



ABINGDON



ABINGDON SCHOOL

International Students' Handbook 2011/12
Welcome to Davies' House

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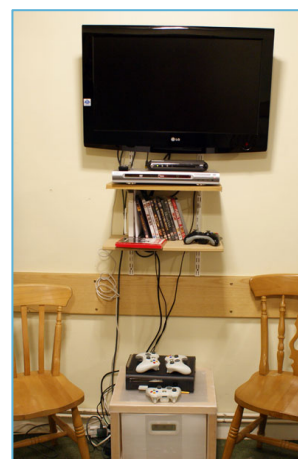
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Welcome from your housemaster, Mr Edward Davies

Welcome to Davies' House. I am very much looking forward to meeting you!

I am Mr Davies. I am the Housemaster of Davies house and it is my job to look after you while you are at Abingdon School. I will be spending some time getting to know you when you first arrive. I will also be helping you get to know your new surroundings.

I am very fortunate to have the help of a number of other teachers, called tutors, who look after smaller groups of pupils within the house. You will meet them when you arrive and you will be introduced to your tutor.

I know that you will be feeling excited but also nervous about arriving at Abingdon School and joining Davies' House. I am here to help you get to understand the life of the school and the house. You will have many questions and you should ask me, or any one of the tutors, for help whenever you need it.

You may be wondering what Davies' house is! It is actually a home, where you will live with 25 other boarders while you are at Abingdon School. However, it is also a small community within the school. Davies house has a mixture of boarders and dayboys. The house community is there to help each other through the challenges of school life. We have teams that compete with other houses in the school and social events that bring different groups together. The other pupils in the house will quickly become your friends and will probably be the people who share your best moments at Abingdon.

Have a good summer and I look forward to meeting you in September.

Mr Edward Davies

Welcome from your Head of House, Alexander Lee

Hi, I am Alex, an upper sixth boarder in Davies' house.

I am looking forward to meeting you in September. You may be worried about feeling lonely or homesick. Don't worry, I know exactly how you feel! This time last year I was in your position as I contemplated leaving my friends and family in Hong Kong. I did have moments of homesickness but very quickly I felt at home here. The boarding community in Davies' House is like a family and all the boarders and the teachers here will welcome you with warm hands. My advice to you is - do not hide your emotions, feel free to talk to me or any member of the prefect team and we will be more than willing to listen to you. I believe you will feel comfortable soon and trust me; you will gain a lot this year!

We are already anticipating the adventures we will have together. Be prepared for our bursting passion!

Alex Lee



Welcome from the E.F.L Department

Welcome to England!

We are so privileged to have you at Abingdon and we look forward to getting to know you.

My name is Miss Lee and I am the head of the E.F.L. Department (English as a foreign language). I work with Mrs Streatfield and Ms Clark. Our job is to help all students who do not speak English as their first language.

This help will vary, depending on how much assistance you need. In the first week or two, I will be catching up with you to find out how you are settling in and to assess the amount of support you will need.

English support may take the form of one-to-one lessons once a week, participation in a small group or just a couple of sessions of help when you need it.

This year we are introducing some new groups for you on Saturday mornings. These will include skills to prepare you for university (learning to give presentations and debate) as well as some groups to broaden your understanding of world affairs and British culture. I hope you will participate!

Remember that the best way to improve your English is to use it at every opportunity so try to resist the temptation to stick with your countrymen speaking your own language and make an effort to utilize your English. No one will mind if you make mistakes.

I very much look forward to meeting you,

Miss Lee

WHAT TO EXPECT

7.30AM	Wake Up
8.00AM	Breakfast served in the Dining Hall
8.35AM	Registration in Tutor Groups
8.50AM	Lesson 1 begins
9.50AM	Lesson 2 begins
10.45-11.05AM	Break
11.10AM	Lesson 3 begins
12.05AM	Lesson 4 begins on Mon, Tue, Thur and Fri
<i>Lunch in Dining Hall and Sport / Activities depending on what you elect to do</i>	
1.55PM	Lesson 5 begins (varies slightly on different days)
2.55PM	Lesson 6 begins
Approx. 4.00PM	Lessons end
<i>Sports, Activities, Music, clubs etc. run until 5.10pm</i>	
5.15PM-	registration and tea/ snacks served in Davies House Kitchen
<i>Free time</i>	
6.45PM	Supper served in Dining Hall
7.30PM-9.00PM	Prep, working quietly in room
9.00-10.00PM	Free time
10.30PM	Everyone in own room; should be getting ready for bed
11.00PM	Main lights out

**This timetable may vary slightly on different days of the week depending on the subjects and activities*





SATURDAYS & SUNDAYS

The idea with Saturday mornings is that you have a more relaxed start to the day.

Breakfast is served at 8.15am

From 9am to 12 noon various activities are available. You need to do something, staying in bed is not an option.

There will be English classes/ groups available and these will take priority.

The Music rooms will be open for musicians to practice.

The Sports Centre will be open so you can use the gym or play basketball/ swim

The Library will be open for research or quiet work.

Lunch is served at 12.30am

On Sundays, you wake up later and have a big breakfast called Brunch and you will be given a packed lunch.

Some Saturdays, there will be trips offered to places of interest or entertainment. The same is true on Sundays. You are strongly encouraged to sign up for these. It would be a shame to return to your home country having done NOTHING except work and to have seen NOTHING except Abingdon School.

You may go into Abingdon or Oxford on Saturday afternoon. Sixth form students may go to London on Sundays. (provided they have asked permission from their housemaster in advance).

Students who get out and do things actually perform better than those who stay in their rooms for two years.

Students must be back in house by 10.30pm and the tutor on duty will register you before bed.

If you have been invited to stay with a day boy or friend for the night, the housemaster needs to know in advance so he can check with your parents and the boy's parents to make sure it is all agreed. This is encouraged, it is great to spend time with British families.

FOOD

Abingdon Catering is considered to be very good indeed.

BREAKFAST

A typical breakfast offers a choice of cereals, fruit, porridge, toast and eggs.

LUNCH

The lunch menu offers many choices: a hot meat/ fish dish, a hot vegetarian dish, a healthy meal option, baked potatoes, a pasta bar, a salad bar, hot and cold desserts and fruit.

TEA TIME

The snack served in the house kitchen at 5.15pm is usually a filled roll, sandwich or pastry and a drink.

SUPPER

The evening supper at 6.45pm consists of a hot meat/ fish dish and a hot vegetarian option. There is a small salad bar, desserts and fruit.

Boarders have the use of a small kitchen in the house to make snacks and hot drinks. Some of our boarders have learned to cook some dishes and cook treats on the weekend for their friends. Boarding tutors often offer a cooking/baking lesson on the weekend. You are encouraged to participate it will be useful for you to know how to cook when you go to university.

The food may be different to what you are used to so you need to be a little adventurous and try some new things. Some students find it takes a while for their stomach to adapt to a slightly different diet. If you experience any stomachaches or problems, please tell the School Nurse.

LESSONS

Lessons are 55 minutes long and there are usually five a day. You move from classroom to classroom in the five-minute break between lessons. Sometimes this may be quite a distance so you need to move quickly.

If you have a free lesson (a study period), you may work in the library, the sixth form room or your own bedroom.

Lunch times are long so you will find many activities and sports training sessions are offered then, as are extra English lessons.

PREP, HOMEWORK & REVISION

Prep means preparation, it may take the form of reading ahead, researching or preparing a presentation. Homework may involve writing an essay, finishing off classwork or practising something you learned in lessons.

By the sixth form, you are expected to take responsibility for how you organize your prep time and study. Sixth form students are expected to do four hours of prep per week for each subject (about twelve to sixteen hours of independent study per week). At certain times of the year, you will need to do more.

In general, Abingdon boys work very hard. Occasionally boys do find it difficult to plan or organize their time. Tutors are there to help or you may want to visit the Learning Support department for a short course of help on time management and organization. Students who are unable to work independently may find themselves having to attend supervised private study periods in the school building.



SPORTS & OTHER HALF

Other Half means sports, clubs and activities. There are over 90 sports, clubs and activities on offer. It is called Other Half to show how important we believe it is to have a balanced life of studies, sport and interests.

The sports on offer vary depending on the season.

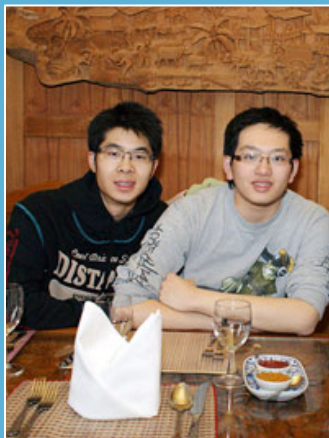
In the sixth form, boys are required to do two sports sessions per week (at least!). They should also try to join at least one club or activity. Everyone has to do some form of activity or sport on a Wednesday afternoon. Your tutor will guide you through the process of signing up for Other Half. It is a good idea to look at the school website or guide book before you come so you have some idea of what you want to do.

EXEAT & ACTIVITY WEEKENDS

You may go away to your guardian, family or friends on these weekends. Many school trips are planned over these weekends. Boys who have signed up for the Duke of Edinburgh (D of E) award scheme will be going off camping and hiking these weekends.

You are welcome to stay in the house for the weekend but you are encouraged to go out to Oxford or London for an afternoon/evening. A change of scenery is healthy and energizing!

CULTURE SHOCK



Everyone who moves from one country to another will need time to adjust to their new life. Before you leave home it is normal to have very mixed feelings. One minute you might be excited about the opportunities of a new life, the next minute you might feel apprehensive or nervous. You may be worrying that you have made the wrong decision. One thing you can be sure of, every boy who is preparing to come to England to study is having the same feelings; they are normal. On arrival in the new country, there is usually a period where you feel very excited and thrilled by all the new people you meet and things you see. Some people then start to feel quite strange. They may feel sad and homesick, isolated or that they don't fit in. This is normal and is called Culture Shock. It takes time to make new friends and to get used to English food, music, sport etc. After about six weeks, you should be starting to feel more at home. If you feel worried, isolated or sad, the prefects, your housemaster and your tutor are there to help you. Calling home is good but it is not helpful if you spend so much time on the phone that you do not make new friends here.

Language Shock

Although your English is good and you have done well to get selected to come to Abingdon, you will find it a bit of a shock when you are suddenly in an environment where everyone speaks English 24 hours a day. It is tiring. At first, you may feel you do not understand what is being said because people speak fast and have a variety of regional accents. You need a period of time to adjust, this is called 'tuning in' and usually takes about six weeks. So don't think you have suddenly lost all your vocabulary when you arrive- it happens to everyone.

Academic Shock

You are clever; you have passed all the tests to get selected to come to Abingdon so we know you are ready for a challenge. What you may find is that the way classes are taught is very different to your home country. To give you an idea of what to expect:

In England, teachers enjoy interaction in class. They judge their students' understanding and involvement by the questions they ask and answer. It is considered good to be curious and even critical. Having an opinion and being able to give reasons to support your thoughts is very important. This may seem odd to you at first. The teacher will not always tell you the right answer, you will be expected to decide what

you think is right and then explain why.

Sometimes students work in groups. This is not easy, even when everyone comes from the same country, so it is even trickier when you have had different experiences of school. The purpose of group work is to learn to work in a team and to collaborate. This is a skill you will need in your working life in the future. Being in a group allows you to practice skills like leading, negotiating, encouraging, motivating, organizing and co-operating. Sometimes there are conflicts in groups; learning to deal with these is also part of becoming a socially adept adult.

You may not be used to reading or writing extended passages. Your teachers know this and will guide you to the skills you need. The EFL department is also there to help you learn to write in an academic style.

Teachers at Abingdon know that you are making probably the biggest change in your life by coming here. It is important not to be silent if you are finding things difficult; tell your tutor or housemaster. They can arrange extra support for you.

PRACTICAL MATTERS

LAUNDRY

Washing of clothes and bedding

There are big laundry bags on the landing and by **Tuesday** evening all washing and dirty sheets must be packed in these bags. It will be returned clean on Friday. You will have a shelf in the airing cupboard and your clean clothes will be put there on a Friday. This can only happen if **YOUR CLOTHES ARE LABELLED**. It makes life much easier if clothes are labelled as it is less likely clothes will go missing.

On a Tuesday, clean sheets and pillowcases will be put on your bed. You need to put the duvet cover onto the duvet.

Bring two towels, two duvet covers and a duvet with you. (they can also be bought in Oxford or at big supermarkets here). There is some spare linen in the house for you but most boys prefer using their own bedding. We provide sheets and pillowcases for you.

As part of growing up, you need to take responsibility for picking up dirty clothes and putting them in the laundry bags. This is not the cleaner's job. Carol, your house matron, is there to advise you if you are unsure about laundry procedures.

RUBBISH

England has strict rules about sorting rubbish and recycling. The school can get fined by the council if we do not sort it properly. You need to do your bit for the environment by recycling as much as possible.

Small green caddies marked 'food waste' are for **FOOD ONLY**, all scraps, leftovers or unwanted food should be put in these.

Big green bins marked 'recycling' are for paper, plastic and recyclable cartons.

White bins are for things that cannot be recycled- silver foil, crisp packets, silver lined wrappers, polystyrene containers (e.g. take-away boxes).

Please try to do this carefully. It is disrespectful to expect others to sort your rubbish for you.

THE HOUSE KITCHEN

The kitchen is in the Coach House, a separate small building in Davies House.

There is a fridge, a microwave and small stove. There is also a kettle and toaster. Fresh bread and milk are provided daily. You can store your own food in the fridge if you want but you must throw away anything that is old.

You **MUST WASH UP AND CLEAN UP YOUR OWN MESS**. Part of leaving home is learning to take responsibility for yourself.

The kitchen is open during free time after school. You can make hot drinks or snacks to eat in the kitchen, they may not be taken to rooms –mainly because people forget to bring back the cups and plates!

There is a television, DVD player and pool table for your use. The television has some Sky Channels.

Boys are expected to take their turn in doing small jobs (like washing up, fetching teas from the Dining Hall, tidying the Games Room etc..) This is called 'Squads' and you will be on a rota for this.

PRACTICAL MATTERS (Continued)

HEALTH CARE AND MEDICATION

There is a Health Centre at school run by fully trained nurses. It is open from 8am to 9pm every day. They can deal with minor illnesses and health problems. You should see them first if you feel ill. If necessary, they will arrange for you to see a doctor. If you feel ill in the night, you should tell your housemaster who will arrange for a nurse to come if the situation is serious.

The doctor, Dr Kahn, runs a clinic at school on a Tuesday at 8am but appointments can be arranged at other times if necessary.

When you arrive at Abingdon, you will have a short medical examination so you can be registered with the doctor. It is important that you show the health centre staff all your medication (even Chinese medicines). You will need to tell them what the medicine is and what it does. They will advise you on how it can be safely stored.

Nurses can also give you advice on your diet, drinking alcohol and smoking, sexual matters and other issues to do with maintaining a healthy body.

SIGNING OUT AND GUESTS

There is a book in Davies House called the **Signing Out** book. If you go off the school site you must sign out and when you come back, you sign in again. You need the housemaster's permission to go to Oxford or further away. If a friend from another house comes to visit you, they need to sign the **Guest Book**. It is polite to let the tutor on duty know if you have friends visiting.

This helps us to keep track of who is where and is especially important because in the unlikely event of a fire, we need to know where everyone is! When off site, you should keep your mobile phone on so that you can be contacted if necessary.

EMAIL, SKYPE AND THE INTERNET

Davies House has a computer room with Wireless Network (Wi-Fi) and eight computers and a printer. You may bring your own laptop to school but you will need to take responsibility for keeping it secure. There is no wireless network in bedrooms.

You will be given a login and temporary password. Your school email address will be your name, dot, surname at Abingdon.org.uk

e.g. martin.lee@abingdon.org.uk

Teachers will email you often so you need to make sure you keep checking your school inbox.

You can access Google, Facebook etc. outside lesson and prep time. The site is monitored so you need to make sure you do not download anything that is not appropriate- e.g. pornography. There is a 'net nanny' which blocks certain sites. If you need the site for school work, you can apply to have it unblocked. It is a crime to send threatening or bullying emails or messages in the UK.

NEWSPAPERS, POST AND DELIVERIES

A selection of newspapers is placed in the house Computer room every day for you to read. The library stocks a large number of magazines, journals and papers, which can be read there.

If you want to post something, you will need to buy a stamp (Post office or supermarket). There is a post box on Bath Street opposite our front gate.

If you want to receive post, ask for it to be sent to you:

c/o Your Name, Waste Court, 76 Bath Street, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, U.K. OX14 1EB

Deliveries can be made to the same address.

Post will be brought to the house each day and put in your postbox (called a pigeonhole). Post is private; we do not read it.



The School is right near the centre of Abingdon, it takes about three minutes to walk to the main square. Abingdon is a small town with a few basic shops and restaurants. The city of Oxford is a twenty-minute bus ride away and it has many more shops, restaurants and facilities.



SUPERMARKETS

The biggest supermarket in Abingdon town centre is Waitrose. It sells good quality food. There are several smaller, cheaper supermarkets close to the school: The Co-operative and Spar are two closest to the school.

There is a small Thai shop selling Asian food on the High street.



BARBERS/HAIRDRESSERS

Abingdon seems to have quite a few of these! It is worth asking the price before you have your hair cut- prices vary from ten pounds to thirty pounds. You will not usually need an appointment. If you want the hairdresser to keep your existing style, you ask for a **TRIM**.



POST OFFICE

You can buy stamps and post parcels from the Post Office counter **INSIDE** the Co-Operative Supermarket (Co-Op) on West St Helen's Street.



BANKS

Lloyds TSB, Santander, Natwest, HSBC and Barclays banks have branches in Abingdon. Usual opening hours are: 9am-5pm weekdays and 10am to 1pm on Saturdays. ATM machines are open 24 hours a day.

To open a bank account, you will need a letter from the school confirming you are a student here. Ask your housemaster to arrange this.

Churches and Places of Worship

CHURCHES

There are at least ten churches in Abingdon. If you do an internet search for 'Churches in Abingdon', you will be presented with a list. By visiting their websites, you can find out about services and other activities. Here are some of the main ones:

St Helens (Church of England/Anglican) Bishopgate Road (www.st-helens.org.uk)

Our Lady and St Edmund (Catholic) (www.stedmundabingdon.org.uk)

Trinity Church (Methodist) Conduit Road (www.trinityabingdon.org.uk)

Abbey Baptist Church (www.abbey-baptist-church.org.uk)

There is a Chinese Christian Church in Oxford (<http://www.oxccc.org>)

MOSQUES

There are two main Mosques in Oxford (both in the Cowley area). The Central Oxford Mosque is in Manzil Way, Cowley, Oxford. The Bangladeshi Islamic Education Centre and Mosque is at 57 Cowley Road, Cowley, Oxford.

TEMPLES

There is currently no Hindu Temple in Oxford but a project is underway to build one (www.oxfordhindutempleproject.org)

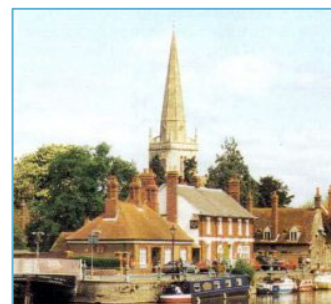


Photo booths

If you need passport photos for any reason, they can be taken at Timpsons (the shoe repairers in the precinct) or there is a booth in the Co-Operative Supermarket (Co-Op).

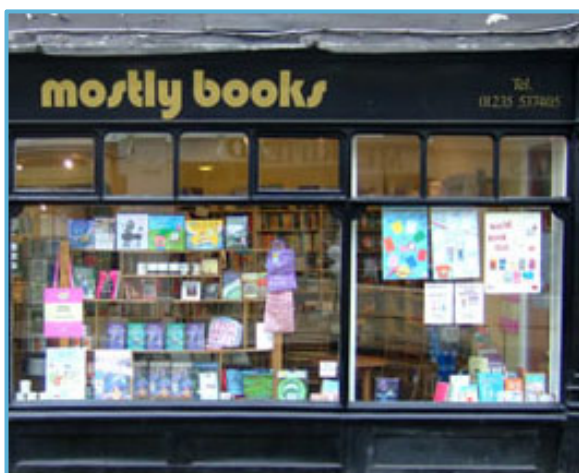


Stationery

There is a stationers called WH Smith in the precinct.

There is a stationery shop called Prices on Stert Street.

'Mostly Books' on Stert Street and 'The Book Shop' in the precinct have a good selection of books and will order any books for you.



RESTAURANTS

Abingdon has quite a few restaurants: Italian Pizza Places, Chinese, Thai and English Fish and Chips to name but a few. The boys here will be able to recommend their favourite places to eat.

Pubs serve food but will not serve alcohol to people under eighteen. You will be asked for proof of your age if you look young. Pubs serve soft drinks. Drinks are served in pints (big glasses) or half pints (small glasses).

There are also a couple of coffee shops right in the centre of the town.

Sixth form boys are allowed into Abingdon during lunch time and in free time after school but they must sign out in the Signing Out book.





TRAVEL TIPS



Abingdon is about ten kilometres south of Oxford. Oxford is a small city, most famous for its university. The university consists of 38 smaller colleges, which are spread out through the town. As well as being full of students, Oxford attracts many tourists from all over the world. There is plenty to do there: cinemas, shops, restaurants etc.

Sixth formers need to ask permission to go to Oxford on the weekends from their housemaster. The bus stop is in front of the school and there are frequent buses (about every ten minutes). The bus journey takes about 25 minutes and drops you right in the centre. A return ticket costs four pounds for an over 16-year old and two pounds for anyone under sixteen.

You can catch bus X3 or X13 (red buses) or bus 31 (white bus) You pay as you get on the bus. It is good to try to have the right money ready. There is a bell to press when you want to get off. The bus will only stop at bus stops. It is polite to say 'thank you' to the driver as you get off.

Buses leave for Abingdon from Oxford on St Aldates Road, outside Christchurch College. When coming back, you stay on the bus till it stops at Stratton Way.

Sometimes groups of sixth formers plan a day out in London on the weekend. There is so much to see and do; it is a good idea to have a plan before you go.

GETTING TO LONDON
There are several ways to do this:

Bus
This is usually the cheapest way. First, catch a bus to Oxford. From Oxford Bus Station (called Gloucester Green bus station) there is a regular bus called 'THE OXFORD TUBE'. It runs about every twelve minutes and costs sixteen pounds return. It stops at Victoria Coach Station, near Victoria Station in central London. It takes one hour and forty minutes if the traffic is good. (www.oxfordtube.com)

Train
You can catch a train to London from Oxford or Didcot (about 10km south of Abingdon- you need a bus from Stratton Way or a taxi to get there). It is very expensive if you buy your ticket on the day. You can get cheaper deals by booking online beforehand. Groups of four travelling together get good discounts. The direct train takes about 50 minutes and arrives at Paddington Station (www.firstgreatwestern.co.uk)

If you buy a day's travel card with your train ticket, you can have unlimited travel on the London Underground for a day. The London Underground is like a Metro. It is called 'The Tube' by English people. It is a bit complicated at first but we will explain the process to you.

Frequent users of the Tube can get an electronic card called an Oyster Card which you can put money onto online (or top up at the station). It is the cheapest way to travel and can also be used on buses in London. (<https://oyster.tfl.gov.uk/oyster/entry.do>)

Keeping Safe in London and in cities

Like every big city in the world, London has some problems with crime. It is unlikely anything will happen to you, but here are a few tips to keep you safe:

- Always travel in a group.
- Carry your money, phone etc. in a zipped bag under your arm.
- Don't flash lots of money or expensive phones around.
- Do ask police for help if you are lost. They are friendly and approachable.
- Make sure you have your housemaster's phone number and the numbers of all the people you are travelling with in your phone.
- Remember, phones don't work well underground. If you get separated on the underground, get off at the next stop and go upstairs to get a phone signal.
- If you see a protest march or incident, don't worry but try to stay clear of the action.
- Follow any instructions given to you by a police officer.
- Plan your journey before you leave and tell your housemaster what your plan is.

GETTING HELP

What to do if you feel sick?

If you feel sick during the school day, go to the Health Centre. The nurse on duty will be able to help you. There is a ward in the Health Centre where people who are too ill to return to the house can sleep.

If you feel ill in the night, go to the tutor on duty until 10.45pm. Thereafter, wake your housemaster. Do not suffer in silence. If you are too ill to get to the housemaster, wake a boy in your room and ask him to go for you.

What to do if you feel homesick or lonely?

Every one gets homesick or lonely at some point. It is most common in your first year, especially a couple of weeks into the first term. Homesickness may take the

form of tiredness, crossness, headaches or stomach aches. You may feel tearful and sad. Don't be afraid to tell your housemaster or tutor or a boy you feel comfortable with that you are feeling homesick. Most often, the best cure for homesickness is to get involved. Once you have joined some clubs or sports and start making friends, it will feel less painful. Although keeping in touch with family and friends at home is very important, it is not good to spend so much time on the phone or Facebook that you stop yourself making new friends here.

If you have ongoing worries you could go to see our school counsellor, Mrs Sylvia Elsner. It is free to see her. You can email her for an appointment on school.counsellor@abingdon.org.uk.

Mrs Elsner is trained to deal with all sorts of problems in a professional and confidential way. The sorts of things boys may go to see her about are issues surrounding stress, anger, home problems – like parents divorcing or illness or a death in the family. Some boys are worried about issues concerning their development into an adult. Mrs Elsner will see you for as many sessions as you want/ need.

GETTING HELP (Continued)

What to do if you need help with English

The E.F.L. department is there for all international students. It is in a small house behind a big building called Whitefield on Park Crescent. If you go through the green gate you will see the front door. Miss Lee's office is upstairs. She is very experienced in helping students to work out what support they need. Some students need weekly support, others may just want a few lessons to deal with particular problems. Miss Lee is also a house tutor in Davies, so you can talk to her when she is on duty on a Wednesday evening- she likes being disturbed as she gets bored, so pop in to see her.

If you are finding a particular teacher is talking too fast, don't be afraid to politely ask them to slow down or ask them to repeat something you missed. Sometimes it may be appropriate to check your understanding with them at the end of a lesson. This will have to be kept short as they will have another class waiting. If you need more help, make an appointment to see them at lunchtime or after school.

What to do if you need help with other subjects

Class sizes are small at Abingdon and the teachers are passionate about their subject. Do not be afraid to ask for help if you are struggling. Most often, it is best to talk to the teacher at the end of the lesson and ask if you can make an appointment to get some help.

Most teachers will be prepared to see you at lunch time or after school. If you do not ask for help, they will assume all is well.

How to get your voice heard: suggestion box, Boarders' council etc.

The best way to express your opinion is directly and politely to your housemaster or tutor. Sometimes you may not want to do this directly. In the house there is a suggestion box where you can put a note. It is regularly emptied by the housemaster.

Boarders have an opportunity to put their ideas, suggestions for improvements and complaints to the Head of Boarding, Mr Aitken, at the boarders' council meeting. Representatives from your house will ask you if you have anything you would like to raise. You will get feedback from the meetings from your representatives. In time, you may want to volunteer to be on the students' council.

The house prefects, led by the Head of House, are also there to help and support you. Many of them were new last year, so they can understand what you are going through.

HOW TO COMPLAIN IF YOU ARE NOT HAPPY WITH SOMETHING?

In person

The best place to start with complaints is to speak to your tutor or housemaster. If you feel uncomfortable doing this, put your complaint in an email or letter. Your tutor or housemaster will look into your complaint and report back to you.

If you feel the matter is not addressed to your satisfaction, you can make an appointment to see Mr Aitken (Head of Boarding) or Mr Wickes (Deputy Head Pastoral. If the matter is still not resolved, you could make an appointment to see the Headmistress, Miss Lusk. You could take a friend with you to these meetings if you feel this is helpful.

Prefects and School Council

Prefects are trained to listen and take your complaints seriously. They will help you decide if you should take your complaint further and they will help you do this. Your house prefects will ask you for feedback on issues such as food, accommodation and outings/ trips. They then take this feedback to the school council (or Boarders' Council) where the complaints are explained to the Headmistress and her team.

Whistleblower

It is rare for bullying or other forms of abuse to happen at Abingdon. However, sometimes people do not behave as well as they should. If you suspect any bullying or abuse, you **must** report it. If you do not want to do this in person, there is an anonymous email facility called Whistleblower. It is accessed on the Study Site on the school intranet. Your tutor will show you exactly where this is.

USEFUL NUMBERS AND ADDRESSES

HOUSEMASTER

Mr Edward Davies
Waste Court
76 Bath Street
Abingdon
Oxfordshire
OX14 1EB

Email: edward.davies@abingdon.org.uk

Home Phone: 01235 849058

Mr Davies teaches during the day so urgent calls from parents should go through main school switchboard.

HEAD OF BOARDING

Mr Douglas Aitken
School House
Abingdon School
Park Road
Abingdon
Oxfordshire
OX14 1DE

Email: douglas.aitken@abingdon.org.uk

Duty Mobile

Will reach the tutor on duty between 5.15pm and 10.30pm on weekday evenings and 9am-10.30pm on Saturday and Sundays.

Duty Mobile Phone Number:
01235 849058

Davies House Matron

Mrs Carol Webb
(on duty during week days till 5.15pm)
Phone: 01235 849105

E.F.L.

(for help with English)

katy.lee@abingdon.org.uk

School Counsellor

Silvia Elsner

School.counsellor@abingdon.org.uk

Health Centre

Healthcentre@abingdon.org.uk

Duty Mobile: 07748 591057

Dos and Don'ts to make the most of your time in England

DO

- Come with a positive attitude determined to make the most of your stay
- Do make the first move in meeting new people and making friends.
- Make a point of learning and remembering names and greeting people
- Speak English as much as you can
- Keep in touch with friends and family at home
- Join activities you have never tried before
- Use the gym, swimming pool and other sports facilities
- Try food you have never eaten before
- Get help from the prefects, teachers, counselor, housemaster, EFL department if you need it.
- Make plans to go out on weekends and exeats
- Remember to thank your parents or whoever is making this experience possible for you
- Have a sense of humour

DONT

- Mix only with boys from your country
- Speak your own language when others who do not understand you are in the room with you.
- Spend all your free time on the phone or on your computer
- Keep worries or anxieties to yourself
- Be so focused on getting good grades that the only bit of England you see is your desk
- Waste this wonderful opportunity you have been given