

Choosing a Boarding School Checklist



School Policies and Values

- Do the school's values fit with those of my family?
- Am I happy with size of the school and its boarding and class numbers?
- Does the school offer counselling and support services to students?
- Does the school's religious affiliation match my family's beliefs?
- Does the school have an anti-bullying policy or other programs to ensure the safety of my child?
- Does the school have student leaders and student bodies to build morale and encourage leadership skills?
- Am I satisfied with the school's disciplinary code?
- Am I satisfied that this school has structures and policies in place to provide a caring and nurturing environment for my child?

Academic Standards

- Does the curriculum offer everything my child wants to pursue (incl. specific languages, for example)?
- Does the streaming or grading of classes suit my child's academic needs?
- Will the technology available meet my expectations?
- Am I happy with the assessment and reporting processes?
- Is there a career advisory service at the school that will help my child make informed decisions?
- Would this school challenge and extend my child?

Extra-Curricular Activities

- Does the school cater for my child's preferred extra-curricular activities (incl. sport and music)?
- Is there an extensive range of summer and winter sporting activities to choose from?
- Would I be happy with the travel and supervision arrangements for weekend sporting commitments?
- If my child's preferred activity is not catered for, can he or she pursue that activity outside the school?
- Am I aware of the additional charges associated with any extra-curricular activities?

Location and Access

- Is the school close to public transport for sporting activities and other outings?
- Is the school easy for us to visit as a family or for family and friends who may take my child out for the weekend?
- Are there other facilities close by that the school uses for after school and weekend outings?

Parental Communication and Involvement

- Am I satisfied with the way the school communicates with students and parents?
- Am I satisfied with the way the boarding house communicates with students and parents?
- Would I be comfortable with the regularity of contact with my child?
- Can my child have access to a mobile phone so that we can contact each other?
- Are there suitable opportunities for me to be involved in the school as a parent?

Boarding Facilities

- Will my child be comfortable in the school's boarding facilities?
- Is the level of supervision in keeping with my expectations?
- Are there enough support services to meet my child's needs, including tutors, medical care, counsellors, etc?
- If my child has a problem or concern, am I satisfied that there would be somebody approachable for them to talk to?
- Is there access to technology, including computers and the internet, in the boarding houses?
- Am I comfortable with the way access to the internet is monitored in the boarding houses?
- Will the homework/study policy and supervision during that time meet my child's needs?
- Am I comfortable with the weekend leave arrangements?
- Are there adequate recreation programs on weekends and after school?
- Do I understand and agree with the pocket money policy?
- Will my child's dietary requirements be met by the catering arrangements for boarders?
- Is there a peer support program for new boarders?

Fees and Charges

- Do I have a realistic appreciation of the fees and costs associated with sending my child to this school?
- Do I have a good understanding of the additional costs, including uniforms, excursions, text books, etc?
- Are there scholarships/bursaries available?
- Is there a fee-paying plan?

Shortlist

- Should I make an appointment to visit this school?