seeks to ensure boarders remain connected to their own families though far away from home.

### **Christian Values**

ACS Oldham Hall operates based on Christian values. We believe in the holistic development of our boarders to maximise their fullest potential as individuals of value in God's sight, and seek to nurture them into mature caring individuals that contribute to society.





## BOARDER'S ROOM

Every room is fully equipped with WiFi and Air-conditioning.

Each boarder has a personal study table (with chair), book shelf, bed, wardrobe and wastepaper bin. There is also additional storage space under the bed for bulky items. Bed linen is provided, although boarders may opt to use their own.



All boarders are expected to maintain the cleanliness and tidiness of their own rooms, as this forms part of development with healthy living habits.

There are 3 types of Boarder's Rooms: 2-bedded, 3-bedded, 4-bedded.

Allocation is subject to the availability and decision by the House Master/Mistress.

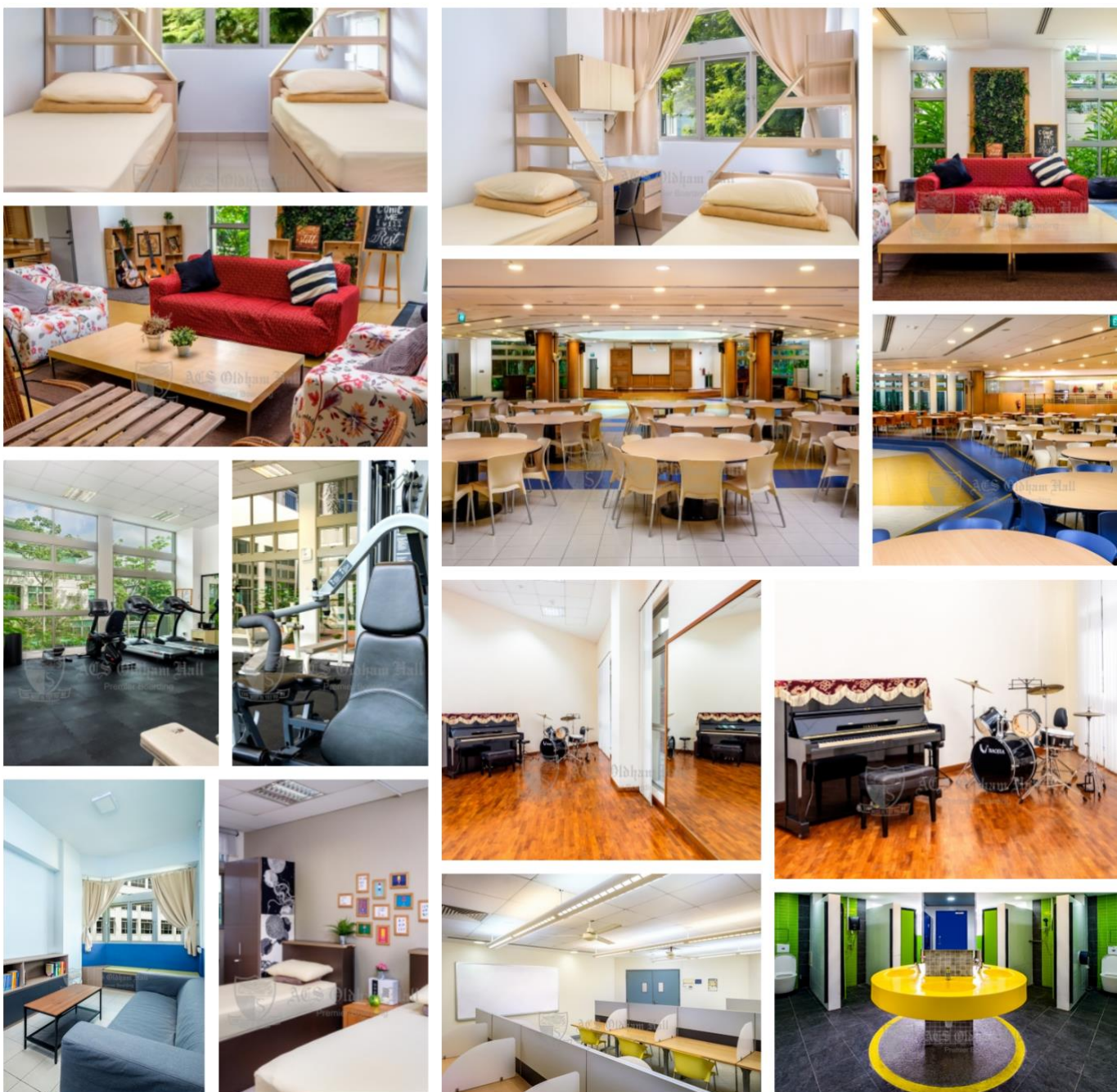
## FACILITIES

ACS Oldham Hall boasts a wide range of facilities to provide boarders convenience and vibrant lifestyle:

- Dining Hall
- Professional Laundry Service & Self-operated Laundry Room
- Gym within the Hall at Level 1
- Table-Tennis area
- BBQ Pit (at the Courtyard)
- Snack Counter + Vending Machines

ACS Oldham Hall also books facilities from the ACS (Barker Road) campus for the use of our boarders:

- Swimming Pool (on Sundays, 2pm – 6pm)
- Sports Hall (indoor Basketball and Badminton courts) – Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays



## Nearby Amenities

ACS Oldham Hall is conveniently located in the central part of Singapore, with easy access to convenience stores, clinic, supermarket and eateries nearby. Newton MRT is around 10 minutes away by bus or 15 minutes by foot.

## Care Structure

Besides providing a safe and secure environment, ACS Oldham Hall strongly believes in the development of the individual as a whole person – physical, emotional, intellectual as well as spiritual. ACS Oldham Hall offers a family atmosphere that is caring with an international community of friends.



### Meal Time

Meals are freshly prepared, cooked and served in our Dining Hall by our in-house caterer. Boarders usually have Breakfast (6am-8am) & Dinner (6pm-7.30pm) on weekdays as they take their lunch in schools. Lunch (12pm-2pm) is served every Saturday, Sunday, School Holiday and Public Holiday.



### Study Time

From Mondays – Thursdays, there is compulsory Study Time from 7.30pm- 9.30pm where boarders will use the Study Room.



### Roll Call/Lights Out

After Study Time, boarders gather at 9.30pm for Roll Call where the residential Assistant House Master/Mistress (AHM) for the Cluster/Floor will take attendance to ensure that all have returned safely and any unwell boarder(s) will be noted. Sometimes, there are mini birthday celebrations during this time. Lights Out will be at 11pm.



### Pastoral Care

To facilitate the holistic development of boarders into mature and caring young people who can contribute meaningfully to the local and international community, we provide a secure and supportive environment to affirm all boarders as valued persons with potential in the eyes of God and care for their well-being in order to support their growth as well-rounded individuals.





## BOARDING LIFE

At ACS Oldham Hall, our boarders learn to have a disciplined lifestyle which will do them well to become responsible students. We strongly encourage our boarders to balance their time for studies and recreation. ACS Oldham Hall also organises a wide range of Hall activities that will enrich the lives and boarding experience of our boarders and develop them to their fullest potential.

### Care Structure

ACS Oldham Hall offers a family atmosphere that is safe, secure and caring with an international community of friends.



### Events



ACS Oldham Hall has a vibrant and interesting student life. Besides our main events – Orientation Games, Founder's Day Challenge, Celebration of Cultures and Thanksgiving Dinner, there are other fun-filled activities throughout the year.

ACS Oldham Hall offers a family atmosphere that is safe, secure and caring with an international community of friends.

## ACS (INDEPENDENT) BOARDING SCHOOL

Established in 1994, the ACS (Independent) Boarding School is home to about 500 students and staff. Each hall has carefully selected resident staff who provide a balance of academic and pastoral support.

The ACS (Independent) Boarding School aims to:

- Provide a comfortable, secure and caring environment for living and learning
- Inculcate moral and social values based on Christian principles and virtues
- Foster esprit d'corps and develop leadership potential in a closely knit community
- Enhance self-confidence and nurture a sense of communal responsibility
- Encourage holistic development through a wide range of enrichment, cultural, recreational and sporting activities

### Management

All Hall Masters and Hall Tutors are also ACS (Independent) either teachers or alumni ensuring that boarders receive the same high standard of education, care and support throughout the whole day.

The Warden is assisted in the day-to-day running of the Boarding School by various administrative, maintenance, cleaning, custodial and security staff.

### Rooms

Each Hall of Residence has rooms with 6 beds, 4 beds or 2 beds. Allocation of boarders to rooms is done by the Hall Staff, who takes into account the age, responsibility level, and specific needs of each boarder.

Each room has attached bathroom facilities, built-in cupboards and desks. Hot water, air-conditioning and ceiling fans are also provided. The Halls each have one/two lounges, television, internet access, a pantry and study rooms for common use.

### Facilities

The Boarding School provides a number of services and facilities for the safety and well-being of our Boarders:

- Wireless Internet Access
- Daily laundry (washing and ironing)
- Weekly change of bed linen and blankets
- Daily meals including breakfast, lunch (on holidays and weekends), dinner and supper

Health matters are looked after by the Matron, a registered nursing officer based in the Boarding School Medical Centre. There are also clinics and the National University Hospital nearby.

## FAQs

### **Who can stay in the Boarding School? Is it open to non-ACS (Independent) students?**

The Boarding School is open to ACS (Independent) and ACS (International) students. External groups may also make bookings for residential programmes such as camps.

### **What do the costs cover?**

The cost includes boarders' accommodation, meals and laundry services.

### **Why isn't lunch provided on weekdays?**

Weekday lunches are not provided as students and staff are in school during that time. Lunch can easily be purchased from the Students' Activity Centre in School.

### **How are meals in the Boarding School served?**

All meals are served in the Dining Hall. Breakfast, lunch (weekends and Public/School Holidays) can be taken as individuals at specified times. Dinner is served at 1900h and is taken together as a Boarding School family. Students and staff all eat together, in tables of four. Dinner typically comprises rice, soup, a meat dish, a vegetable dish, a side dish and a fruit. For boarders who do not take beef and pork, there are alternatives when the meat is served. Dietary constraints on medical and religious grounds must be declared on the registration form. A Food Committee with representatives from the staff and student body ensures that the food served is nutritious and feedback for improvements is welcomed. Weekend meals (Friday dinner, Saturday and Sunday breakfast, lunch and dinner) must be ordered through the on-line meal-booking system by Wednesday 2359h to reduce wastage.

### **What about meals outside of meal times? Can I keep food in the Hall?**

Boarders are allowed to keep their stocks, carefully labelled with name and date, in the refrigerator in the pantry area. A microwave, oven toaster and kettle is provided to prepare snacks. Water-coolers are provided.

### **How is laundry managed?**

On registration, boarders are provided with a Laundry Number, marker pens, laundry bag and locker with padlock. All clothing sent to the laundry room will need to be marked clearly and sent to the laundry on a daily basis. The team of laundry maids will wash, iron and return clothes to the specified locker number for collection.

### **What if there is an emergency?**

The Boarding School carries out emergency exercises to prepare students for emergency situations that might happen in the Boarding School. All boarders are briefed of safety precautions and evacuation routes at the beginning of each semester and for all newcomers.

### **What happens if my child/ward is taken ill?**

If your child/ward is taken ill, you will be contacted and you may wish to take him/her home or he/she can be taken care of by the boarding staff in his/her room or in the medical centre. A health form will need to be completed on registration to enable proper medical attention when needed. Medical bills will be borne by the boarder.

There is a Matron based in the Medical Centre and there are clinics and hospitals nearby. There are facilities for isolation if needed.

### **What do I need to bring when checking-in?**

Bring school uniforms and clothing for out-of-school hours. Bed linen (bedsheets and pillow cases) and blankets are provided and boarders are required to change them weekly. New bed linen and blankets are provided through the laundry locker weekly.



# **Homestay Providers**



## HOMESTAY PROVIDERS

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.

**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.

If you are considering moving your child into Homestay it is strongly recommended that families liaise with the ISC to get their opinion about what options would be best for you child. The school promotes Approved Homestays as they meet a set of standards set by the school. While families may appoint a Homestay provider that is not on the Approved Homestay list, the school advises against this. The school also recommends that where possible the Homestay provider and Guardian are the same person.

## HOMESTAY POLICY

ACS (International) requires all international students who are residing in Singapore without their parents to stay in suitable accommodations. The policy sets out the expectation of the Homestay Provider's role.

### Types of Approved Accommodations

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 benefits that come from boarding experience while studying in an overseas country. The advantage Boarding has over Homestay is that students are in an environment where there is a high level of adult supervision.

### Approved Homestay Providers

The school screens potential homestay providers and conducts annual checks on its Approved homestay providers. To become an Approved Homestay Provider, they must meet the following criteria:

- They must be 30 years old and above.
- They must be a Singapore citizen/Singapore Permanent Resident/Employment Pass Holder.
- There must **NOT** be a ratio of more than 1 adult:10 students.
- They must be willing to comply with the school's Code of Conduct for Homestay Providers.
- They must have and understood the ACS (International) Accommodation Handbook.
- They must have completed ACS (International)'s Child Protection and Safeguarding Training, and provide the school with a copy of their completion certificate.
- They must be willing to disclose particulars of all persons living in the Homestay including Domestic Workers.
- They must be willing to visits by the ISC on an annual basis or as required e.g., student has asked an ISC to visit or there the school has a concern.
- All adults who live in the homestay premises must **NOT** have a current/history of criminal or mental illness record.
- All homestay providers must submit a Statutory Declaration stating that they do not have a criminal conviction, do not have a mental illness and do not have a drug dependency.
- They must be willing to have single gender homestay arrangement OR have gender-specific floors in which case, both male and female residents **MUST** have different bathrooms.
- Male homestay providers can **ONLY** accept male students

For a list of Approved Homestay Providers please 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.

### **Other Homestay Providers**

Families sometimes source Homestay accommodation through a Homestay Provider who does not, or has not attempted, to meet the criteria to become an Approved Homestay Provider. Using an unapproved homestay provider carries risk as the school has no relationship with them, they do not understand the school's expectations on the level of care expected and we cannot guarantee that we can inspect the home for areas that would concern us, such as poor child protection and safeguarding practices, unhygienic or unsuitable living arrangements and/or insecure premises.

### **Homestay Providers and Guardians**

The school strongly recommends that where possible the student's Guardian and Homestay Provider are the same person. In cases where they are different people, the school's experience has been that in some cases when issues arise neither the Guardian or the Homestay Provider take responsibility for the actions of the child and believe that it is the responsibility of the other person to deal with the issue. For example, in the case where is frequently late to school, the Homestay Provider may say it is not their responsibility to get the child to school, and the Guardian can say it's not their responsibility to get the child out of bed in the morning.

### **Homestay Providers Duties**

The duties expected of a Homestay Provider can be found in the Homestay Provider – Code of Conduct. However, when the Homestay Provider is also the child's Guardian families should also expect the following:

#### **Before starting school**

- Contact parents directly to establish personal working relationship and to understand the student better
- Check on flight details and to work on pick-up arrangement of the student
- Help the student get essential things
- Accompany the student to school for orientation and to attend briefing for new parents/guardians
- Assist with student pass matters
- Ensure that the student has international health insurance coverage

#### **After starting school**

- Update the parents regularly (at least once a fortnight or as arranged with the parents)
- Sign consent forms
- Alert the school on medical issues/absences/late-coming of the student
- Assist with the student's overseas travel arrangements
- Liaise with the school on the student's discipline matters
- Ensure that the student is properly attired and reports to the school on time
- Keep communication lines with the school open through email, SMS or telephone
- Monitor the student's progress in school, both in academic and co-curricular activities
- Monitor the student's computer and internet usage
- Monitor the student's weekend activities
- Monitor the student's expenditure
- Acknowledge the receipt of communications from school through email
- Read the monthly newsletter
- Attend Parent-Teacher Meetings with the student



## Homestay Guidance

The school's preference is for students to reside in Boarding Halls due to the higher level of adult supervision. However, the school understands that Homestay does have some advantages and that some families prefer this option.

For families that prefer Homestay, the parents/guardians must get in touch with the ISC regarding availability and are encouraged to view a few places before they commit. They should also consider the questions:

- Is the Homestay Provider an Approved Homestay Provider, where the level of service and care is likely to be higher and the property will be inspected by ACS (International) staff?
- What is the preferred location?
- Is the student willing to travel? What is the maximum distance the student is willing to explore?
- What kind of room is the student looking at, e.g., single or double-sharing?
- Does the student prefer a smaller homestay or a community-based one?
- What is the parent's budget?

As a guide to families, the fees for Homestay in Singapore typically ranges from an average of \$1,600/month for double-sharing to \$2,500 for a single room. Homestay providers should provide meals, laundry and cleaning services, wifi and supervision of school work within a home setting.

## Homestay Provider – Failure To Meet School Expectations

If ACS (International) is not satisfied that the Homestay Provider is meeting the requirements as set out in this document, ACS (International) will work with the Homestay provider to meet the requirements.

In cases where requirements are continually not met, or where ACS (International) has a serious concern over the welfare of the student, the school will require the student to move out of the Homestay. If this does not occur the school may suspend or terminate a student's enrolment until it is satisfied that an alternative and suitable Homestay has been found.

## Monetary Rewards

The school does not, in any form, take monetary reward for the matching of homestay/hostel providers. No school staff member is to be paid any commission for recommending or matching of homestay/hostel providers nor should any be offered, whether in cash or in kind, to any staff in exchange for favours.

The monetary aspect is a private arrangement between the parents and the homestay/hostel providers, of which the school does not concern itself.

The school nor any staff member is responsible for the fulfillment of any contractual arrangement between the parents and homestay/hostel providers.

## Homestay Contracts

- Full legal names of the parent, student and homestay provider
- Duration of contract
- Example: 1/1/2017–31/12/2018
- The school recommends a yearly contract as it provides ample time for mutually agreed changes to terms and clauses.
- Coverage of contract
- The expectations covered in the policy guide must be included, in addition to any other terms proposed by the individual homestay provider.
- Payment matters
- Example: Mode of transfer, Date of transfer
- Amount of deposit to be collected
- Emergency contact numbers
- \*Termination of contract. Essential points to include:
  - Under what circumstances
  - Notice period
  - Refund policy (especially the calculation of the due amount)

\* Parents and students must be fully aware and comfortable with the clause for the termination of individual homestay contract with regards to the refund policy before they sign the contract.

## Important Information for Homestay Providers

- Any food allergy?
- Any medicine allergy?
- Any medical condition?
- What is the blood type of the student?
- Does the student have an international student insurance?
- Any relative in Singapore?
- Any person to contact in case of emergency, other than the parents (should they be uncontactable)?
- How do the parents want the homestay provider to discipline the student, e.g., grounding, reduction of allowances?
- What subjects are the student weak in?
- Any other matters that arise from any conversation with the parents and the student

The school cannot enforce a Code of Conduct on Homestay Providers. However, Approved Homestay Providers have agreed to the following Code of Conduct. For Homestays that are not approved the provider has not formally agreed with the school to abide by the Code of conduct set out below.

## CODE OF CONDUCT – HOMESTAY PROVIDERS

### ACS (International) 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.

### Preamble

ACS (International) is accredited by the Council of International Schools. To be awarded and maintain this accreditation ACS (International) is required to provide a high standard of oversight of students in Homestay arrangements to ensure their well-being. In cases where Homestay providers do not meet the school's expectations, as guided by the Council of International Schools, the student will need to relocate from their Homestay provider in order to remain enrolled at ACS (International).

Quality for our Homestay program is maintained by the Homestay Providers meeting the expectations in the following areas:

- Responsible Adult(s)
- High quality accommodation standards
- Supervision and Care
- Medical and Emergency procedures
- Communication with the School

Activities to ensure quality include monitoring, Homestay evaluation and follow-up actions performed by responsible staff at ACS (International) in partnership with the student, their family, Guardian and Homestay provider. Continual monitoring, evaluation and improvement to our Homestay program leads to a better experience for Homestay students and hosts and an improved reputation for our Homestay service.

This Code of Conduct outlines all activities associated with maintaining quality so stakeholders are aware of the expectations and the high standards demanded of the Homestay providers who accommodate ACS (International) students. There is also a Code of Conduct for ACS (International) staff about the provision of service expected of them in relation to Homestay oversight.

### Expectations for Adult(s)

Homestay Providers are expected to:

- Develop positive relationships with homestay students which are based on mutual trust and communication
- Acknowledge the uniqueness of each homestay student and the levels of each homestay student's strength and weakness
- Support and assist homestay students to live comfortably within a foreign environment
- Respect the homestay student's right to privacy while realising that privacy does not equate to isolation
- Acknowledge the significance of culture, customs, language and beliefs in the life of their Homestay student and accommodate appropriately for these within the family's life
- Assist, support and nurture where needed or requested, but keeping in mind that a desire to please may be interpreted as interfering by the homestay student



To achieve this desired outcome the Homestay Provider will:

- Report any Child Protection or Safeguarding concerns they have in regards to the student
- Report all suspicions of harm to a child or young person as a result of abuse or neglect in accordance with ACS (International)'s policies and procedures
- Allow ACS (International) staff to view the property and to perform the standard Homestay inspection on request
- Provide a safe environment which will offer the homestay student positive experiences while living as a member of a family and engaging in positive study habits
- Provide the homestay student with a private, clean and ventilated bedroom, good quality, fresh healthy food, frequent laundry facilities and a supportive environment
- Provide breakfast, lunch and dinner (unless otherwise required)
- Offer help, guidance, support and encouragement with language practice, studies
- Provide an orientation within the family home e.g. use of pool area and house facilities and security Applicable house rules should be explained e.g. what time dinner is, telephone protocols, rules regarding guests visiting, curfews, household tasks and bathroom conduct
- Offer sincere interest in the cultural background of the homestay student
- Respect the homestay student's need for privacy and allow them space to be alone
- Have a duty of care towards the homestay student
- Liaise with ACS (International) staff regarding any concerns or difficulties
- Notify ACS (International) staff of any change of circumstances in the household
- Be responsive to the cultural differences and beliefs of the Homestay student by allowing the homestay student to continue familiar cultural practices without criticism
- Adhere to guidelines set down by the International Students Pastoral Care Coordinator and attend the International Students Pastoral Care Coordinator information sessions and parent/teacher conferences if required
- Ensure that the homestay residence is suitable for habitation and complies with all applicable laws and standard

## **Expectations of Accommodation**

The Homestay Provider must provide the student with appropriate accommodation and living assistance, including:

- full board in a clean, tidy household that has been approved as the homestay residence
- a safe, secure, private bedroom with suitable storage space for clothes, personal effects and study materials
- suitable facilities for study including a desk, a chair and adequate lighting
- access to bathroom and laundry facilities
- access to household items, such as towels, sheets, blankets and eating/cooking utensils
- any keys, alarms or passwords required for the student to have free access to the Homestay Residence
- a general orientation to the local area and community facilities that are available
- providing access to the use of television, telephone, computer and internet facilities as mutually agreed between family and student, assistance with additional connections if appropriate, and negotiated proper use within the home

The Homestay Provider must:

- negotiate house rules including agreed curfews with the student, which must be shared with ACS (International) staff if requested
- notify the school four weeks in advance if the homestay provider proposes to materially change the homestay residence
- advise the school as soon as reasonably practicable of any wilful damage done to the homestay residence by the student

## **Expectations of Supervision and Care**

The Homestay provider must:

- ensure that the student is appropriately supervised at all times throughout the duration of the homestay by:
  - maintaining suitable supervision of the student outside of school hours
  - monitoring the student's general welfare including the student's social activities
  - confirming with the student and the ACS International that appropriate approval has been obtained by the student prior to the student participating in travel and activities
- notify the school if they are temporarily unable to provide accommodation for, or supervision of, the student



## **Expectations in Medical and Emergency Situations**

The Homestay Provider must:

- in the event of a serious incident, accident or medical emergency involving the student, promptly notify the school
- assist the student to access any necessary medical, dental, hospital or other health-related services as required

## **Expectations in Communication with the School**

The Homestay Provider must:

- provide the college with their contact details and keep the details current by notifying ACS (International) within 1 day of any change
- advise ACS (International) at least 2 weeks in advance of any changes to the household occupants of the Homestay Residence, or as soon as practicable if advance notice is not possible
- use all reasonable means to attend all relevant meetings and information sessions arranged by the college in relation to the Homestay Program

## **Withdrawal of services by the Homestay Provider**

The homestay provider may withdraw their services by providing written notice to ACS (International).

## **Withdrawal of services by ACS (International)**

If ACS (International) is not satisfied that the Homestay provider is meeting the requirements as set out in this document, ACS (International) will work with the Homestay provider to meet the requirements.

In cases where requirements are continually not met, or where ACS (International) has a serious concern over the welfare of the student, the school will require the student to move out of the Homestay. If this does not occur the school may suspend or terminate a student's enrolment until it is satisfied that an alternative and suitable Homestay has been found.



The Code of Conduct below is how the International Student Coordinator (ISC) will conduct themselves in relation to Homestay Providers.

## CODE OF CONDUCT – ISC IN RELATION TO HOMESTAY

### Expectations of ACS (International) Homestay Staff

In arranging Homestay accommodation for international students, the International Student Coordinator and ACS staff will:

- Familiarise providers with the culture and education philosophy of the homestay program and homestay students through in-service support and individual awareness
- Be aware of the needs of the homestay students and have processes in place to support and assist them
- Identify any personal prejudices and biases and promote awareness and an adherence to ethical standards
- Accept flexibility of regulations and communication practices that may be necessary to meet the diverse and variable needs of homestay students
- Adhere to non-discriminatory practices set out by the institution based on race, age, gender, ethnicity, disability and socio-economic backgrounds
- Keep all possible communications open, honest and appropriate to the situation
- Put the best learning interests of individual homestay students above all other financial and organisational needs as without this focus the impact on the homestay experience can be extremely negative
- Act with sensitivity and discretion and enact a process of crisis management, in time of grief and trauma
- Have access to opportunities for professional development with regard to the provision of homestay care and meeting the needs of homestay students
- Maintain the confidentiality of homestay hosts and homestay students' right to privacy under the terms of privacy and anti-discrimination acts
- Have emergency contact information provided for key ACS (International) staff for use in emergencies

### Best Practices

In arranging Homestay accommodation for international students, the ACS (International) staff will:

- Provide ongoing support to homestay hosts and international students as necessary
- Advise homestay host and international students of the expectations of homestay by means of orientation, written documents and information, and orientation sessions if needed
- Inspect all providers and homes registered in the homestay program and provide an orientation of the expectations/requirements of the program
- Visit each homestay provider and place each student in a home which is, to the best knowledge and belief, a safe and suitable home for international students
- Ensure all international students under the age of 18 years are placed in appropriate families that meet all legal requirements
- Encourage networking contacts to ensure the quality of all providers enlisted in the program is maintained
- Monitor the number of household members to homestay student ratio
- Ensure payment arrangements are confirmed with the homestay hosts
- Follow up any complaint made by homestay students/providers in an appropriate timeframe
- Respect and be responsive to the beliefs and diversity of cultural requirements of homestay hosts and homestay students by providing alternative accommodation immediately if it is believed that the welfare of the student, or host, may be at risk
- Maintain clear communication to all parties in regard to Homestay matters
- Act openly and professionally in all dealings with other Homestay providers and institutions
- Ensure that the confidentiality of Homestay hosts and homestay students is preserved
- Schedule regular meetings with the provider and inspections of the physical property



## CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING ACCOMMODATION POLICY

### ACS (International) Guiding Statements

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.

#### *Child Protection and Safeguarding*

Child Protection is defined as being the measures taken to prevent and respond to child abuse. Safeguarding refers to the protective practices in place in order to minimise the likelihood of child abuse.

ACS (International) will support families and students who have concerns about child protection and safeguarding issues while in Singapore. However, it is important that ACS (International) families and students understand that the safeguarding of students while in their accommodation is the responsibility of the family appointed Guardian, Homestay Provider and Boarding Hall.

The section below is provided to families to help them understand the principles of Child Protection and Safeguarding that should be expected from accommodation providers.

#### *What is Child Abuse?*

Commission or omission that would endanger or impair the child's physical or emotional well-being or that are judged inappropriate. It includes all types of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, negligence and commercial or other exploitation, which results in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.

This definition also recognises and includes peer-to-peer abuse, that is inappropriate behaviour of children towards other children.

### Accommodation Providers

Accommodation providers should fundamentally believe that all children have the right to a life that is free from harm and abuse. They should have policies, practices and procedures in place to provide an environment that is free from abuse. The principles that are used to guide these are as follows:

#### Guiding Principles

- All children have equal rights to be protected from harm and abuse.
- Everybody has a responsibility to support the protection of children.
- Accommodation Providers have a duty of care to children in their care.
- All actions on child protection are taken with the best interests of the child, which are paramount.
- The Accommodation Provider is clear in that it describes how it is committed to preventing and responding appropriately if children are harmed, or if allegations of harm to children are made.

### Homestay

Homestay parents are required to exercise a duty of care towards international students. It is therefore necessary for homestay families to be aware of the following when they host international students:

- Homestay Providers are aware of their responsibilities in relation to Child Protection and Safeguarding.
- A knowledge and understanding of the needs of adolescents
- An understanding of cultural, linguistic and religious differences
- An understanding of the needs of young people away from their home environment
- A flexible approach to matters of discipline, house rules and cooperative living
- What to do if a problem occurs.
- The has formal procedures for determining the character of adults who interact with students. These procedures may include criminal record, background checks or other such means as may be suitable based upon the risk posed to the students.



## Boarding Halls

Boarding Halls tend to offer a higher level of care and support to students when compared to Homestay. For this reason ACS (International) requires students who are new to Singapore to reside within the Boarding Hall for the first year of their study at ACS (International), unless they are able to live with an immediate family member. Once a student has completed one year in the Boarding Hall, they may seek a different Accommodation Provider, however in most cases the school recommends that they remain in the Boarding Halls due to the higher level of care and support students are offered.

The Boarding Hall should have:

- Specific child protection policies, practices and training to ensure the safety and welfare of all students.
- Formal procedures to obtain and verify references for prospective and existing staff.
- Developed and adopted a code of conduct and written guidelines for appropriate and inappropriate behaviour of adults towards children and children towards other children. All faculty, staff, volunteers and contractors acknowledge that they have read the code of conduct and agree to abide by it.
- A scheduled programme of regular, systematic professional training for volunteers, contractors, faculty and staff on student safeguarding, child abuse prevention, recognition, intervention and reporting.
- Developed structured procedures for reporting suspected or disclosed maltreatment or abuse, including disclosure of abuse that may have taken place in the past history of the Boarding Hall, and adopts a formal policy identifying actions to be taken, including informing appropriate authorities.
- Develop meaningful and effective relationships with external organisations, schools and bodies that are able to provide appropriate support and advice on matters related to child protection.
- Child protection measures are integrated with all procedures and systems (strategic planning, budgeting, recruitment, programme management, performance management, procurement, partner agreements, risk management and management systems etc.)
- Due regard is given to building and facility design, layout, designation and use to ensure best practice in child safety and protection, within the context of the host country.
- Be cognizant of cultural expectations and complies with the legal and ethical expectations and requirements regarding child abuse within the country in which it operates.
- All reports of suspected or disclosed abuse and any actions taken by the Boarding Hall are securely archived, regardless of the conclusions reached.
- Areas around the Boarding Hall may be marked as gender specific areas, most commonly toilet and change room facilities. These areas should only be entered into by people of that gender. However, if there is a requirement for someone of the opposite gender to enter they should do so by clearly marking the area as closed and with clear notification of opposite gender working in that area. They should not do this in isolation but should do so with the knowledge and approval of the Boarding Hall.

## Child Protection Support and Advice

For further information about Child Protection and Safeguarding families can use the following resources:

- International Task Force on Children Protection
- Child Protection Service, Ministry of Social and Family Development, Singapore
- Ministry of Education, Singapore

## APPENDIX: HOMESTAY SITE VISIT CHECKLIST

The Homestay Checklist below shows the checks that are conducted annually or as required by Approved Homestay providers. Homestay providers that are not approved may not be checked.

Homestay Students				
Name	Age	Gender	Nationality	Time lived in this homestay

Homestay Particulars			
Family Name		First Name	
Address			
Contact Phone Number		Phone Number	
Type of Residence (House, Condo etc)		Languages Spoken in Home	
What is the Max Homestay students in the house?		How many Homestay students are currently living in the house?	
Who is the adult in charge of the homestay house?		Does the adult in charge live in the homestay house?	
Homestay Provider has signed copy of Code of Conduct?		Homestay provider also acts as Guardian?	

Family members residing in the home				
Name	Age	Gender	Relationship to homestay provider	Occupation



### Details of House Rules

Observations	Comments
Curfew	
Visitors	
Digital rules	
Cooking	
Cleaning	
Study times	

### Home Environment Checklist

Checklist Items	Comments
Students have access to adequate laundry facilities?	
Students have access to adequate washing facilities?	
Students have access to adequate cooking/eating facilities?	
Students have access to adequate storage facilities?	
Students have access to adequate heating and cooling facilities?	
Students have access to First Aid materials?	
Students have access to communication e.g. phone?	
Students are aware of how to escape in case of fire?	
Observations of living space (i.e. is it adequate?):	
Furniture / utilities available in student's room (i.e. bed, wardrobe, desk, bookcase, study lamp etc.)	
Cleanliness of kitchen, bathroom/s, bedrooms and general living area (please specify)	
If mixed gender in house is it segregated living/sleeping area?	
Are the grounds of house secure with gate etc	
Do the security arrangements prevent students leaving the house?	
Are the students private areas free from CCTV or similar?	
Are there smoke detectors installed?	





# **Student Management**

Student Management varies depending on the accommodation provider. For example Oldham Hall and ACS (Independent) have different policies, procedures and expectations from each other in terms of Student Management. Homestays are very different from Boarding and each one may have a different set of expectations from students.

Guiding Principles for Student Management by accommodation providers should include:

- Providing a positive experience for the child
- Providing a safe, homely and comfortable environment.
- Providing for the needs of the child.
- Providing excellent pastoral care.
- Providing fair, reasonable and transparent discipline.
- Providing opportunities for the girls to become leaders.
- Foster good communication between the accommodation provider, student, parent, guardian and school.

As the school does not provide Accommodation services it is important that families are making informed choices about their child's accommodation. The areas below are written to provide guidance to families about what acceptable levels of care should be from accommodation providers. They should consider these items when making choices about where their child will live. The ISC is able to help provide their insights to families on this issues as required.



## **BULLYING, HARRASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION**

### **Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination in Private Accommodation**

The Guiding Statements of the school demonstrates its commitment to student well-being by providing a safe environment so that students can flourish across a range of areas. Harassment, bullying and discriminatory behaviours run counter to this goal and so need to be dealt with effectively and fairly.

#### **Guiding Statement**

##### **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.

##### **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.

ACS (International) is not responsible for how accommodation providers oversee issues related to harassment, bullying & discrimination that may occur within their premises. However, the school provides the following guides and recommendations for families, students and accommodation providers to use.

#### **What is Harassment?**

- Harassment is verbal, non-verbal and/or physical attacks on a person by another person or group.
- Harassment may be an ongoing pattern of behaviour, or it may be a single act.
- It is intended to hurt, frighten, embarrass, offend, humiliate, make you feel angry or uncomfortable.
- It is usually deliberate, but it can also be just thoughtless or careless.
- Harassment is behaviour that targets an individual or group due to their identity, race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital, parenting or economic status; age; ability or disability.

#### **What is Bullying?**

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Cyber-bullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies.

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved including bystanders.

#### **What is not Bullying?**

- Conflict or fights between equals and single incidents are not defined as bullying.
- A single incident of malicious or aggressive behaviour is not bullying. This behaviour may still be responded to as unacceptable behaviour and dealt with as part of the School's behaviour management processes.
- Dislike - although social rejection can be hurtful, it is not bullying unless accompanied by repeated and deliberate attempts to distress or hurt.
- Conflict and arguments can be distressing but it is not bullying when two people are both upset and neither one is misusing power over the other. Conflict may still give rise to unacceptable behaviour which will be responded to as part of the School's behaviour management processes.

#### **What is Discrimination?**

Discrimination occurs when people are treated less favourably than others because of their race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital, parenting or economic status; age; ability or disability. Discrimination is often ongoing and commonly involves exclusion or rejection.



## What is Violence?

Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person (s) that results in psychological harm, injury or in some cases death. Violence may involve provoked or unprovoked acts and can be a single incident, a random act or can occur over time.

## Examples of Bullying and Harassment

Here are some **examples** to help you decide about things you **see**, or **do**, or that might happen to you:

- Hitting, kicking, punching, pinching, jostling, pushing or spitting
- Threats, stand-over tactics
- Hiding, damaging or destroying property
- Using offensive names or abusive language
- Teasing
- Sexual abuse, including making suggestive comments, touching or grabbing
- Making insulting comments about another's culture, gender, religious or social background
- Putting a person down about his or her body, abilities or achievements
- Writing graffiti about others, including writing crude notes or making crude drawings
- Insulting or spreading rumours about people or their families
- Deliberate exclusion in order to hurt, frighten, embarrass or humiliate
- Offensive gestures, sounds or sarcastic laughter
- Nasty telephone calls to annoy or upset you and/or your family.

## Cyber Bullying

E-technology provides individuals with a powerful means of communicating instantly with others in both positive and negative ways.

Cyber bullying is bullying which uses e-technology as a means of victimising others. It is the use of internet or mobile technologies - such as email, chat rooms, blogs, discussion groups, instant messaging, twitter, social networking sites, webpages, video sharing or SMS (text messaging) – with the intention of harming another person.

Cyber bullying can include communications that seek to:

- Intimidate
- Control
- Manipulate
- Put down or
- Humiliate

This is achieved through (but not limited to):

- Repeated negative messages
- Sexual and racial harassment
- Denigration
- Impersonation
- Trickery
- Exclusion and
- Cyber stalking.

Cyber bullying can occur from a single act when the message or picture is sent to more than one person. For example, a bully may only press the 'Send' button once, but the choice to send the message to multiple addresses makes the action more than a single incident. Cyber bullying may involve varying levels of severity, ranging from occasional messages to frequently repeated and highly disturbing threats to a person's life. The targeted person often feels powerless and may need help. Further information about ACS (International)'s response to cyber bullying can be found in the Social Media Policy and Mobile Phone Policy.



## What is E-Crime? (Electronic Crime)

Cyber bullying can be an e-crime, a fact often not clearly understood by those involved.

E-crime occurs when a computer or other electronic communication devices (e.g., mobile phones, tablets, e-readers) are used to commit an offence, are targeted in an offence, or act as a storage device in an offence.

## Examples of Possible E-Crime

- Sexting
- Impersonation
- Intimidation
- Harassment
- Publishing suicide or self-harm related material
- Making a threat
- To menace, harass or cause offence

## Suggested Approach By Accommodation Providers

There should be an expectation of respect for all others within the accommodation setting.

In practice, this means we really value the three C's.

**Courtesy** to all

**Cooperation** with each other

**Consideration** for those we meet

When we are harassed, bullied, discriminated against or if we do this to others, our School Community is damaged. We must also understand that harassment, bullying, discrimination and violence may contribute to us becoming angry, humiliated, embarrassed or frightened, and encourages us to retaliate in equally hurtful ways.

**Within private accommodation there should be NO harassment, bullying, discrimination or violence, irrespective of the form, action or mechanism through which it occurs.**

## Reporting

If the bullying is occurring in your accommodation you should let a responsible adult know. This could be the staff in the Boarding Hall, your Homestay Provider, Parents or Guardian.

If you, or you are aware of someone else, are being bullied, harassed or discriminated, it should be reported to the accommodation provider and someone else, for example:

- Telling a teacher e.g., House Tutor or Head of House
- Telling the School Counsellor or International Student Coordinator
- Telling a Vice-Principal
- Telling your parent or guardian and asking them to approach the school on your behalf
- Asking a trusted friend to tell a responsible adult.

You may be asked to complete an Incident Reporting Form, depending on the nature of what you are reporting.

## Principles for Response To Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination

The following Principles are recommended to be followed by accommodation providers as they respond to incidents:

- Listen and take your issue seriously.
- All reported incidents will be dealt with.
- He or she will consult you to reassure you and find out more details.
- He or she will work out the best way to handle the situation.
- There are consequences for harassing behaviours, such as – warnings, detentions and suspension.
- Cases of criminal behaviour will be referred to the Police.
- For repeated offences, the offender may be asked to leave the accommodation



### **All harassment complaints will be handled**

- promptly;
- confidentially;
- impartially; and
- according to the following procedures.

### **Information Will Be Sought**

A suggested approach is outlined below for accommodation providers if a harassment incident is provided. The school invites accommodation providers to involve the school in these processes or to have the school lead the investigation.

The Adviser to whom the complaint was made or referred to will firstly gather full information about the complaint from both the Complainant and the Supposed Offender in the following manner:

### **The Person Making the Complaint**

- The person making the complaint will be interviewed by the Adviser in order to clarify the matter about which the complaint has been made and to determine how they want the complaint resolved. The complainant can request that a support person be present during the interview.
- The adviser will ask the person lodging the complaint to write down in his or her own words what actually happened, but if this is not able to be done, the Adviser will make notes and have the complainant sign agreement to their accuracy.
- The Adviser will interview any witnesses and will make notes of those interviews and have the witness agree the accuracy of those notes.
- The person making the complaint will be asked not to talk to others, however a student who lodges a complaint will be advised to talk to his or her parents about the incident.
- In cases where the complaint relates to cyber bullying, harassment or e-crime evidence will be gathered of the purported offensive material.

### **The Supposed Offender**

- The supposed offender will be interviewed by the Adviser and will be asked to tell in his or her own words what was done, or said, to the complainant.
- If the supposed offender admits that the harassment did take place, he or she will be advised why the action was wrong and will be requested to apologise to the complainant in the company of the Adviser. The offender will also be informed of any further appropriate action.
- If the supposed offender does not admit the harassment, a signed statement will be taken.

The Adviser will interview any additional witnesses who are identified by the supposed offender and will make notes of those interviews and have the witness agree the accuracy of those notes.

### **The Complaint will be Resolved**

#### **a) Is the complaint justified?**

- After weighing up the evidence gathered from the interviews, the Adviser, in consultation with another responsible teacher will make a decision as to the validity of the complaint.
- If it is decided that the complaint was not justified, both parties will meet together with the Adviser for reconciliation.
- If it is decided that the complaint was justified it will be resolved as follows.



**b) Complaint justified – student offends**

- If the complaint is justified and the offender is a student, the Adviser in consultation with another responsible teacher, will decide on the appropriate method of resolution according to the severity of the complaint.
- In each case it would be expected that the offender would apologise to the victim either verbally or in writing. The parents/guardians of the offender, and where appropriate the parents/guardians of the complainant, will be informed in writing of what has happened.
- The Adviser shall take immediate steps to remove, seize, disable any offensive materials (including cyber materials)
- In serious cases, the parents/ guardians of the offender and where appropriate the parents/ guardians of the complainant, will be asked to come to the School separately to discuss the matter with the Principal and Head of School.
- Follow up counselling for both the complainant and offender will be arranged where appropriate.



## HEALTH CARE

Accommodation Providers have a duty of care to those in their care to provide adequate and appropriate access to health services when medical attention is required. The items below are suggestions made by the school to accommodation providers about how to handle the health of students. The responsibility of medical care of student in private accommodation is the providers and not ACS (International)s.

### Emergency Situations

- **In the event of a medical emergency the responsible adult may call an ambulance on 995.**
- The accommodation provider should contact the appropriate parent/guardian regarding the transfer by ambulance to a hospital. Advise the parent/guardian of the student's condition and the hospital to which the student is being transported. If the parent cannot be contacted, the emergency contact for the student shall be contacted.
- Any student travelling by ambulance without a parent/guardian present, should be accompanied by the responsible adult until the parent/guardian is present.

### First Aid Procedures

- Assess the presenting injury or illness.
- Establish the history of the student's injury or illness, e.g. how it occurred, where it occurred, when the student first felt unwell.
- Obtain relevant medical details: past medical history, allergies, current medications, etc.
- Refer to medical action plans supplied by a Medical Practitioner and or Registered Pharmacist (if applicable). Medication will not be issued to any student without a current medical action plan or notification from a medical practitioner for its specific use
- Administer appropriate first aid according to the level of first aid training.
- Where necessary, contact the appropriate parent/guardian regarding further treatment. If further treatment required and unable to contact the appropriate parent/guardian, telephone for an ambulance.
- Any illness or injury that requires more than First Aid management/treatment is to be referred for medical follow-up either via guardian pick up or call 995 to arrange for transported by ambulance to an Emergency Department (to be decided by the ambulance service) of a public hospital.
- In the event that a parent/guardian is unavailable to accompany the student in the ambulance and to the hospital a responsible adult will accompany the child until a parent or guardian arrives.
- Notify ACS (International) of injury and subsequent treatment.
- The accommodation provider will maintain accurate medical records.

### Management of Student Health

To provide ongoing health management for children in their care to, the accommodation provider should;

- Seek the medical background of the student and accurately and securely record this information in an accessible way.
- The accommodation provider asks parents/guardians/student to update the provider in writing of any routine and predictable emergency health care support that may be required.





To provide ongoing quality of service and health management for students to maintain health, the accommodation provider will;

- Liaise with parents/guardians regarding treatments, ongoing management and follow up, such as asthma action plans, diabetes action plans, to obtain relevant information from parents/guardians regarding chronic and ongoing medical conditions.
- Recognise if there is a need for ongoing counselling and refer a student when appropriate.
- Recommend a child sees a doctor or goes to hospital for further assessment if medical need increases.

## **Student MC Procedure**

The school has developed a procedure from the management of student medical certificates (MC's) and parental letters informing the school of injury or ill health which may be emailed to the school or brought into school by the student themselves.

Accommodation providers pass on all details of medical incidents to the school, including Medical Certificates that have been issued to the child in a timely manner.

## **Management of Medications**

The accommodation will be aware of medications that student take, including storage conditions, dosage, frequency, administration, side effects and any other issues related to the medicine.

## **Record Keeping**

Accommodation providers need to keep up to date and accurate records in relation to student health.

- All medical information and records should be treated as confidential information and will only be accessible by authorised responsible adults.
- All information of any routine and predictable emergency health care support that may be required should be recorded.
- The accommodation provider should provide opportunities for the family to update medical records as required.
- Details will be recorded of each instance where a student presents with a medical need.

## BEHAVIOUR AND DISCIPLINE

In private accommodation each resident needs to feel affirmed, respected and safe. In a behaviour context this means there needs to be established levels of acceptable behaviour. Other in the accommodation also need to know the consequences for breaching expected levels of behaviour and for these consequences to be widely understood and adhered to.

Each behaviour case is different, and there is no “rule-book” that can be used to look up a specific set of circumstances and behaviours in order to determine a specific outcome. While some behaviour issues can be relatively simple to identify and resolve, there are times when it is complex due to reasons including insufficient evidence, anonymous offenders, inaccurate reporting of events and conflicting reports. Further difficulties can arise when there are differences in expectations of outcomes from involved parties.

ACS (International) recommends the following to accommodation providers:

In relation to expected levels of behaviour **students** should:

- Be familiar with, understand and follow the behaviour expectations of their accommodation provider.
- Behave in a positive and supportive manner at all times and build positive relationships with others.
- Encourage others to do the same.

In relation to expected levels of behaviour **accommodation providers** should:

- Set high standards and expectations for positive behaviour and communicate these clearly to all stake holders.
- Support the residents in achieving high standards of positive behaviour.
- Encourage and reward positive behaviour at every opportunity.
- Challenge poor behaviour.
- Apply the behaviour expectations consistently and with certainty.
- Support colleagues and students in achieving and maintaining high standards of behaviour.

### Rewards

Accommodation providers may choose to reward students who demonstrate good behaviour. How this works is determined by the accommodation provider. Some suggestions are:

- An encouraging word, ‘well done’, ‘that’s right’, ‘that was good’
- Congratulations and informal communication with parents
- Personalised letters / emails to parents
- Special privileges
- Special suppers
- Treats

### Sanctions

Accommodation providers should aim to use positive reinforcement when it comes to discipline. There is an understanding that mistakes will be made but an importance is placed on learning from these. Residents who adopt inappropriate behaviour or willingly refuse to follow expectations and routines should have suitable consequences applied. Consequences will differ depending on the offence and seriousness.

Consequences may include:

- Removal of privileges
- Grounding
- Curfews
- Detentions
- Increased chores
- Written reflections
- Issuance of demerits
- Warning letters



Please note that the following sanctions should **never be used**:

- Corporal punishment such as hitting, smacking, caning or other similar actions.
- Deprivation of basic needs such as food and drink.
- Deprivation of sleeping quarters.
- Humiliating acts.
- Actions that might be considered as emotional abuse.
- Unreasonable additional work or activities.
- Application of restraint

**Should a student receive sanctions such as these they should notify the school immediately.**

In serious cases the resident may be asked to leave the private accommodation. In these cases the school should be informed as soon as possible. Families can liaise with the ISC to find temporary accommodation while alternate accommodation is found.

### **Restraint**

Physical restraint or seclusion must not be used except in situations where the student's behaviour poses an imminent threat of physical harm or danger to self or others; where such action (i.e. to physically restrain or seclude) would be considered reasonable in all the circumstances; and where there is no less restrictive means of responding in the circumstances. Every effort should be made to prevent the need for the use of physical restraint or seclusion. However, if unavoidable, the following measures should be followed:

- Restraint or seclusion should be discontinued as soon as the immediate danger has dissipated
- Accommodation providers should never use mechanical restraints or a drug/medication that restricts a student's freedom of movement or to control behaviour.
- Physical restraint or seclusion should never be used in a manner that restricts a student's breathing or harms the student.
- If physical restraint is required, parents\guardian and the school should be notified.



## SECURITY

Families will have to judge the security of accommodation providers through inspection and published policies and procedures. Factors to consider are:

- Appropriate adult supervision – *Is there appropriate adult supervision and oversight?*
- Appropriate numbers of residents – *Are the facilities suitable for the number of residents?*
- Appropriate washing facilities – *Is there sufficient toilets, showers and bathrooms available?*
- Secure access arrangements – *security fences, locks, biometrics, who has access? who controls access?*
- Child Protection – *Are there appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to Child Protection?*
- Privacy – *Is there sufficient privacy?*
- CCTV – *is there CCTV?, is it appropriate? Are private areas free from CCTV? Who has access to the footage?*
- Lighting – *Is there sufficient lighting in the property?*
- Air conditioning - *Is there air conditioning? Are there any Restrictions? Fire Alarms and Fire suppression – Are there fire alarms? How can a fire be fought?*
- Health Care – *Is there sufficient health care in place? What happens in a medical emergency*

If there are concerns about the security of accommodation families should raise concerns with the accommodation provider. The school can provide help and support as necessary.



## INCIDENT MANAGEMENT, REPORTING AND RECORD KEEPING

Accommodation Providers should have procedures in place to deal with incidents that occur in relation to the children in their care.

### Incident Management

Incidents that should be managed and recorded include, but are not limited to:

- Medical incidents e.g. injury
- Health issues e.g. health diagnosis.
- Unhealthy lifestyle behaviours e.g. erratic sleeping patterns, gaming addiction.
- Behaviour issues or breach of accommodation provider rules.
- Bullying and harassment issues.
- Child Protection and Safeguarding issues.
- Any signs of self-harm e.g. cuts or unusual bandages/coverings.
- Drug or alcohol related incidents.
- Complaints.
- Formal incidents raised by the family, guardian or child.

All stakeholders should be involved in a formal process of investigation.

Should accommodation providers require any assistance, help or guidance in dealing with incidents they should feel free to contact the school.

### Incident Reporting

While there may be cases where incidents are reported and dealt with informally, accommodation providers should have a formal way for those in their care to report incidents. Formal incidents tend to be more of a more serious nature and warrant investigation. Accommodation providers should use the following as a guide when recording formal incidents:

- Date and time of report.
- Person(s) making the report.
- Person writing the report.
- Date and time of the incident.
- Location of incident or electronic platform used.
- Summary of incident.
- Actions taken at the time by people present.
- Record any direct quotes.
- Take a record of any evidence e.g. social media posts, chats archives, screenshots, photos, videos etc.
- Any actions taken after the incident already.
- Record of any authorities already involved.
- If relevant any immediate action that needs to be taken for safety reasons.
- If relevant what outcome the person making the report is hoping to achieve.
- Any other relevant details.

### Record Keeping

Accommodation Providers should keep accurate records of any incidents that occur in relation to those in their care. They should also pass on important information to the school. Information that they should consider keeping as part of the records may include:

- Formal Incident Management submissions.
- Notes of investigators.
- Statements from witnesses.
- Relevant photos and videos.
- Written correspondence between parties e.g. emails and letters.
- Relevant documentation e.g. Doctor's notes, police reports
- Outcome of the resolution.

All records should be securely stored.



## COMPLAINTS POLICY

### ACS (International) Guiding Statements

#### 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.

In any community from time to time there will be complaints related to issues that they are experiencing. The school has a formal Complaints Policy for issues related to the school, that is available to all. The school is not an accommodation provider, but it recognises that often it might have a role in supporting students who are having issues. This policy outlines the school's approach to students who might have complaints against their accommodation provider.

### ACS (International) Limitation Statement

It is important that families understand that they enter into private arrangements 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.

Complaints about Homestay should be made directly to the Homestay provider.

Complaints to the Boarding Halls should be made directly to the Boarding Hall, which have their own complaints procedure.

However, the school might provide appropriate help and support to students to manage issues that they are having regardless of how the complaint is being handled by the accommodating provider. The school will not get involved in legal disputes between parties.

### Complaint Principles

While Homestay Providers and Boarding Halls will run their own process for complaints, the school would suggest that the following principles should be followed by all parties should there be a complaint. The term 'person in charge' is used below, this is referring to the person in charge at either the Homestay or the Boarding House, it does not refer to a staff member of ACS (International).

Depending upon the nature and gravity of the complaint, the supervisor or other manager receiving the complaint will determine the nature and scope of the investigation or follow-up procedures. If the complaint involves serious allegations, the matter will promptly be referred to the person in charge who will determine whether an internal or external investigation should be conducted. In either case, the person in charge will determine the nature and scope of the investigation and designate the person responsible for the investigation or follow-up relating to the complaint. The designated investigator will ascertain details concerning the complaint and respond promptly to the appropriate manager concerning the status or outcome of the matter.

The appropriate manager will respond in writing to the complaining party concerning the outcome of the investigation or follow-up, including any appropriate action or corrective measure that was taken, to the extent permitted by law. The person in charge will be copied on the correspondence and consulted in advance of the written response when appropriate.

The aim of all parties involved should be to make sure that both the complainant and any other parties are satisfied with the outcome of the situation, and reconciliation is made between all parties. Ideally, complaints should be dealt with informally, however, in some cases it may be necessary to escalate the complaint to formal status.

The school adopts the restorative approach in resolving conflicts and repairing relationships between people and its community. The importance of communication and understanding the issues involved is key to restorative practice.





### *Informal Resolution Principles*

The below outlines suggested principles to resolve complaints informally, however accommodation providers may have a different approach of handling informal complaints.

- It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally, without recourse to formal channels.
- Families may wish to let the school know through the International School Coordinator (ISC) if they have an informal complaint
- Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential.

### *Formal Resolution Principles*

The below outlines suggested principles to resolve complaints formally, however accommodation providers may have a different approach of handling formal complaints.

- Formal Resolution will follow the policies and procedures of the accommodation provider.
- If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the person in charge, the person in charge will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take. This will start the formal phase of the complaint.
- In most cases the person in charge will contact the parents concerned, normally within five working days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- It may be necessary for the person in charge to carry out further investigations as a consequence of any such discussions. The person in charge would aim to do so within five working days and contact the parents having completed these investigations. Should such investigations require further time the Person in charge will contact the parents to clarify matters.
- The person in charge will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint. Records will note whether the complaint was resolved or whether it was referred on to the next stage. Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential.
- Once the person in charge is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in writing which will be final. The person in charge should also give reasons for his decision.
- Parents should be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except where any legal obligation prevails.

## ACS (International) Simplified Complaints Procedure

### Step 1:

- Complaint discussed informally with Boarding Hall Staff or Homestay Provider.
- Advise International School Coordinator if support is required.

Complainant  
**not** satisfied

Complainant  
satisfied

No further  
action

### Step 2:

- Follow formal procedures according to Boarding Hall.  
OR
- Formally inform ISC to see if the issue can be resolved.

Complainant  
**not** satisfied

Complainant  
satisfied

No further  
action

### Step 3:

- Decide whether a change of accommodation is required.



# **Guardians**

### **Guardianship policy of ACS(International)**

ACS (International) requires all international students enrolled at the school, regardless of age, and not residing with a parent, to have a guardian for the duration of their enrolment. The guardian is to act on behalf of the student's parent and to assist with all aspects of the welfare of the student.

The Guardianship policy of ACS (International) sets the expectation of the guardian's role and monitor the contractual relationship between the guardian, student and the parent.

### **Guardianship Criteria**

A Guardian must fit the following criteria:

Be 30 years old and above and be a Singapore citizen/Singapore Permanent Resident

or

Be an adult family member (21 years and above) of the international student and who is working/staying in Singapore

and

- Must not have exceeded the cap of 15 ACS (International) students as wards
- Must be willing to comply with school expectations.
- Must not have current or history of criminal or mental illness record.
- Must be willing to be subject to a background check by the school by submitting official document of proof.
- Must not be a member of the staff of ACS(International).

### **Registration Of Guardian**

- Fill up Guardian Registration Form
- To sign completed registration form with declaration component duly completed. Guardian would have to declare that they:
  - Does not have a criminal record or under criminal investigation
  - Does not have history of or existing mental illness
  - Is free from financial embarrassment

For guardians new to the school, to have a one-time face to face meet up with the IPC for guardianship interview. Where a match is deemed suitable, the potential guardian would be called down for an initial meeting with the student or/and parent

All guardians of ACS (International) are to submit Statutory declaration form (Annex A) to prove that they do not have history of drug use/mental illness and criminal records.

All guardians who wish to be considered as potential guardians for new international students referred by the school must produce use the Guardian Registration Form to register with the school.

Guardians may choose to go to their own lawyer or have it authorised by the duty Commissioner of Oath at Level 3M of the Supreme Court for \$25. The whole process should take less than 15 minutes.

Please print out Annex A and complete it before going down.

### **Appointment of Guardianship**

There are a number of ways that families appoint Guardians.

Request submitted via country agent or parents when overseas

- Agent or parents to fill in guardianship request form in admission package
- IPC to match according to language request and availability of guardian from guardian pool. Same gender guardian will be matched with prospective student

#### Request by existing international students or/and parents who are physically in Singapore

- IPC to arrange for meeting of at least 2 guardians for student or/and parents to interview.
- IPC would be present at the interviews

#### Guardians who are appointed by parents directly

In cases where guardians are appointed by parents directly, the guardian would fill in the school's guardianship registration form and submit to the school upon enrolment of the student

Guardians are expected to have a formal written contract with the parent that states that the parent has agreed to grant guardianship of their child/children to the guardian concerned (see Annex B for what to include in the contract) for a commonly agreed period of time.

The guardian, parent and the student should each have an individual copy of the guardianship contract. ACS (International) should also have a copy of the guardianship contract in the English Language.

### **Duties Expected of Guardians**

#### **Before starting school**

- Contact parents directly to establish personal working relationship and to understand the student better. (See Annex C)
- Check on flight details and to work on
- On pick up arrangement e.g. how to recognise guardian
- Arrange airport pick up to temporary location/boarding school
- Arrange for viewing and interview with the halls (either ACS Independent Boarding or Oldham Hall)
- Help students get essential things e.g. transit link cards, phone card/lines, uniform, school books
- Bring ward to school for orientation and to attend briefing for new parents and guardians
- Assist with student pass matters\*
- Ensuring that student has international health insurance

#### **After starting school**

- To check in with student at least once a week
- To update parents regularly (at least once a fortnight or as arranged with parents)\*
- Alert the school on medical issues/absences/late-coming of wards\*
- Assist with ward's overseas travel arrangements
- Sign consent forms\*
- Liaise with the school on ward's discipline matters\*
- Ensure that the ward is properly attired and reports to the school on time
- Keep communication lines open through email, SMS or telephone
- Monitor ward's progress in school: both in academic and co-curricular activities
- Monitor ward's computer and internet usage
- Monitor ward's weekend activities
- Monitor ward's expenditure
- Acknowledge receipt of communications from school through email
- Read the newsletters
- Attend all Parent-Teacher Meetings with their wards\*
- Update address and contact information when there are changes\*

- Should there be changes in boarding arrangement from hostel to homestay after the mandatory one year, guardian is to assist the ward, in collaboration with the IPC, in looking for a school approved homestay. Should guardianship be changed at this transition, the school and parents must be kept informed.

*Note: should the ward be staying in a homestay and the guardianship is not changed to homestay provider, clear division of roles should be made between the 2 care-providers. (See Annex D and also Accommodation Policy)*

### **Monitoring of guardians**

- Mid-year review to be conducted by IPC on satisfaction level of parents and ward with regards to care and duties carried out by the guardian
- End-year review to be conducted by IPC on satisfaction level of parents and ward with regards to care and duties carried out by the guardian
- New guardians to go through briefing of new guardians for them to be familiar with the school system
- IPC to investigate any complaint lodged against guardian and where necessary, to discontinue the guardianship services provided by the said guardian

### **Monetary rewards of guardianship**

The school does not, in any form, take monetary reward for matching of guardians to students. No member of the school staff is to be paid commission for recommending or matching of guardianship nor should any be offered, whether in cash or in kind, to any staff in exchange for favours. The \$550 fees collected by the school for international students with student pass goes to a generic school pool of funds and not as payment for the work of the IPC directly.

The market rate charged by most guardians is SGD2000 per annum. It is also the market rate for guardians to charge SGD2500 for the first year due to the heavy logistical and administrative duties to be done in the first few months.

The monetary aspect is a private arrangement between the parents and the guardians, of which the school does not concern itself with in anyway



**Annex A****OATHS AND DECLARATIONS ACT  
(CHAPTER 211)****STATUTORY DECLARATION**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, NRIC/FIN No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_, Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do solemnly and sincerely declare that I :

1. do not have any existing substance dependence e.g. alcohol, drugs (excluding prescription by a certified medical professional).
2. do not have any existing or past history of mental illness.
3. do not have existing criminal record(s) in Singapore or overseas.
4. am not currently under police investigations in Singapore or overseas.
5. am not under any current Child Protection Services investigation, nor have been subject to a Child Protection Services investigation.

And I make this solemn declaration by virtue of the provisions of the Oaths and Declarations Act (Cap. 211), and subject to the penalties provided by that Act for the making of false statements in statutory declarations, conscientiously believing the statements contained in this declaration to be true in every particular.

Declared at Singapore )

this day of )

\_\_\_\_\_  
(R.T.P./Signature of Declarant)

Before me,

Interpreted by

\_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner for Oaths, Singapore

\_\_\_\_\_

## **Annex B**

### **What to include in contract with parents**

1. Full legal names of guardian, parent and ward
2. Duration of contract e.g. 31/12/2019 – 31/12/2020. The school's recommendation is a yearly contract as it allows room for mutually agreed changes to terms and clauses
3. What the guardianship covers. The expectations covered in the policy guide must be in the contract, in addition to any other terms proposed by the individual guardian
4. Payment matters e.g. mode of transfer, date of transfer
5. Amount of deposit to be collected
6. Emergency contact numbers
7. Termination of contract. Essential points to include for this:
  - a) Under what circumstances
  - b) Notice period
  - c) Any refund of guardianship fees and how it is calculated

## **Annex C**

### **Essential information guardians need to know about ward.**

1. Any food allergy?
2. Any medicine allergy?
3. Any medical condition?
4. Blood type
5. Does ward already have international student insurance?
6. Any relative in Singapore
7. Who to contact in cases of emergency other than the parents should parents be uncontactable?
8. How should pocket money be given to the student? E.g. weekly, monthly
9. How would parent want guardian to discipline student? E.g. grounding, reduction of allowances
10. What are the subjects the students are weak in?
11. What are the subjects the students require tuition in? \*
12. Any other matters that arise from conversation with parents and ward

\*Guardians are to note that teachers of ACS (International) are not allowed, under school policy, to tutor any of our students even if they are not teaching the students directly

## **Annex D**

### **Transfer of student to homestay**

In the event that the student moves into a homestay from boarding/another homestay, the school strongly recommends the following:

#### Model A (should guardianship remain unchanged)

Guardian to continue charging for guardianship fees. With this, guardianship duties as stated in policy continues except for cases of medical emergencies when the homestay provider is expected to respond to the situation in the best interest of the student under their care

A mutually agreed understanding to be reached between homestay provider and guardian on division of roles e.g. signing of consent forms

Should the guardianship be transferred to homestay provider before 6 months is up, the homestay provider should pay the guardian the amount equivalent to one month's rental

#### Model B (should guardianship be transferred to homestay provider)

Homestay provider to pay a one-time referral fee to the guardian. The amount to be paid is one month's rental

Homestay providers are not obliged to pay the existing guardian any more referral fees when the student renews the homestay contract for the following and subsequent years.