

## **Pastoral and Boarding FAQs**

### ***What options does my child have for boarding and how does it work?***

There are 2 boarding options at NMSC.

1. Homestay is popular with younger students and all students under the age of 16 must take this option. Families are carefully chosen by our guardianship partners Sutherland Education <https://sutherland-education.com/> and all families and their homes are inspected prior to allocation. All homes are within reach of the College and students are transported to and from their homes by our own College minibus and driver.
2. City Village Hall of Residence is a state of the art boarding residence in the centre of Coventry, close to the Belgrade Theatre, shops and restaurants. Our students each have an individual en suite study bedroom and eat and relax in the shared kitchen and sitting rooms. NMSC has its own floors set aside solely for the use of our students and supervised 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by our Wardens, overseen by our Boarding Manager. Breakfast and Supper are taken in our own kitchens in the Residence. Students also have the opportunity to prepare their own snacks and fruit, milk and tea and coffee is always available to them. <https://www.downingstudents.com/student-accommodation/coventry/city-village/>

### ***What role does the Tutor play?***

Students meet with their tutors once a week as a group and have access to their tutors each day to ask questions about any aspect of their life - academic and/or pastoral – at College. Tutors also meet with individual tutees two or three times each term more formally and monitor their academic progress (test scores and reports) as well as monitoring their welfare and involvement in our Enrichment (or extra-curricular) programme.

### ***How does NMSC help students to settle in?***

There is a full induction programme of talks, tests, tours and fun ice-breaking activities for all new students on arrival. Students meet with their tutors and fellow students and are buddied up with returning students to help them settle in. All students are allocated to one of our Houses. This helps them to get to know students across the College and across the year groups.

### ***What if a child does not settle easily or has not boarded before?***

All our staff are on the look-out for signs of homesickness and our Induction programme and weekly tutorial sessions help students to settle in quickly. In the boarding residence, communal mealtimes and events such as film nights help our new students to settle in quickly. We also encourage students to keep in contact with home, as we feel it is very important to maintain regular contact with their families. In College, we encourage new students to join clubs and become involved with all aspects of

College life. Getting used to new routines, college food and UK weather is a common experience for the vast majority of our students.

### ***What counselling provision does the college provide?***

The College is fortunate to have its own trained counsellor who is available to meet students on a 1:1 basis. There is no charge for this counselling service. Our counsellor also leads Personal and Social Development group sessions on a weekly basis covering all aspects of life in Britain for young people. An Independent Listener is also available if students would like to talk to someone outside the College community. Contact details of the Independent Listeners are posted in College and in the Hall of Residence.

### ***What happens at the weekends at NMSC?***

There is a film night every Friday evening in the hall of residence which is organised by our boarding staff. College students in Homestay are welcome to attend these events. Students attend the Belgrade Theatre programme on Saturday mornings from 10.00 – 12.00. Gym activities are made available (yoga, circuit training) to students living in City Village on Saturday afternoons. Sundays are often spent relaxing and/or studying in preparation for the week ahead. There are also planned activities and outings to places of interest for new students during the first term.

### ***Can parents and children communicate regularly with each other?***

We do not place any restrictions on parents and children communicating with each other (other than during lessons) as we believe it is vitally important to maintain communication with Home for our students. Students have access to wi-fi in our boarding residence and teaching areas. All Homestay homes also have wi-fi which students are able to use. We do ask parents to be considerate of the time differences and not to disturb their children between the hours of 11pm and 6.30 am GMT.

### ***What happens during the holidays?***

The boarding residence remains open during half term breaks as do Homestay houses. At the end of term, the boarding residence remains open for period of 24 hours after the end of the term and re opens at 9am on the Saturday before term begins. Parents should refer to the Term Dates which are posted on the college website.

### ***Does my child need to bring bedding?***

No. All bedding is provided by the College for those in the boarding residence and by families in the Homestay. If students wish to personalise their bedding, this is also possible. In the boarding residence, all beds are double sized. Bedlinen is laundered once a week by the boarding staff. 1 bath sheet and 1 hand towel are also provided for students although they may also prefer to bring their own.

### ***What other equipment will my child need to bring?***

Details of what equipment will be needed is set out in the Student Handbook and the Boarding Handbook which will be sent to all parents before the start of term. Please note that stationary may be purchased in Induction week when there will be an organised outing for all students to the local mall for a shopping trip.

### ***Will my child's special dietary requirements be catered for?***

The caterers (Belgrade Catering) do their best to provide a range of meal options to suit: the dietary needs of vegetarians; those holding religious beliefs – such as Muslims requiring halal food; those who have allergies or intolerances to certain foods. Further individual arrangements and needs may be catered for upon request and we ask parents to inform us before the start of the year so that our caterers can plan appropriate meals. Food will be different from that which some students are used to consuming back home while trying to cater for a range of international tastes and appetites. Sample menus can be found on our website under the **Accommodation** tab.

### ***Will my child be able to cook in the boarding residence?***

Students do enjoy cooking and the boarding residence is equipped with 2 full sized and fully equipped kitchens on each floor. It should be noted that cooking is not allowed in bedrooms or in the studio rooms for fire and safety reasons.