

# Notes for Staff 2010

**IT IS ESSENTIAL TO READ THIS ENTIRE BOOKLET.** It is based on experience and has been revised for 2010. **New sections are in this colour.** The various paragraphs represent our Policy Statements on issues.

## **Vacational Studies - we aim to give...**

- young people aged 11-17 the chance to meet people their age from many different countries using English as the only communicative medium
- a positive and safe experience of our country
- a taste of independence while being secure in our care
- a learning experience that they could not get in their own country
- the best time of their life.

We do not take groups of students via agents, so we have a number of different nationalities with no preponderance of any nationality. We are now well into our second generation of students. In many families, coming on a VacStuds Course is a rite of passage. Parents know their children will meet interesting youngsters from similarly cosmopolitan backgrounds. We have been running Courses for 37 years and are well-established in the field. Our students come to us on recommendation from past parents. With every enquiry I send out a list of Parental References, so prospective clients can speak to parents who have already sent children to us. I also require a letter of recommendation covering behaviour and attitude to study before accepting a new application. In this way we tend to get pleasant children who are motivated to learn and have a good idea of what the Course is about. Parents and children receive special Notes before they come. We shall show you these so you know what they know. Parents tell me they like to deal with a person - me - rather than an impersonal organisation. I write all the letters and so am known to the family before their child comes. I appreciate that parents are entrusting me with their most precious possessions. In appointing staff I am delegating this trust to you. Although you will see children 'en masse', bear in mind that each is an individual who comes as a result of much correspondence. All of them have high hopes and all of them leave behind parents who are naturally concerned for their welfare. What happens to them is up to us. We must be the best in the field.

## **Why these Notes are important**

Sections are included that are applicable to all posts as well as some that apply only to particular jobs. This is to provide everyone with as clear an idea of the Course as possible. **We shall assume you have read these Notes in conjunction with the job-description, the website and the News-Sheet.** For some posts there are additional Notes. Further details on specific areas of the Course will be sent before the start. I am sending this information to all staff before acceptance of posts with us so that this Organisation's standards and expectations are known. I cannot cover every aspect of the Course, but all the points included here appear because they have arisen in one way or another on previous Courses. Most of the time things run smoothly. Part of the reason is because staff and students are briefed beforehand on what to expect. The main reason is because we know exactly what we are doing. These Notes are designed to be help newcomers, especially staff unused to VacStuds and to boarding schools, benefit from our experience. They are not meant to be patronising (I realise they can be so interpreted), but positive and unambiguous.

## **Staff**

Job-descriptions:-

- As Director I am ultimately responsible for everything. I set up the Courses during the year. When the Courses are in action, I try to visit frequently to get to know the children better and gain an impression of how the Course is working. As the permanent factor

in Vocational Studies, I need to be well-informed so I can liaise with parents during and after the Courses. In many cases I have information about students and their backgrounds which may be useful if problems arise. I invite students to raise issues directly with me, if they wish.

- The Course Manager is in charge of the day-to-day running of the Course. The CM will have had extensive experience in boarding education and/or of our Courses. In an emergency, staff refer to the CM before taking other than life-saving action.

- The Assistant Course Manager (ACM) takes over the Course Manager's rôle in the CM's absence. It follows that the CM and the ACM cannot be away from the School at the same time or that the ACM can be away when covering for the CM. The enhancement for the ACM appointment will be pay +10%.

- There is an overall Academic Manager who has a DELTA and substantial experience in teaching English as Foreign Language and in planning a Programme of Work. The primary functions of the Academic Manager are to devise a task-based learning system which will be implemented by ensure parity of academic standards and to support each School's Senior Teacher. The Academic Manager, in conjunction with each School's Senior Teacher, helps give a brief induction to the teaching staff on the first day; visits classes; observes and advises on teaching methods and oversees student placements and transfers and arrange the writing of progress and final reports.

- The Senior Teacher is the senior teacher at each School and is responsible, in liaison with the Academic Manager, for teacher-induction, overseeing student placement, teaching and the writing of reports on students' progress.

- A Teacher teaches, does boarding duties and helps with the sports/social activities. We particularly look for staff who have experience in teaching children, of working in a boarding environment, or have the necessary sensitivity to children's needs

- A Support Teacher may be available to teach classes when, for example, the Senior Teacher is observing classes or if a teacher is ill. This involves following on from the regular teacher where possible. It does not mean just sitting in front of a class while they get on with pre-set work. When not teaching, they may observe classes. They also do boarding duties and help with the sports/social activities.

- The Sports/Social Organiser arranges the sports/social programme around students and staff. Ideally, the SSO will have had previous experience of the Course, possibly as an Assistant member of staff.

- Matron is in charge of health, welfare and domestic arrangements. The CM or ACM provide cover for Matron on her day off.

- Assistant Staff help the Sports/Social Organiser and also assist the Matron. Assistant Staff are available to do boarding duties.

- The Staff Helper (if applicable) is a substantial ex-student returning at my invitation to help the staff. They are not employed as staff and do not do boarding duties. They cannot supervise any hazardous activity (such as swimming) or be put in charge on trips.

- My Childcare Assistant looks after my 9½ year-old triplet sons.

- My PA is responsible to me.

## **Proof of staff identity and qualifications**

I need proof of identity for staff who have not worked with us before. I am required to see originals and keep copies of all staff tertiary qualifications. Those coming for interview should bring originals for me to copy. If originals are unavailable for the present, copies will suffice as long as originals are brought at the start of the Course.

## **Staff Pay**

Payment is by cheque at the end of the Course. If they wish, staff can be paid an advance at the end of the first week, to be deducted from the final balance. As employment is temporary, we are not required to deduct PAYE from British staff at source unless they are normally resident in the UK and so liable to tax. NI is deducted at the prevailing rate. Because we value their experience of our work, teachers (including support teachers and Senior Teachers), sports organisers, assistants and matrons are paid a bonus of 10% of the regular pay if they return after one summer with us and 15% if they return after two or more.

## **The protection of children**

We have a duty to ensure that we provide a sufficient level of protection for all the children under the age of 18 in our care. References and CVs will be checked. The Criminal Records Bureau advises us that, because our staff have substantial access to children, if they have not already been checked for their current employment, they should request 'subject access' at their local police station or a 'certificate of good conduct' from the British Embassy if they live and work overseas.

## **Safety, Welfare & being 'In Loco Parentis'**

For every member of staff the most important task is to make sure that each student's safety, welfare and happiness are maintained. Legally, we are 'in loco parentis' at all times - even when not specifically 'on duty' - and we must always keep in mind what a 'prudent parent' would do in similar circumstances. Clearly, no 'prudent parent' would permit a child to endanger him/herself, nor take risks with or by negligence jeopardise a child's safety. Prudent parents are protective and restrictive. We must be, too. It is our legal and moral responsibility. I prohibit contact with anyone or anything I, in my absolute discretion, consider 'undesirable'. This includes topics for classroom discussion. The atmosphere on the Courses is friendly and informal and the children are on holiday, but we must guard against complacency lest minor oversights develop into major problems.

We employ local doctors on a per capita fee basis. EU students are entitled to the full benefits of the NHS. Students from EU and EEA countries are asked to bring a EHIC (European Health Insurance Card), to ensure free NHS medical treatment for all (including pre-existing) medical conditions. We insure all our students against illness.

In the event of a visit to hospital or the calling of an ambulance, staff refer to the Course Manager first, unless there is a real threat to life.

## **Bullying and other inter-student problems**

We take bullying and racism seriously. Staff must tell us if they suspect this is happening. Teachers must talk to their class about these when they go through the 'Notes for Students' at the start of the Course. I write to all students before they come informing them they can tell any member of staff - or me - if there is a problem, such as bullying. As an example - so that we can be aware of any form of bullying or unpleasantness, students are told they can request a change of dormitory 'without specifying a reason'. They know that this will alert us to the existence of a student:student relationship problem which the Course Manager will investigate. We shall contact parents and place on suspended expulsion any student bullying any other student whether mentally or physically.

## **The Students**

They are generally 11-17. A few may be older or younger. They tend to be bright, interesting to talk to and can have a disarming self-confidence. You may think that their English is better than it actually is. It is easy to speak a little English and a few set phrases can disguise paucity of vocabulary. All of them have a lot to learn. They will learn most from the community experience of which you are a part. The line I take with them is that they are privileged to be on the Course. The students know what to expect and I have no sympathy with those who waste their place and parents' money by not integrating and participating.

## **Teaching**

During the four 45-minute lessons in the morning, there should be a balance between oral and written work. The 'Supervised Study' period after lunch is for written work. Capitalise on the fact that you are a native English-speaker and that the children are (i) in Britain and (ii) on an international Course. If you are doing something that could equally be done in (say) Oslo with a Norwegian teacher in front of a class full of Norwegians, you are not using the Course situation to its best advantage. A Course of four weeks is brief and compromises have to be made. A teacher, like every other member of staff, is really much more effective joining in the sports and social programme or just being around the School chatting to children than hidden away preparing lessons or marking books. A highly-structured lesson normally does not go according to plan. Marking can be more effectively done in front of a student. There is no point in making copious notes and corrections if a student does not read them. We use 'OK' 1, 3 and 4; 'Compact'; 'Reward Intermediate'; 'Cutting Edge Upper Intermediate' and 'Headway Advanced' as the main textbooks. We also have a great variety of supplementary material together with work on audio and video cassettes. We ask staff to make use of all the materials. We provide pen, files and A4 paper for students. Our own Programme of Work (hints and advice for teachers) is published separately. We have a video of specimen lessons to assist teachers.

Students can find the classes too easy. They need to be pushed - hard. They will expect it from you. The units in the textbooks contain more than enough material for four weeks - if properly exploited.

The Academic Manager, Directors of Studies and I place the students initially into 'assessment groups' based on our knowledge of the students, their age and nationality, the time they have been learning English and parental assessment. There may also be a brief, easily-administered placement test. For the first few days there is movement between the assessment groups before they become classes. The possibility for promotion/demotion thereafter remains. The AM and Senior Teachers compare standards in each class and effect transfers. Teachers can recommend transfers and the students should be told that the appropriateness of the level of the class they are in is continuously assessed. The AM and Senior Teachers also allocate staff - first to assessment groups and then to classes. Staff preferences are taken into account, but the AM and Senior Teachers exercise absolute control over teacher-placement.

## **Reports**

Progress reports are sent to parents after about ten days. Teachers complete a multiple-choice form and can, if they wish, add a brief comment to provide parents with an idea of how the child is performing. The contents of reports must be disclosed to students. They cannot rectify deficiencies in work or attitude if they are unaware of them.

Final reports develop points raised in the progress report. Teachers add other observations and give their opinions on the students' performance on the Course - in and out of the classroom. Teachers key draft reports into the computer. Advice on report writing is published separately.

## **What we expect of teachers**

Teachers' responsibilities to children do not end after the homework period whether or not they are on duty. They should be on the premises and available to help with events. They should not expect the sports/social crew to help with bedtimes.

If staff wish to leave the premises, except during their day(s) off, they must check with the CM and give time of departure and estimated time of return. This includes Sunday afternoons.

Teaching staff are expected to assist with pool duty and other leisure-related pursuits.

## **Staff-student Relations**

Traditionally these are excellent with the staff on first-name terms with the students - and vice-versa. The staff may be the only native English-speakers the children have access to. They cannot get this at home, so please be around as much as possible. Don't spend hours in the Staff Room. This is more of a between-lessons-refuge than a staff waiting room. Talking to colleagues outside or in communal areas in the School will help staff-student relations. This is the key to our most successful Courses. Dress is informal with a distinction between what is worn in the

classroom and what is worn on the sportsfield. I expect our students to be well-behaved. Please insist on good behaviour in the classroom and outside it. Our students also deserve courteous treatment.

## **The Rules**

These are outlined in the 'Notes for Students'. All parents and students will have read these and agreed to be bound by them. It is essential that you know them and enforce them - in and out of the School. It is easy to say 'yes', to appear to be 'liberal' about the rules and seek to gain popularity with the students by appearing to empathise with them. It does not work. The students will see through this attitude. The rules have been developed over the years to help everyone. Children prefer an organised environment and function better in one. We are, in effect, creating an 'instant' boarding school and we need to have a structure of discipline right from the start. Tabulating the rules helps achieve this and such a structure helps everyone. All staff rely on the rules if they encounter a discipline problem and cannot expect the support these give if they have previously selectively condoned their being broken.

## **'Notes for Parents/Students'**

Please read these. [They are on the web-site](#). You need to know what 'rules' parents and students are expected to observe. The rule banning chewing gum may seem rather drastic and need explanation. The schools we use do not allow their pupils to have gum for the same reasons we ban it. It causes damage to floors, walls and furnishings. We assure the schools that no damage will be caused by gum and we enforce the ban. The fine is high as a deterrent. Staff must report students who have gum. 'Childline' will be delighted at your doing this. Those fined for chewing gum will have the task of removing all gum from floors, etc. on the last day. We hope that staff will not chew gum in front of students... The other rule constantly broken by students is the one about only having a small amount of money on them. They tend to hide money so they will not have to queue for pocket money. If they do this, not only is money likely to be stolen, but the theft may not be reported as the student knows he or she should not have had so much money. To avoid the bad feeling that results from thieving, staff should instruct students to return all unspent money after trips.

## **Pocket Money**

To guard against arithmetical errors, there is a space on the Pocket Money sheet for students and Course Managers to check and sign after every seventh transaction. Return travel arrangements and other information are included on these sheets.

## **Doing what we ask the students not to do**

As students are quick to spot what they perceive as unfairness, we ask staff to be so kind as not to do in front of the students what we forbid students from doing. For example, please do not smoke in front of them. The schools are no-smoking areas. We expel students who smoke. They know there is no second chance. If you see a student smoking, it absolutely must be reported. As we fine the students for chewing gum, we ask staff not to chew gum.

We also tell students that they may not change their hair colour or style or their appearance while they are with us on the basis that the student's appearance on arrival is acceptable to their parents. Young people may like the idea of having their hair dyed, head shaved or ears pierced while they are out of parental control. We ask that staff appear on the Course looking as they did at interview and that they do not change their appearance while with us.

The swimming pool rules apply to staff as well as students.

## **Alcohol, pubs and clubs**

Unwind in the local pub by all means, but we shall absolutely not tolerate any form of intoxication on School premises. This will be regarded as a breach of contract. All staff on the premises must be able to exercise responsible judgement at all times in case there is an emergency. This is why we request no alcohol in the School. Noisy gatherings do nothing for students' respect for staff.

No one affected by alcohol must enter school premises. 'Affected by alcohol' means, for example, anyone who could be reasonably supposed to be legally incapable of being in control of a car.

Course Managers are asked not to allow anyone apparently over the drink/drive limit to enter the school. That person must make other accommodation arrangements.

The Course Manager can decide when to secure the school. Anyone out after this time must make alternative accommodation arrangements for the night.

## **A boarding school day**

is 24 hours long. Because the children are asleep, this does not mean that they have ceased to exist. We continue to be responsible for them and there must always be adequate staff presence in the house.

## **Fire alarms**

must be responded to. We have fire practices, but one never knows when it will be for real.

## **Humour**

Best to avoid jokes at the expense of a nation's characteristic behaviour, accent, history, etc. or to discuss stereotypes or anything that might be construed as racism.

## **Sanctions**

are usually administered by the Course Manager. I am the 'ultimate deterrent' and will expel, if necessary.

## **Extra-curricular activities**

You are 'contracted' to help with these on at least six occasions each week. An 'occasion' is an afternoon, evening or Sunday morning activity session. You will find that the more you involve yourself, the more you will get out of the Course. The programme is worked out by the Sports/Social Organiser who will, if possible, take your preferences into account before putting you in charge of an activity. If there is an activity you would like to arrange, please mention it. Also, if you wish to take a group out, tell the Course Manager and Sports/Social Organiser. For everyone's safety, there are special rules for the swimming pool. These are sent in advance. If you do not feel competent to cope with a crisis in the pool, say so. Do not let yourself be persuaded to help with this or any other potentially hazardous activity unless you are sure you can take effective action to preserve life.

## **Trips**

All trips must have a written risk-assessment before they take place. There must be a staff:student ratio of 1:10 or better. Supervision of groups by staff is arranged on a rota basis. Any student going out of the School must carry a copy of 'Notes for Students'. This contains a 'help square', so they know what to do if they become lost. Accompanying staff must ensure that students have money on them and that they know how to use a public telephone or take their mobile phone. Unless specifically instructed to the contrary, all students must be supervised at all times. It is not sufficient for staff to ask students to meet them at a certain place by a certain time. Safety is the prime consideration. All students must wear seat belts. Frequent checks must be made to ensure that all students are present. This is specially important before the departure of a bus. We expect staff to appear to be interested in the trip, even if they are not, as children tend to take their cue from those in authority. Students must be accompanied by more than one member of staff - at least one male and one female. Any additional trips or changes to scheduled arrangements must be cleared with me first as contractual or insurance obligations may be compromised. Theatre trips are just that. No stop-offs are permitted.

## **Writing some 'unwritten' rules - 1. Loyalty**

The Course Manager and I will support staff in front of students - even when the member of staff is wrong. We expect your loyalty; so do your colleagues. Give and take are important in such a small community and any over-critical analysis - of another person or the Course in general - is likely to be damaging. One can always find fault if one looks closely enough, but the positive aspects become obscured like this. Please do not air criticisms in front of the children. They like to take the Course as it comes. For this reason, avoid questionnaires on the Course, teaching, etc. If something seems odd or meaningless, remember that the Courses have been running for more than three decades and there is generally a good reason for what we do.

## 2. Professional relationships

In a boarding situation, staff should have good, friendly relationships with the students while avoiding any suggestion of exclusivity or over-familiarity. The relationship staff have with students is a privileged one, based on trust and subject to professional, ethical and contractual restraints. For reasons of age and authority, staff and students do not meet on equal terms. *No advantage must be taken of this situation for personal gratification and any clandestine or improper development of this professional relationship will be regarded as a breach of contract.* To prevent allegations of any form of abuse, staff must not be alone with any student in a private room without the agreement of the Course Manager. Except in the case of fire rescue or similar, *male staff must never be in girls' dormitories or vice-versa.*

## 3. Staff relationships

Social mores in northern Europe are not always acceptable elsewhere. We do not, for example, expect hand-holding or other open displays of affection among the staff. In view of the residential nature of the Course, we shall determine the boundaries of acceptable behaviour.

### The telephone

The office telephone is for the Course Manager's use. All calls by or for other staff on our lines - outgoing and incoming - must be via the call box. The Course Manager is not permitted to vary this. Personal calls made on our Office phone are traceable via the printout we receive with the bill. Call box numbers are:-

Mary Hare: 01635 244261

Cheam: 01635 268225

*Disregard the numbers in the brochure. They are the office phone numbers.*

Students may receive calls only on specified days. Only the Course Manager may let them receive calls at other times or make calls. They can make calls from call boxes when on trips. We ask parents not to call as this disrupts the programme. In return, we say we shall let them know the moment there is a problem, even if they can do nothing about it. We also invite them to phone us. For this reason, someone **must** always be within earshot of the office telephone. **It must not simply ring.**

### Catering

Staff are provided with meals; coffee, tea, milk, biscuits and sugar at breaks; orange juice all day; hot chocolate and biscuits. We provide all meals except lunch on all-day trips away from School. We do not provide a cash equivalent in lieu of these meals. We provide lunch on Sports Day. The Staff Room is provided with a weekly allocation of coffee and biscuits for breaks. After the evening meal, light snacks are left for duty staff and those at the School for evening activities. The Caterers budget for all this. Please do not ask for other supplies. The Caterers are instructed to decline. Staff are asked to deal with the Caterers only through the Course Manager, not directly. In an attempt to limit waste, we avoid using disposable cups (except for hot chocolate) and wash up glassware instead. We also try not to use disposable cutlery for barbecues, etc.

### Days Off

There are two 'days off' during the Course arranged by the Course Manager on a rota basis. It is probably a good idea to go right away from the School for a complete break. Your 'day off' is a full 24 hours. Permutations of the total 48 hours (two 'days off') may be possible.

### Staff Helpers

If there are applicants of sufficient quality, there may be one or two per school. Each is a former student aged 18-20, returning to help with sports, the 'Club' and to do odd jobs. They act as a link between staff and students. They are not paid, but have, effectively, an expensive Course for nothing. As they are not 'employees', they cannot supervise excursions or swims. They are my personal responsibility, so I should like to hear praise or blame. I know them - often very well - and they will tell me how they think the Course is going. They are answerable only to the CM, ACM, Sports/Social Organiser, Matron and me. They may be too young for the pub. It is perhaps a sign of the times that, in the past few years, I have found few applicants worthy of the trust that is necessarily placed in a SH, so we have not had SHs recently.

## British Students

There are one or two at each School. They are hand-picked by their Housemasters and should be excellent all-rounders. They are with us to encourage English-speaking and to be ambassadors for our country. We expect them to join in with everything and get to know everyone. Teachers can use them as a resource. Their roles are described in the 'Notes for British Students', available on request. I expect them to feed information back to me on how the Course is going.

### Student Leaders

It is important that we recognise and develop leadership potential. Those students who have it will relish the chance to take responsibility. Needless to say, this cannot include supervision of any activity that might be considered 'dangerous' or require life-saving skills. Students can take certain sports and lead the Folies Bergères.

### The speaking of English

This is what the students are with us to do. It's up to us to encourage them. We try to accept no more than a certain number of students from any particular country so that they will not be tempted to use their own language. At the end of the Course, staff will put forward to me the names of those who have impressed them with the linguistic use they have made of the international environment and I shall award the 'English-Only Prize' (a Vacational Studies watch or similar) at the Final Dinner. At all times, staff should encourage English-speaking and international integration. To help with this, we have a seating plan for some meals, staff sit at students' tables for the evening meals and they should discourage 'national grouping'.

### Encouraging a pride in Classwork

The AM and Senior Teachers will award a prize (a Vacational Studies watch or similar) for academic excellence to the student with the best folder.

### The use of cars

Vacational Studies vehicles are not for staff use. Staff must not carry students in their own cars, nor use their cars on our business, unless they have specifically cleared this with me. We use only hired buses with drivers. We do not use self-drive hired vehicles.

### Equipment

This may be used only with the express authority of the Course Manager. Equipment in the kitchen and dining room is the responsibility of our caterers. As light refreshments are provided for staff remaining with the students in the evenings, some crockery and cutlery is provided at the start of the Course. No more may be removed from the kitchen or dining room during the Course. Any furniture that is moved must be returned to its original place by the end of the Course. Drawing pins and Sellotape must not be used, except on pinboards. We can provide Blutac. The 'Club' stereo is not to be moved out of the 'Club'. The revolving whiteboards in Mary Hare classrooms must only be written on with special pens provided by Mary Hare, otherwise use the chalkboards. We do not use the interactive whiteboards in each classroom. Students must be told not to mark them.

### Educational Equipment

The many computers and cameras we use must be locked away centrally when not in use. A teacher taking these items assumes responsibility for them. If they are left in a classroom and are stolen, they are uninsured. They are insured only when stolen by forcible and violent entry (= a thief breaking into a locked cupboard.)

### Photocopying & Video Recording

The Course Manager, AM and Senior Teachers (only) have access to the copier. The number of copies taken must be noted. We have a licence to copy copyright material, except newspapers. The blackboard can often be used instead of copied paper. We are covered by an Educational Recording Agency (ERA) licence, so you can record (non OU) radio and TV programmes as a teaching aid and copy recordings.

## **Expenses**

These are to be cleared with the Course Manager first. We have accounts with suppliers of the sort of goods likely to be needed. Purchases are to be made through the Course Manager.

## **What to bring**

You will need towels, but not bed linen. Sports/casual clothes are generally worn, but you should include formal clothes for the 'Casino', last-night dinner, etc. Don't bring expensive jewellery. If you wish to play tennis or squash, bring a racquet.

## **Directions to the Schools**

are in the brochure. None of the Schools is served by regular public transport past the door.

## **On the first day**

Staff are asked to arrive at about 10.00 on the day before the students arrive. For teaching staff, the AM and Senior Teachers will provide a brief induction starting after lunch.

## **First Aid Course**

A four-hour practical course is given to all staff on the first day by St John's Ambulance's 'First Aid at Work' unit.

## **Airport collection/return**

A number of staff are taken to Heathrow Airport to meet students on arrival day. Staff are taken there by taxi and return with the school bus. Expenses are paid. Staff accompany students to Heathrow Airport on the departure day to check them in and send them through to departures. Staff go to Heathrow on the school bus and return by taxi.

## **End of the Course**

To prevent the high spirits from getting out of hand, we have a special duty rota for the last two nights. Everyone helps by being on patrol for short periods during the night. There is an amount of clearing up to be done at the end. Staff are involved in this.

## **Guests/Visits to other Schools**

Only if agreed with me (not CMs) first, please. I expect to be asked if you wish to invite a guest to a meal or for an overnight stay. In general, for reasons of child protection, we do not permit overnight guests.

## **The Staff Common Room**

This is a communal, no smoking area. Staff are responsible for keeping this room clean.

## **All Rooms**

The Schools tend to be rather fine country houses/stately homes. Some of the fittings are more suited to domestic than institutional use. Nevertheless, they are our responsibility and any damage should be reported to the Course Manager.

## **Dress**

There should be a distinction between dress in the classroom and on the sportsfield. In the classroom and at meals, staff should not wear shorts or sports clothes. We ask students not to walk barefoot in the School or to and from the pool. This applies to staff, too. Stiletto heels and studded boots damage floors and should not be worn. There are occasional events where formal dress is appropriate.

## **Laundry**

We launder students' clothes. We will arrange for a limited amount of staff laundry to be done, too, if we are asked. Clothes must not be sensitive to bulk washing/drying and are laundered at your own risk.

## **Insurance**

Our students are comprehensively insured. We hold Public Liability insurance. In addition, personal effects of employees and dependants whilst engaged in duties of Vocational Studies at the School are insured against theft to a maximum value for any one person of £1000. We have a safe in the office for valuables and request that these are not kept in

staff rooms and insist that proper precautions against theft are taken. As they are not 'employees', Staff Helpers have the same insurance as students. Vocational Studies holds employer liability insurance. This is a standard policy which covers employees against injury through the negligence of the employer. If there is no negligence, there is no claim. Insurers see sports injuries (whether playing or supervising) as part of the risk of the game and an uninsurable event unless there is provable negligence. Staff should hold their own personal accident insurance. Injuries to teeth are generally not covered by personal accident insurance and need to be separately insured.

## **Student-Staff matches**

Because of differences in age, size, weight and experience, staff and students will not compete on equal terms. Any student v staff event that includes any form of or even just the possibility of physical contact is not allowed. Any student v staff event must be cleared with IGM.

## **Sports Day**

This takes place at The Mary Hare School and is scheduled for Monday 2 August - weather permitting. If rain is forecast for that day, Sports Day may be put forward or back to Tuesday 3 August. A trip is scheduled for either Tuesday 3 August or Monday 2 August, whichever is not Sports Day. Staff are asked not to be away on whichever day is Sports Day. This may mean having to re-jig a day off at very short notice.

## **Giotto, The Jörg Weise Association and The Vocational Studies Foundation**

You will hear mention of these. They are international organisations which have sprung from the work VacStuds does. Giotto comprises former students, staff and anyone else who wants to be part of it. It is a way for people to stay in contact long after the letter-writing days have gone. Giotto is now exclusively Internet-based. Through Giotto, you can have contacts in almost every European country and much of the rest of the world. The Jörg Weise Association is named after one of our students who was tragically killed just when he was embarking on a promising career. The JWA helps young people cross frontiers and, as part of its work, awards Scholarships to VacStuds and other organisations. Representatives from the JWA may talk to the students. The Vocational Studies Foundation was registered as a Charity under English Law in January 2000 to assist talented children from less-privileged backgrounds and offer them opportunities to develop their potential in environments they might otherwise not experience.

## **Scholarships**

A number of Scholarships each year by the JWA and the Vocational Studies Foundation. These students are treated in exactly the same way as the others and their special status is known only to the staff - and to their friends, if the Scholarship recipients decide to tell them.

## **The British Council Inspection**

All English UK members are visited by British Council Inspectors every four years and by 'spot-check' thereafter. We were successfully inspected in 2007.

## **Safeguarding the School and residents**

Each School building has a value of several million pounds. For reasons of security, someone on our staff must be at the School at all times - even when everyone else is away on a trip. The School must never be left without a member of staff there. All staff have my permission to challenge (politely!) anyone they find on the premises, if they feel that person's right to be there needs to be established. Note the numbers of and report to the Course Manager vehicles that appear suspicious. In 2009, four people walked through the Cheam School unchallenged and stole three cameras and two computers. The School's local reputation must also be safeguarded. None of the bought-in discos may be used at full volume on the loggia at Cheam or outside the conservatory at Mary Hare

## **Access to be restricted**

All rooms containing potentially dangerous equipment (such as laboratories) must be locked. The gymnasium and pool must be locked when not being used. Use of the gymnasium and pool is permitted only when a member of staff is present.

## **A Typical Day**

08.15	Breakfast (all students to be out by 08.55)
09.00	First class
09.45	Break
09.55	Second class
10.40	Break
11.10	Third class
11.55	Break
12.05	Fourth class
12.50	Break
13.00	Lunch
13.45	Written 'Supervised Study'
14.15	Break
14.45	Organised sports and games begin
18.00	Evening meal
19.00	Games, films, etc.
21.00	Hot chocolate and biscuits
21.30	'Club'
22.30	Bedtime (or 22.45)

## **Being 'On Duty'**

All staff (except the Staff Helpers) are involved. It is absolutely crucial that it is done conscientiously. It cannot be done from the Staff Room and duty staff must be around the School and grounds the whole time.

## **Notes on Duties**

For all staff (except Staff Helpers) there is a total of 2½ duty days (or the equivalent thereof) each week. This could, for example, be two 'full day' duties and one 'evening assistance' duty, or one 'full day' duty and three 'evening assistance' duties. Full day duty begins at 07.50 and ends at 07.50 the next day. If a male member of staff is on duty, evening assistance is provided by a female - and vice versa. Evening assistance duty begins at 18.30 and ends when all is quiet. As a member of staff has a legal liability for the safety and well-being of the children, a detailed list of particular aspects of a duty day is given below. THE DUTY MEMBER OF STAFF MUST BE CONSPICUOUS THROUGHOUT THE DAY AROUND THE BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS. This not only ensures that the duty staff are aware of what is happening around the School, but also that there is no period during which it can be assumed there is no member of staff about. Visits to all areas must be frequent and irregular. Any damage or safety hazards must be looked for and reported. It follows that the staff on a full day duty cannot remain in the Staff Room, nor be involved in sports or activities other than teaching.

## **Duty - Before Classes**

Ensure that the rising bell is rung at 07.50 (08.50 on Sundays.) Supervise entrance queue into breakfast. Check orderliness of breakfast arrangements. (At 09.00 Matron checks that dorms are tidy, beds made, etc. Occupants of untidy dorms can be recalled during the first break.)

## **Duty - During Classes**

Arrange for the bell to be rung at the beginning and end of every lesson - 09.00; 09.45; 09.55; 10.40; 11.10; 11.55; 12.05; 12.50 ; 13.00 (for lunch); 13.45; 14.15; 14.45 (for the beginning of afternoon activities.)

## **Duty - Lunch**

One member of staff to supervise the entrance queue into lunch and name-check the children; another to check the serving of food.

## **Duty - Afternoon**

If students are going out, make sure they have given you their names. Keep children away from manoeuvring buses. Check they have 'Notes for Students' which includes the School telephone number.

## **Duty - Before Dinner**

Check on the general tidiness of the School and report on this to the Course Manager.

## **Duty - Dinner**

Arrange for the bell to be rung at 18.00. One member of staff to supervise the entrance queue into dinner and name-check the children; another to check the serving of food.

## **Duty - Evening**

Make sure the hot drink container, mugs and biscuits are in position. Have the bell rung at 21.00. Serve hot drinks and biscuits (with the help of the other duty staff, Staff Helper, or any other member of staff.) Make sure the mugs are cleared afterwards and the room is clean for the breakfast caterers.

## **Duty - Bedtime**

Students should be upstairs by 22.30 and in bed by 22.45. Dormitories must be tidy and clothes folded before lights-out. Curtains should be closed and at least one window left partly open. Dormitories must be tidy and clothes folded before lights-out. Lights-out can either be then or after a short reading period (at the duty staff's discretion.) Only the Course Manager may authorise later bedtimes for any dormitory. Maintain a 'presence' until all is quiet. Before retiring, tour the School. Check that all lights are off (except certain corridor lights) and that fire doors are closed. The School must be locked up by 23.00.

## **Duty - During the Night**

You are still on duty. Should there be an emergency before the next duty staff takes over at 07.50, take appropriate action or contact the Course Manager or Director.

## **When you leave**

Departure is mid-afternoon of the last day of the Course. Special arrangements may apply to Matrons. The Course Manager remains until the last student is in the air. Staff are expected to help with clearing up and are free to leave after 15.00. If staff wish to leave at any earlier or later time, this must be by prior arrangement with me as Director.

Cleaners, caterers, etc. are contracted until the end of the Course only. Those staying at a school by private arrangement between the end of our suppliers' contract and our handing the school over to its authorities are responsible for making good any untidiness or damage. Please leave a contact address, e-mail and phone number for the month after the Course in case a parent has a query which only you can answer.

## **Confidentiality - 1. Students' forms**

These are confidential, but available for inspection by staff. Information in them is not for copying or communicating. Photographs are not to be removed.

## **Confidentiality - 2. Students' Addresses**

While there is no objection to these being requested for social contact purposes after the Course, I have to stipulate that they must not be given or sold to any commercial or news organisation.

## **Confidentiality - 3. Confidentiality clause**

We require staff to declare if they are or intend to be freelance or paid journalists. We do not permit information gained or photographs taken while in our employ to be sold or given to the press or other media.

## **Terms of Employment/Contract/Grievance**

These are outlined here and in the letter sent to you in response to your enquiry. If an offered post is accepted, this constitutes a contract. If a contract is broken, our practice is to inform referees and claim refund of interview expenses. If we consider a teacher's or other member of staff's performance unsatisfactory after three working days, we shall put the reasons in writing and invite the employee to a meeting to discuss the issue(s). After the meeting the employee is informed of the decision and offered the right to appeal. If the employee wishes to appeal, the employee is invited to a second meeting to discuss the appeal. A final decision is given after this meeting. If you are not happy about something, tell us. We shall do the same for you. 'Force Majeure' applies to contracts if conditions beyond our reasonable control occur. These include Government restrictions, wars and terrorist attacks.

***And finally....***

Thank you in advance for your co-operation. I am sure you will enjoy your experience this summer. Many of the children have spent the whole of the previous year looking forward to coming. I value good staff and am happy to write references and testimonials after the Course, based on my experience of your work. If you wish to have your teaching observed, just let me know. I cannot write a reference on an aspect of work if I have not actually seen it performed.

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