

## Forres Sandle Manor (Non-Academic) Policy

Policy Title	<b>International Children and Admissions</b>
Policy Lead (Appointment (& Initials))	<b>Headmaster (JW)</b>
Date of Last Review	<b>September 2019</b>
Date of Next Review	<b>January 2022</b>

We welcome all children to FSM in line with our Equal Opportunities Policy. Whilst there are several FSM children whose parents reside overseas, what follows refers primarily to those whose first language is NOT English.

### **INTERNATIONAL ADMISSIONS**

FSM is non-selective and operates a clear equal opportunities policy. However we aim to apply the following principles:

- The maximum class size is approximately 20, although certain subject groups (such as PE) may be greater.
- The proportion of children in any class requiring specialist support should not exceed one third.
- The Learning Centre can accept a maximum of 40 children in total.
- We try to ensure that the number of pupils for whom English is not their main language does not exceed nine per year.

**A place may only be offered on the understanding that the offer breaches none of these fundamental principles.**

Other guiding principles include:

- Children are accepted at any time during any term on the condition that space is available.
- Conditional places are offered only upon receipt of a completed registration form and registration fee (£150). Those offered places will be recorded on a numbered list on a first come, first served basis.
- Firm places are normally offered by the start of May prior to the academic year during which the place is required.
- Firm places will only be confirmed upon receipt of a deposit (£500) and completed Form of Acceptance which must be returned within three weeks of the offer of such a place.
- Where the school is unable to offer a place, the parent may request that the registration fee is returned. Where the parent withdraws the child, or when a place has been offered, the registration fee is non-returnable.
- There is no entry test. We do ask that placement tests are completed in English and Math's to ensure we can meet the individual pupils' needs and that we can set them

appropriately. In addition, parents are required to inform the school, on the registration form, of any circumstances concerning health, educational or family background, or difficulties with learning. Where such information gives cause for concern, FSM will discuss with the parent the extent to which it hopes to meet the child's needs.

- There are no specific quotas allocated to day children, boarders or weekly boarders, nor to girls or boys. However, it is our intention to retain sufficient full boarders to ensure that the full boarding option remains popular. It is also our intention that at least half of those children aged 8 years and over should be boarders.

## **FACTORS GOVERNING THE AVAILABILITY OF PLACES**

- The academic year operates from September to July and consists of three terms: Autumn (September), Spring (January) and Summer (April).
- Children move from one Year group to the next with their final year being Year 8.
- There is a natural break at the end of Year 6 when some children face examinations for selective senior schools. For this reason, we are unable to ascertain how many spaces will be available in Years 7 and 8 until these results arrive – usually by late April.
- The offer of places to children for Years 7 or 8 is dependent on two factors: the availability of spaces in the relevant class and the availability of beds in the boarding house.

## **INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN AT FSM**

- Most of those wishing to enrol at FSM from overseas do so in the hope that the experience will improve their English language skills and broaden their social, cultural and emotional horizons. Consequently, it is important that the number of available spaces is limited to ensure a worthwhile experience for the child concerned. It is our policy that, where possible, children from the same country and of the same age will not be placed in the same class AND the same bedroom.
- Once their child's place is confirmed all parents will receive a Parents' Guide and all new children receive a Boarders' Handbook. Efforts are being made to produce these in both Spanish and Norwegian. These publications are in addition to the standard joining pack sent to all new families.
- Contact details of a UK Guardian must be listed on the Registration Form.
- Each family is asked to complete a 'Transfer Form' which effectively informs the school of perceived strengths and weaknesses as well as areas of interest both inside and beyond the classroom.
- All staff are informed about new children and are encouraged to review transfer information which is retained in the School Office.
- The Deputy Head (Academic) is responsible for ensuring that international pupils receive a balanced curriculum which meets their needs and that additional English lessons are arranged as appropriate.

- Each Faculty Head of Department includes within the subject handbook reference to the meeting of the needs of all children at FSM. This may involve differentiation within the class or in preps and the setting of appropriate examination papers.
- Every effort is made to identify those pupils who might experience specific learning difficulties before their arrival so that the Learning Centre can advise parents (and staff) on possible and appropriate provision.
- All children may be raised for discussion each week at either or both of the Staff meeting and Residents' meeting. Minutes of these meetings are distributed to all staff. International pupils are reviewed at least twice each term as a matter of policy.
- FSM encourages close communication with International parents. Pastoral staff will contact all parents within 48 hours of a child arriving at the school and then remain in regular contact as the need arises or should there be something to report.
- All international pupils are assisted in emailing/telephoning within 24 hours of arriving at the school.
- The visits by the majority of Spanish/Chinese pupils are usually arranged and coordinated by agencies. We receive self-assessments and references on all children. A member of the agency's staff team usually visits early each term to ensure that the children are settled.
- Our international pupils and their parents have an individually designated member of staff through whom they can direct queries or concerns.
- Our Spanish children have regular meetings with two members of staff, one of whom is a fluent Spanish speaker in order that concerns may be expressed and addressed in their own language.
- Particular care is taken by the matrons' department to liaise closely with parents of International pupils on medical issues and medication.
- Every effort is made to recognise and celebrate special occasions in a child's national calendar. For example, we celebrate Norway Day on 17 May with flags, songs and special treats!

**Every member of staff and every child is encouraged to support those joining the school from overseas.**

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **How is the English academic year organised?**

Oddly, our academic year runs from September to July. The Autumn Term begins in September, the Spring Term in January and the Summer Term in April. Children normally move up a year in the September following their birthday. They will normally have their 13<sup>th</sup> birthday in Year 8, the final year at FSM.

### **How long do international children stay?**

It depends on the offer made by the school. Whilst on some occasions it may be possible to register an overseas child for a shorter stay, most children stay for at least one term and many children stay for longer.

### **Which is the most popular term to visit?**

Whilst the Summer Term is popular (because of the weather, swimming etc. and despite examinations) the other two terms contain lots of fun things, too! The Autumn Term often works best when you consider the wishes of your child's current school.

### **What is the best age at which to come?**

We are aware that a stay at FSM is usually only possible through careful negotiation with a child's current school and that there are some 'natural' breaks. International children normally join us between Year 6 and Year 8 (and sometimes in Year 5), though we have hosted a number of younger pupils before. There are advantages and disadvantages to both. For example bed space is more often limited for our older pupils but, these pupils are also usually more mature and may be more ready for an overseas boarding experience whilst also enjoying certain privileges as a result of being in the final year. The Summer Term in Year 8 will be less valuable in terms of tuition as English children have examinations at half term and then have few lessons from then on.

### **How many places are available for international students?**

The number of pupils for whom English is not their main language should not presently exceed approximately 7.5% of the school.

### **How do we reserve a place?**

Once a child's recent report has been assessed (purely to ensure we can meet their needs) parents (or Agents) will be contacted to offer a place as soon as possible.

We ask that a registration form is completed together with a Form of Acceptance and returned to us together with the registration fee of £150 and deposit of £500 (the deposit is re-credited on the final term's account).