

2023 | 2024



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Message from the Deputy Head of School



Dear QMS Parents and Guardians,

As educators striving to prepare students for the realities and challenges of an unknown future, a high-quality boarding experience can offer so many opportunities for individuals to develop character, interpersonal skills, and self-awareness. Navigating the complexities of adolescence with many other students requires numerous qualities, such as perseverance, compassion, and respect. At QMS, we seek to create cultures and environments that help develop key behaviours and habits that will give students an advantage in life.

Living so far from home and learning a new culture can be challenging; however, our team of boarding staff are in place and willing to support. The importance of relationship building cannot be underestimated; both between staff and students and between staff and parents. As we operate *in loco parentis*, we hope to create strong partnerships that yield significant personal development and growth for your children.

In our efforts to create capable, confident, and connected people, we hope that your children will enjoy the boarding house environment, build lasting relationships, and discover a sense of purpose in life that will provide direction in the coming years.

With an emphasis on wellbeing, particularly in the wake of a global pandemic, our Director of Boarding and House Directors, along with their support teams, are excited to provide guidance and role modelling to your children, and to build relationships with you, their parents and guardians. Please use the resources available to build constructive and meaningful relationships with our boarding team as they will take a keen interest in your children's development this year.

We look forward to the invaluable journey boarding life provides.

Sincerely,

Ander Monroe
Deputy Head of School



1.0 Program Goals

1.1 Core Behaviours

Curiosity; Bravery; Kindness; and Open-Mindedness

In order to personally develop and build self-confidence, we ask that students embrace these core behaviours. Being curious is a foundational quality of any meaningful learning, and in Geoghegan House and Denny House this is no different. We invite students to explore their own values, perspectives, and characters, and seek to learn more about the people with whom they live. Understanding different perspectives and preferences is integral to learning about how to live with other people and to develop a better sense of oneself.

Living away from home can present numerous challenges and requires a brave spirit to overcome fears associated with challenge. We know that through the network of peers, student leaders, and boarding staff, we have the knowledge and experience to help all students develop tools that will help them overcome their fears and promote personal growth. The courage to try new things is one element of a boarding experience that is so important, and there will be plenty of opportunities for this.

Kindness requires a level of respect and manners that results in a sense of compassion for others' wellbeing. To create an environment that is hospitable and welcoming, especially at the end of a long, busy week, is absolutely crucial to making QMS feel like a home away from home.

With all the new experiences and opportunities—not to mention the culture shift—we ask all students to embrace the notion of being open-minded; open minded to other people, to new systems, and to new adventures. This ties in with and links back to curiosity and learning. If we keep an open mind, it is amazing how we can change our pre-conceived perceptions and discover new interests or passions.



2.0 Boarding Staff and Resources

2.1 Staff

Each boarding house has a House Director (HD), Assistant House Director (AHD), Boarding Assistant (BA), as well as supporting Student Assistants (GAP students) and interns. During the week, teachers will come into the house to provide supervision and guidance. Together through the leadership of the HD, these teams collaborate to ensure that the environment, culture and care are optimized for the student experience. We also have our Health and Wellness staff who provide health and wellness support as required.

Our Boarding Team:

Director of Boarding – Wes Plater

Geoghegan House Director (HD) – Jessica Lyric

Geoghegan Assistant House Director (AHD) – Cristina Mir Baucells

Geoghegan Boarding Assistant (BA) – Katie Colosimo

Denny House Director (HD) – Rob Jones

Denny Assistant House Director (AHD) – Marlene Donaldson

Denny Boarding Assistant (BA) – Noah Charles

Junior Boarding Coordinator – Rowena Jones

International Boarding Coordinator – Qing Li

School Nurse – Mindy Swamy and Tara Raymond

Senior School Counsellor – Alison Bowden, Rubeena Sandhu and Darlene Tully



Wes Plater: Wes was born in Duncan, BC and raised in Williams Lake, BC. He was lucky enough to attend Shawnigan Lake School and went on to obtain a Bachelor of Education Degree at UVIC. His teaching career has revolved entirely around the boarding aspects of school life (23 years). Wes has had several roles in various schools including being a House Director, Assistant House Director, Social Studies Teacher, PE teacher and Rugby coach. He is excited to be a part of the QMS boarding team and looks forward to continuing to build and develop the boarding program. Beyond his professional life, he cherishes family time, fishing on the West Coast, and exploring the world through travel.

Wes Plater's contact details are: wplater@qms.bc.ca 1-250-732-5317



Jessica Lyric: Jessica was born in St John, New Brunswick and raised in Shawnigan Lake, BC. She is excited to bring a sense of family to the boarding house because her boarding house in high school felt like an extension of her family. She is also eager to start some new traditions and to help understand each student as an individual. She has lived in France, England and the US, and has taught ELL for many years as well as students from all around the world. Jessica holds a Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Education (both SFU) and Master of Educational Technology (UBC).

She also has a Film Foundation diploma from Vancouver Film School. She is TESL certified and is First Aid qualified. Her hobbies include reading, writing fiction, singing, playing with my daughter, critiquing film and TV shows. Jessica's contact details are: jlyric@qms.bc.ca 1-604-226-2488





Rob Jones: Rob was born and raised in a small village in rural Wales. Rob is a passionate Rugby coach and outdoor enthusiast. He gained his A-Levels at The Bishop of Llandaff Church of Wales High School before heading to London where he gained a Bsc (Hons) degree in Sport Science, Geography and Environmental Issues. From there he went back to Cardiff and completed a Post Graduate Certificate of Education in Physical Education. Rob spent the first few years of his career teaching at a small Island school off Penzance in England, where he taught PE to both High School and Primary aged students. In 2004 he made the move to New Zealand and has spent the last 20 years teaching at Feilding high School. Rob has been a Sports Director, House Director and Head of Physical Education, but most important of all a parent to four daughters. He is very excited to be joining QMS with his family and not only giving his family a life changing cultural experience but also being able to help shape and grow both the Denny Boarding House and the rugby at Queen Margaret's School. Rob's contact details are: rjones@qms.bc.ca 1-250-732-4612

Health and Wellness – The QMS nursing and counselling staff focus on keeping our students healthy. It is important to communicate all medical history or concerns with our health team to ensure we provide the best care for your child. The QMS nurse will communicate with community medical professionals such as physicians, dentists, physiotherapists, etc. Our counsellors will help connect students and their families with other professional services as needed. We are pleased to assure parents that the Cowichan Valley is home to a large team of highly qualified health and wellness professionals.

School Assistants (GAP Students) – These young people are generally 18–21 years of age, English speaking students from various countries. They are part of a program which involves spending a part of or a full year at QMS before beginning their university studies. They assist young students in the classroom and boarding staff in the boarding house.

2.2 Communication

Healthy, constructive communication is the key to successful relationships, and we encourage our staff to build positive relationships with parents, updating them on student success and learning. If you have an academic concern, please contact your child's Faculty Advisor, and thereafter, for any concerns, please contact their HD.

2.3 Technology Resources

Wi-Fi Access, Laptop Computers and Cellular Phones

Wi-Fi access is available throughout the boarding house. All students are expected to bring their own laptop (please see the [School Handbook](#) for details). Students with international cellular phones must ensure the phone is "unlocked" before coming to Canada. Locked cellular phones will restrict Canadian cellular activation plans and could result in very expensive options. Please provide boarding staff with your child's cellular number and advise them of any changes to cellular phones or numbers, both domestic and international throughout the year.

Students in Grades 6 to 10 will have to hand in their phones in the evening. Over the course of the year, HDs will address the Grade 10 situation and adjust as required.

2.4 School Store

The School Store sells uniform items and may be able to order specialty sizes upon request. All uniform items, with the exception of runners and dress shoes, are available in our on-campus School Store. Please see the required uniform item list available in our [School Handbook](#) or on our website qms.bc.ca.



Students whose parents have given prior authorization may charge School Store items to their account. Parents are asked to indicate their child's School Store charging privilege on the School Store Permission Form include with the fee invoice from the Finance department, or by sending an email to accounting@qms.bc.ca.



3.0 Boarding Daily Routines

Students will have a morning sign-in with an adult before heading to breakfast. Thereafter they will head to classes, returning at the end of the school day to prepare for tutorials, sports, arts, activities, or service. Dinner is between 5:30pm and 6:30pm, and then there will be homework time, followed by free time, followed by bedtime.

3.1 Schedules

General School Day

6:30am–7:00am	Wake up	
7:00am	Breakfast	
7:50am	Leave Boarding House	
8:00am	Classes begin	
3:00pm	Classes end	
3:00pm–4:00pm	After-School academic help with teachers	
3:30pm–5:00pm	Sports, Clubs or free time. Boarders may sign out to go off-campus if approved by boarding staff	
5:30pm–6:30pm	Dinner in Glide Hall	
6:45pm	Prep Study Time begins	
8:30pm–9:00pm	Snack in the Atrium	
8:30pm	Grades 6–9	Technology Hand-in
9:30pm	Grades 6-9	Lights Out
10:30pm	Grade 10	Lights Out
11:00pm	Grade 11	Lights Out
12:00am	Grade 12	Lights Out unless approved by staff for a later Lights Out (based on academics)

Boarding House and Room Access

Students will be permitted to return to the boarding house during the school day. When not in their rooms, they may lock their doors; however, when they are in their rooms (including at nighttime), their doors must remain unlocked. Refusal to comply with this will be dealt with by the HD, and thereafter by the Director of Boarding and Deputy Head of School if needed. Students will be provided lockers in the school building to store supplies, books, PE clothes, etc.

Weekend Routine

As posted in Houses by the HD

11:00am–12:00pm	Brunch
5:30pm–6:30pm	Dinner

Approved Weekend Leave

1:00pm–5:30pm	Saturday
1:00pm–5:30pm	Sunday

Extensions may be granted on an individual basis by the HD.



3.2 Young Boarders Program Grades 6 to 9

Our Young Boarders Program recognizes that our Junior School boarders in Grades 6 to 7 and Senior School boarders in Grades 8 to 9 require additional attention. Because of their age, boarding staff spend more one-on-one time with them to help with their daily learning and living. Areas of focus for our Young Boarders include:

- More supervision, both on and off-campus
- Organized and supervised age appropriate weekend activities
- Personal hygiene and self-care
- Developmental support (social and emotional)
- Organizational skills
- Individual academic support
- Technology supervision
- Healthy lifestyle choices (friendships, food, exercise, etc.)

3.3 Free Time

Boarders have grade appropriate free time throughout the week. Students may use their free time to join athletic teams, complete homework, access the fitness studio, attend academic tutorials or music lessons, visit the Equestrian Centre, etc. All boarders must sign out if they leave the boarding house. This information is posted throughout the House. Extra sign-out hours must be approved by boarding staff.

3.4 Academic Support

Prep Study Time

Prep Time is a mandatory quiet study period which takes place on school evenings beginning at 7:00 pm. Please try to avoid contacting your child during Prep Time unless it is an emergency. It can be disruptive to their studying time as well as the other students around them.

Academic Help

QMS faculty members offer general academic support after school, Monday to Thursday. All students are encouraged to use this time to ask questions and clarify assignment expectations from their subject area teachers.

Tutors

If a student requires additional support with their school work, we recommend hiring a professional tutor. Parents may request extra tutoring support through the Post-Secondary Counselling Office. Self-arranged online tutoring schedules must be pre-approved by the House Directors to avoid conflicts with community events.



4.0 Welcome to your Room

Welcome to our Boarding House

You and/or your child will be greeted at the main entrance upon arrival to our campus. Staff will show your child to their room.

4.1 Room Assignment

The House Directors assign rooms and roommates each year based on registration, student leadership, academic standing, and positive behaviour. Most of our rooms are double rooms, many with bunk beds. Our Young Boarders can have up to four students in one large room. Single rooms are assigned to senior students or student leaders as available. Furnishings include a mattress, pillow, built-in desk area, desk lamp, closet area and dresser drawers. We try our best to place students from different home countries in double rooms.

Sharing a room with another student will be a new experience for many students. Learning to share space takes a lot of conversation, consideration, and respect. Staff will support students through this transition and address any roommate issues or concerns that appear. It is important that parents support staff during this transition time so all boarders can settle quickly to their new environment and routine.

Room changes are NOT considered for discussion until after **November 1** and are at the discretion of the House Directors. Changes to rooms could involve many other students (and families); therefore, patience and understanding is the best solution when working through roommate issues.

Your support will help your child feel confident in learning new life skills as they adapt to living with other students around them.

4.2 Room Decoration

Students are responsible for maintaining the condition of their room, including the furniture. Rooms can be decorated individually by each student, but all material must be appropriate and not offensive to others. Any inappropriate pictures or words will be removed. Our local fire regulations state that no more than **20%** of the walls can be covered. Staff members provide each student with “sticky tack” (a gentle wall adhesive) to use when putting pictures on the wall. No tape is allowed as it takes the paint off the walls, and pins or tacks cause too much damage. Students may be billed for damage to their room and furniture for actions such as writing on desks, walls, chairs, or beds.

4.3 Room Cleanliness

Each student is responsible for keeping their room tidy. Sharing space means learning to organize belongings and to respect the other student(s) in the room. Your child is responsible for making their bed, vacuuming the floor, putting their clothes away, removing garbage, and any other tidiness needed to maintain an enjoyable space to live. Housekeeping staff DO NOT clean bedrooms but do clean the common areas such as hallways, stairs, kitchens, bathrooms, and common gathering spaces. Student rooms are inspected each school day. There may be consequences for students whose rooms are not considered tidy.



Boarders are not permitted to use any sort of hair dye in their room, the bathrooms or common areas. Hair dye stains everything it comes into contact with. If carpets, furniture or other boarding house items are stained or damaged, the fees for cleaning or replacing these items will be charged to the students' family account.

4.4 Personal Belongings

In addition to all toiletries, casual clothing, outerwear and school uniform, here is a basic list of what your child will need to bring or purchase upon arrival:

- One (1) small laundry bag for delicate clothing items such as socks, bras and underwear
- One (1) large laundry bag for large items
- Two (2) bath towels, face cloths, hand towels
- Bedding for twin size bed—bottom sheet, top sheet, blanket/quilt, and pillowcase
- Sleepwear (including a bathrobe and slippers)
- Flip flops for wearing in the shower
- Flashlight and batteries (for night-time emergencies)
- Canadian Safety Association (CSA) approved electronics as needed such as laptops, tablets, cellular phones

All items and clothing must be clearly labelled with the boarder's name in English.

Please note:

- Students are expected to wear the school uniform during school hours and to official functions as required. Uniform details are listed in the [School Handbook](#) and must be purchased at the School Store.
- Casual dress may be worn after class time, on weekends and on holidays. We ask that students wear appropriate clothing. Students are not allowed to wear revealing clothing or items promoting alcohol, tobacco, drugs, foul language, or sexual connotations.
- Suitable clothing for formal occasions should be packed.
- A bathing suit will be required for PE class and some boarding life activities.
- Boarders traveling to and from the School at the beginning and end of a holiday or on a weekend leave must wear "respectful casual dress."
- Pajamas and any sleepwear should be respectable.
- Students are NOT ALLOWED to dye their hair in the boarding house. They must have this done at a professional hair salon and the hair color must be a natural hair tone.
- Discreet jewelry may be worn.
- Nail polish must be a neutral color.

Dresser and cupboard space is limited, we ask students to keep their personal items to a minimum.

The School is NOT responsible for lost or stolen property. Students are asked to ensure all valuables are locked up in the lockable cupboard provided in their room or given to boarding staff for safe keeping. (See [Section 7.4](#) for more information.)

Students are NOT to keep large amounts of money in their room. HDs have a safe-box available where money can be securely stored. It is impossible to replace lost or misplaced money.



Items NOT permitted in Rooms

- Candles, liquid wax, matches, lighters, incense or other strong-smelling room fresheners
- Cooking or heating equipment (such as electric kettles or hot plates)
- Refrigerators or freezers
- Televisions
- Large stereo or electronic gaming systems
- Pets of any kind
- Hair dye

4.5 Room Searches

Safety and the overall wellness of all our students is important. The House Directors will direct and monitor any necessary student room searches, with or without the student present, should there be concern of any possible illegal action, involvement, or wrongful behavior that may affect the safety or well-being of our students. Reasons for room searches could include, but are not limited to, possible possession of alcohol, drugs or suspicion of theft.

4.6 Laundry Services

Each boarder is responsible for having all of their uniform and clothing clearly labelled with a permanent black marker or a label. It is each boarder's responsibility to ensure that their laundry is done regularly and not allowed to pile up.

Free laundry services are provided on-site twice a week by our housekeeping staff. A schedule is posted in each hallway.

Students also have the option to do their own laundry in one of the student laundry rooms.

Each boarder is given a laundry locker key and a laundry contract to sign when moving into the boarding house.

Housekeeping staff will not be responsible for color fading, shrinkage, damaged, or lost clothing articles. Housekeeping will also assist in coordinating dry cleaning services as needed (dry cleaning expenses will be billed to the student's school account).

4.7 Electronic Devices

All electronic devices (laptops, tablets, cellular phones, iPods, cameras, etc.) **must** be clearly labelled with the student's name. Students are expected to follow the [QMS Technology Use Policy](#) guidelines as outlined on our School website at qms.bc.ca. Wi-Fi is available across campus.

Students in Grades 6 to 9 are required to turn in all electronic devices before bedtime to ensure a good night's sleep. At times, we find this action is also needed for older students who require support in managing their electronic usage.



4.8 Summer Storage for Registered Returning Students

Limited storage of personal items over the summer months will be provided for registered returning students only.

QMS will store a maximum of five (5) small boxes per student. Standard size boxes (18 cm H X 18 cm D X 16 cm W), along with labels, will be available at a cost to the student. More than five (5) boxes must be approved by the House Directors.

Packing and shipping personal items home is the responsibility of the parent and student.

If your child withdraws from QMS before the end of the school year, either they or their parents are responsible for packing all of their belongings. If this is not possible, and a member of the boarding staff must clean out the room, charges may apply. Costs would include the preparation and shipping of ***non-replaceable*** items only. Replaceable items will be donated to local charities.



5.0 Healthy Living and Health Centre

Your child's health and wellness is important to us!

Medical Records (including up-to-date immunizations) must be provided to our School Nurse. If a family chooses not to immunize their children, they must provide a statement of conscious/religious belief or medical exemption.

If your child is not immunized against vaccine-preventable diseases for whatever reason, they may not be allowed to attend classes or fully participate in school programs in the event of a community outbreak.

We promote healthy living and encourage our boarders to learn how to make important personal decisions regarding their own health and wellness. Our health services team works closely with our staff and faculty in supporting and encouraging healthy lifestyles for our boarders. We remind our students of the benefits of exercise, proper nutrition and quality sleep. We also support our boarders as they learn to manage stress effectively, choose supportive friends, and take quiet time to self-reflect.

5.1 Homesickness

Being away from family and familiar routines can sometimes bring feelings of homesickness. This is normal and boarding staff are ready and prepared for this. We are very attentive to giving extra care to boarders who are experiencing temporary feelings of sadness. Staying connected with family, bonding to new friends in boarding and staying in a positive routine will help overcome these feelings quickly.

5.2 Food and Nutrition

Our School Nurse and House Directors will discuss the importance of nutrition and healthy food choices with boarding students. Our Food Services department supplies quality food choices for breakfast, lunch and dinner. All meals follow the Canada Food Guide and include the necessary proteins, fruits and vegetables and whole grains to maintain good health. Snacks are also available after school and in the evening. Our healthy food selections reflect local and seasonal cuisine here in British Columbia.

There are two cafeterias on campus: *Glide Hall*, named after our former Headmistress Margaret Glide, and *Karin Quinn Hall*, named in memory of a past parent. Meals are prepared by our Food Services staff and served buffet style in both dining halls during meal times.

Special dietary needs can be accommodated through discussion with our School Nurse and the Executive Chef. Meal suggestions and recipe ideas from parents are encouraged.

5.3 The Importance of Exercise and Sleep

Exercise provides energy and health to the body and mind. We encourage all boarders to participate in walking, running, weight training, team sports, or other scheduled fitness classes. The School Athletics program offers sports such as volleyball, basketball, golf, soccer, rugby, badminton and equestrian riding.



Sleep is vital to our health. Sleep helps the body and mind recover from the busyness of the day. Limiting healthy sleep can affect learning, emotional and physical health, as well as healthy decision making. Enough rest and sleep will support the happiness and success of each boarding student.

5.4 Health Centre Resources

Our Health and Wellness staff are here to support the healthy development and growth of our students. Students will be required, upon arrival, to meet individually with the School Nurse and a School Counsellor to discuss any health issues or concerns. Please be open and honest with our health care providers; this will allow us to provide a better level of care for your child.

The School Nurse is in the Health Centre during school days, 7:30am–3:30pm, and is then on-call during the evenings and weekends. If a student is not feeling well, they will remain under the care of the nurse in Sick Bay during the school day and then monitored by boarding staff during the evenings and non-school days.

Our School Counsellor is available for those emotional times when life seems stressful or challenging. The counsellors support students in making choices that reflect personal growth, self-awareness, stress management, and other strategies that assist the student through times of need. Our counsellor also co-ordinates community resources when additional support is needed.

Our Health and Wellness staff will help arrange any appointments to referred community professionals, such as doctors, dentists, physiotherapists, optometrists, mental health professionals, or other health specialists.

5.5 Medications

All medications, including vitamins, herbals, or non-prescription items purchased here or brought from home, must be labelled with the student's name and stored in the Health Centre. Please provide an English translation for all medications. Our nurse will monitor the dispensing of all medication. It is important that the nurse understand all medical conditions or concerns so appropriate support and treatment is given.

The nurse will dispense all medications at the Health Centre between 7:30am—3:30pm. Students requiring medications in the evening or on weekends must see the on-duty boarding staff.

Please note that the Health Centre offers medication such as Aspirin, acetaminophen (Tylenol), ibuprofen (Advil), cough syrups, decongestants, antihistamines, anti-diarrheal, anti-nauseants, laxatives, vitamins, medication for menstrual cramps, etc. It also has band-aids, tensor bandages, dressing of all types, antibiotic creams and hot/cold packs. These items are issued to students by nurse or boarding staff at no additional cost. If prescription medicine is required by a student, this specific cost will be charged to the student's account.

The winter season in British Columbia (November to March) is often cold and damp. It is very common for students to suffer from flu and cold symptoms (which include fevers) and this should not be a cause for alarm. Both our School Nurse and our boarding staff are well-trained to manage the symptoms of these minor illnesses. Our School Nurse will monitor cold or flu outbreaks and notify families if there is any cause for concern.



5.6 Illegal Drugs, Smoking, Alcohol, Sex

Teen life is a time when independence and personal choices are tested. We recognize the challenges of peer pressure and have clear policies and an immediate response to the rare issues involving alcohol, drugs and smoking.

Our campus is a *tobacco and drug free* campus (including vapour and e-cigarettes) and students are taught about the health dangers and addictions of these substances. British Columbia is known for its clean fresh air and outdoor living. Laws regarding smoking areas are very strict in protecting others from the harms of second hand smoke or vapour. It is illegal to purchase alcohol, cigarettes or cannabis when under the age of 19. Because we care about your child's health, we take this seriously, and severe action can result should a student chooses to participate in the use, sale or possession of illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco or vapour products, cannabis or e-cigarettes. If a student turns 19 years of age while boarding in our boarding house these rules and expectations still apply, even if they are of legal age in British Columbia.

Sex is a natural topic of curiosity for many teenagers. Under our Health and Wellness Program, students learn in the classroom about sex and sexual relationships. This information is intended to promote healthy conversation keeping family values, religious beliefs, and personal responsibility in mind. Sexual activity in any school building is not permitted. The comfort, respect, and safety of all members of the boarding community is of utmost importance.



6.0 Community Building & Social Time

6.1 Boarding Activity Program

Community Building Activities

Fun and engaging activities are arranged throughout the year to connect boarding students with boarding staff in a relaxed and playful environment. The focus is on community building, our school values, service, and personal health and wellness. These events expand student engagement in the arts, create opportunities for broader friendships and create student bonds across grades. It helps students feel connected, valued and a part of their new home. **All boarding students are expected to remain in the boarding house and participate in these important scheduled activities.** Our community activities include:

- RED DAY Activities (No student travel weekends)
- RED WEEKENDS Activities/Retreat (No student travel weekends)
- Community Dinners (including Cultural Dinners)

Community Sport or Club Activities

Students may join many activities in the local Duncan community such as swimming lessons, dance lessons, archery, tai chi, music and more. These activities can be arranged through our House Directors. Fees and transportation costs associated with these local community organizations can be charged to your credit card on file once your permission is received.

Other Off-Campus Activities

Students can participate in the planning of individually requested activities throughout the year. Our House Directors encourage students to share their ideas with them. These activities can be initiated by students, or by staff, for student enjoyment. Individual fees associated with these activities will be applied to participating student accounts. These individual activities can include events such as:

- Vancouver, Victoria or Nanaimo day trips
- Musicals or theatre productions
- Organized competitions (i.e., dance, sports, etc.)

If your child has a special event or activity they would like us to consider, please encourage them to speak with our House Directors.

Cultural Dinners

Throughout the school year, students and staff come together to celebrate the various countries, cultures, languages and cuisine of our boarders. These dinners are an opportunity for our community to share food, customs and dress from around the world.

Hallway Group Meetings

All boarding students will meet regularly with their hallway or family group along with their student Boarding Assistant (BA) leader. This is an opportunity to build support, make weekly announcements, discuss community concerns, plan friendly hallway group competitions or activities, and share in student successes and recognitions.



6.2 Student Leadership

There are many opportunities to be a student leader at QMS. We encourage all of our students to seek out opportunities as this will support their individual growth and enhance their experience. Here are a few of the leadership opportunities available in the boarding house:

- Head of House
- Deputy Head of House
- Sustainability Captains
- Duty Captains
- Activities Captains
- Junior Boarding Captains
- IT Captain
- Media Captain
- Equestrian Captain
- Celebration Captain

6.3 Social Time

Social time is important for teenage development. However, boarding staff members recognize that it is still important to guide young students in their choices and to encourage healthy activities and play. We strongly encourage our boarders to develop stronger bonds with our community through participation in campus activities and creating friendships with day students and their families. We also welcome parents to encourage their child to take advantage of the multicultural opportunities that QMS offers to forge cross-cultural connections. Those connections provide a friendly atmosphere to practice speaking English.

Common Rooms

These are rooms where boarders can visit together, watch TV and play games. The Denny Commons Room is one of the largest of the common rooms in the boarding house where students can gather throughout the week.

Visitors

All visitors must sign-in with boarding staff in the Boarding House entrance.

Weekend Leaves – Day Student and Family Visits

We encourage day families to host our boarding students on weekends. All activities that our students will be participating in must be under the supervision of the host parent. All QMS rules, including the non-use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs, apply both on and off-campus. Student safety is always our top priority and the House Directors, along with boarding staff will use their discretion when approving Weekend Leave activities. For more information on travel arrangements with regard to a Leave, please see the [Section 8.3](#) in this handbook.

- **Day Student Family Visits**

The House Directors will help organize student requests and speak directly with the day family extending the invitation. This is another way of supporting your child to enjoy our local community and to surround them with other caring adults.

- **Out-of-Town Travel**

Many students enjoy going to Vancouver or Victoria to visit family or friends. At QMS, we have strict guidelines when it comes to “out of Duncan” weekend requests and staff will do everything possible to make sure your child is staying with appropriate adult supervision (a person over the age of 25) and is



well cared for. Full time boarders are required to fill out a **Weekend Leave Request** using our student management system called 'REACH,' asking permission to leave campus. If the House Directors or Director of Boarding are not comfortable with the request, the request may be denied.

- **School Attendance Expectations**

Academic attendance is important for academic success. Parents are asked to schedule appointments when classes are not in session. Should it be necessary for your child to take time away from class, please request permission for absence from the Deputy Head of School as well as the House Directors.

Student Cooking

On weekends, students may wish to cook the occasional meal or snack for themselves. Kitchen access is limited on weekdays. Students are responsible for ensuring the kitchen area and all dishes are cleaned and put away properly following use.

Bringing Food into the Boarding House

On Fridays and Saturdays and during extended weekends, students are permitted to order food. They may also purchase ingredients and prepare their own meals. Regular meals will still be provided in the dining room in Glide Hall. Food is not to be stored or eaten in bedrooms due to health and safety concerns.

Sleepovers

Sleepovers are a fun way to spend time with friends. Students can sleep over in each other's room on Friday or Saturday night if their request has been granted by boarding staff prior to 9:00pm that evening. It is up to the discretion of the boarding staff as to whether sleepovers will be approved. Boarding staff members grant sleepover requests based on respectful and co-operative behavior, clean rooms, homework completion, health and wellness of the student, and any other general expectations that need to be considered. Sleepovers can be cancelled should student's behavior become intolerable for other students or staff.

Sleepover guests are to bring their own bedding and are to sleep in the extra bed in the room. If necessary, the guest may need to sleep on the floor if an empty bed is not available. Only one person per bed please!

Birthdays

Birthdays are important. Students wake up to a beautiful birthday card on their door from boarding staff. If a parent wishes to have a birthday cake or small party arranged and charged to the student's account, please contact the House Director. Flowers, balloons and other birthday items can also be arranged. Students will be allowed to order take-out food or go with friends to a restaurant on their birthdays and may celebrate either before or after prep, depending on staff permission.

Birthday Packages

A birthday package can be provided for your child on their special day. The package will include a birthday cake, flowers and balloons valued up to \$140.00.

6.4 Banking and Spending Money

Boarders are learning about personal finances when they open their own bank account and learn how quickly money can be spent! This is a great life lesson and can provide an opportunity for further conversation between parents and their child. Most debit cards from other countries work in Canada (please be sure that they are Interac, Plus, Visa or Cirrus compatible). By using debit cards, parents can directly deposit money to the bank



account for their child's use.

If parents feel their child is not ready for their own bank account, they are asked to complete the Expenditures Permission Form for weekly pocket money.

Being responsible and safe with money is another lesson to learn. Each student has a lockable closet, drawer or safe in their room to keep their money and valuables. Lost money cannot be replaced; therefore, it is important that our students use their lockable closet daily. Other personal items, cash and travel documents shall be looked after by the House Directors.

Pocket Money

For those students who have parental approval, pocket money (or an "allowance") is distributed each week by the House Directors. Parents are permitted to deposit a lump sum of money with the School or place a credit card on file before (or upon) their arrival, and define a weekly allowance for their child. Though parents may stipulate a lesser or greater amount, we recommend an allowance of **\$20–\$40** per week.

Pocket money may be collected on Thursday afternoons between 3:00pm–4:00pm, or on Fridays during the lunch hour, and between 3:00pm–4:00pm. If these times are being changed due to holidays or Professional Development Days, the schedule will be posted around the boarding house.

If your child is requiring more money than they are regularly permitted, parents must contact the Finance Office at accounting@qms.bc.ca by **Thursday at 4:00pm of the week prior to receiving the money**. Amounts over \$100 will be charged against a credit card on file.

Parents can expect an administrative fee added to pocket money distributions that will be charged to their credit card on file.



7.0 Safety and Security

7.1 Custodianship

All boarding students must have a guardian representative living in Canada, who are able to give consent and sign waivers on behalf of the student's parents.

House Directors can make decisions on your behalf, which they believe are in the best interest and care of your child. These decisions could involve permission for:

- sleep over trips to a day student's home
- weekend travel to Vancouver or other areas outside of Duncan (pending parent notification)
- medical emergencies (in consultation with parents)
- most low cost charges to the student's account for School events or activities (usually under \$150 per activity)
- any other day-to-day care required for your child

If the House Director does not have enough information or does not feel safe or comfortable with a request, permission may be denied. We are familiar with our country and customs and will always do what is best for your child.

The House Directors will invite parents and guardians to sign Informed Consent and Acknowledgment of Risk Forms or Waivers when necessary.

7.2 Student Conduct & Disciplinary Action

Queen Margaret's School prides itself on being a community built on trust, mutual respect and honesty. Our school expects all students to be good role models to others, both on or off-campus. Mutual understanding and accountability are values we want our boarders to exhibit within our community. It is important to learn appropriate social skills and behaviours and to understand that consequences are attached to choices made. The school expects parents and guardians to be supportive of these QMS conduct policies and encourages parental involvement at all levels.

Minor consequences will be dealt with individually with the student and according to the individual situation. The goal is for the student to learn, understand and choose to participate in healthy choices and behaviours. In addition, students will come to recognize how others are impacted by their decisions.

Bullying or harassment of any type is unacceptable. This includes, but is not limited to, verbal, emotional, cyber, physical and sexual threats of any kind. Students making negative comments or actions toward another person will be spoken to, with the experience highlighted as an opportunity for growth and learning. If negative student behaviours continue, escalating disciplinary actions will occur.

Distribution or possession of any illegal products or drugs is considered a very serious offence. We care about the health of our students and the influence these choices have on other students. Our commitment to a safe, non-threatening and nurturing community dictates that illegal behaviour will be dealt with swiftly and seriously.



Behaviour that brings disrespect to the School, both on and off-campus, will result in disciplinary action as needed, including suspension and/or expulsion from the School at the discretion of the Head of School.

On-Campus Suspension—“Gated”

Students who have not adhered to the boarding house guidelines may be given an on-campus suspension (“gated”) for a specified period of time. An on-campus suspension means the student is not allowed to go off-campus, to receive visitors or have a sleepover.

Suspension

For serious misbehaviour, a student may be suspended from school (internally or externally) for a period of one or more days. This sanction can be imposed by the Deputy Head of the School upon consultation with the House Directors and Head of School. Off-campus homestay may be necessary; the cost will be charged to the student’s school account. Teachers will use discretion to determine marks for assignments overlapping the time period of the suspension. Field trips and/or extra-curricular activities will not be permitted, even if this causes problems for affected teams or clubs.

In the case of out-of-school suspensions, a boarder may be returned to the parent or guardian for the imposed period of time. They may not attend school or visit specific school premises. All tests and assignments must be done upon the student’s return.

Appeal Process

The Head of School is responsible for running the day-to-day operations of the School. This includes all matters pertaining to student discipline. In the event that parents disagree with the final decision of the Head of School, a special procedure for a formal review exists. The Federation of Independent Schools Association (FISA), of which QMS is a member, has identified a qualified person to act as an ombudsperson for member schools. Parents are advised that the ombudsperson is available to conduct an impartial review of the process carried out by an independent school that led to the decision in question. To initiate this process, parents can request further information through the Head of School.

Complaints

Complaints related to boarding should be submitted in writing to the Deputy Head of School and/or the Director of Boarding. A written response to the complaint will be given within 24 hours of its receipt, even if the initial response is simply outlining the investigatory process that will need to happen.

7.3 Off-Campus Privileges

Safety is a word your child will hear many times while living in the boarding house, regarding both personal safety and property safety. Signing out is mandatory for every activity that takes place **off-campus**. It is our highest priority, and we want each person to learn to be responsible for their own safety and aware of each other’s safety and well-being.

Students in Grades 6 to 8 may sign out according to the posted schedules, in pairs or groups, but never alone, and must remain with the same person(s) unless they have special permission from boarding staff. Grades 9–11 students may sign out and travel alone across the street to 7-11, CANCO Grocery or the Fish Bowl Cafe. For those wishing to travel downtown, they must travel in pairs. All sign-outs are based on meeting daily priorities, room tidiness, academic responsibilities, and always consider personal safety. Boarders will sign in and out with a



boarding staff member prior to leaving campus and upon return. It is the staff member’s responsibility to know the location of every boarding student at all times.

Grade 12 boarders are permitted greater privileges regarding sign-outs as they learn about accountability, safety, independence and personal responsibility.

7.4 Protecting Your Valuables

Each boarding student receives a room key and a lockable closet, drawer or area within their room. Room keys can be replaced if lost for the cost of **\$25**. If a room key is not returned at the end of the school year, the full amount of **\$100** will be charged to replace the door lock.

It is the responsibility of every student to lock their valuables and money at all times. Students should not have more than \$100 in their rooms and are encouraged to use debit cards instead of keeping cash. Unfortunately, lost or missing money cannot be replaced.

Insurance

The School does not provide insurance coverage for student belongings in the event of theft, loss or fire. We strongly recommend that parents check homeowner policies to ensure coverage on their child’s possessions (including electronics) while living at the School.

7.5 Campus Security

Throughout the day and evening, boarding house doors have restricted access and visitors must enter through the Atrium office. At night, doors are alarmed to notify staff of any entries or exits. Our private security provider, Footprints Security, patrols our campus between the hours of 10:00pm–6:00am. For special events, we can request additional security as needed.

7.6 Emergency & Safety Plans

Safety is important to us. We follow British Columbia fire regulations and provincial laws as well as the School’s emergency protocols and procedures. Together, we practice emergency and safety plans both at School and in the boarding house. These include earthquake drills, fire drills, and lock-down drills. Most staff are trained with current Level One First Aid. Information regarding our school emergency procedures can be found in our [School Handbook](#).

7.7 Emergency Contacts

If you need to contact staff or your child for an **URGENT or EMERGENCY** situation, please see the telephone numbers below:

Wes Plater	Director of Boarding	wplater@qms.bc.ca	1-250-732-5317
Ander Monro	Deputy Head of School	amonro@qms.b.ca	1-250-732-8515



8.0 Travel and Holidays

Our House Directors, with assistance from our Assistant House Directors, are available to help parents and their child with travel arrangements.

8.1 Travel Documents

Students must arrive with valid passports and a current study permit that are valid for the entire school year (September 1–June 30 or January 1–June 30 for mid-year entries).

All travel documents, including passports, study permits, separate entry visas and any other necessary travel documents, must be kept with our House Directors. These documents will be stored securely in a locked, fireproof safe.

Our School can support families with the processing of study permits that need renewal while attending Queen Margaret's School. All associated costs will be charged to the student's school account.

8.2 Arrivals and Departures

Our House Directors are available to help you and your child with travel arrangements. When booking your child's flights, please remember to also book connecting flights between Vancouver (YVR) and Victoria (YYJ) or Nanaimo (YCD) airport. *Vancouver is NOT the final destination.* Please inform the House Director or Director of Boarding of your child's complete arrival and departure plans so that all transportation connections from the BC Ferry terminals (Swartz Bay, Departure Bay and Duke Point) or airports (Victoria and Nanaimo) can be arranged. Please inform us if you or a family member plan to travel with your child.

SPECIAL NOTE: If your child's travel plans change, just prior or during transit, please notify the House Directors immediately. These changes could include flight numbers, dates/times, ferry sailings and/or the name of designated family members who will be dropping-off or picking-up your child. Please ensure your child has a communication device such as a cell phone with them during their travels. This device will allow us to connect with your child to confirm their location, or to initiate emergency protocols if they do not arrive at their destination as scheduled.

At holiday breaks and year end, it is expected that STUDENTS DO NOT DEPART until after the last school exam and/or final activities and the Speech Day assembly. **Any necessary early departures** must be requested to and approved by the Junior School Principal or Deputy Head of School. It is important that your child is here for all year-end celebrations and recognition assemblies. This will help complete their year socially as well as finish their academic requirements.

8.3 Weekend Leaves—Travel Requests

Travel must be approved by the House Directors. Should a student request travel during a school day, the Junior School Principal or Deputy Head of School must also approve the student missing classes. Any overnight and weekend leaves are limited to Friday and Saturday or other non-school nights.



All boarders who wish to leave the campus overnight must fill out a **Weekend/Overnight Leave Request** by Tuesday of that week, before 9:00pm. The host family or family friend must also approve the request which states they are aware of the request and will be present for supervision during the stay. They can do this when they receive an email through REACH for the requested leave. All boarders must return to the boarding house by 6:00pm on Sunday, unless prior permission has been given by the HDs.

Our House Directors arrange weekend travel requests once they have been approved. They will also ensure that students who require transportation on weekends travel in a QMS vehicle to the appropriate location. All students must return from the Lower Mainland on the 3:45pm Horseshoe Bay Ferry or the 3:15pm Tsawwassen Ferry. A QMS vehicle will meet the returning students at the pre-arranged location to bring them back to the boarding house. If your child cannot or does not meet these scheduled trips established for the weekend leaves, staff must be notified before the scheduled pick-up time. The student may require public transportation or a taxi to return to the School at their own expense.

Should your child miss scheduled travel arrangements, without prior permission from the Boarding Directors or their designate, further weekend trips could be restricted. Students must be responsible for meeting the expectations of the School.

All transportation to and from the school will be billed to the student's School account, including any missed scheduled pick-ups.

8.4 Chaperoned Boarding Trips—Long Weekends and Term Breaks

Boarding staff provide organized and chaperoned trips throughout the school year during long weekends or holiday breaks. These trips may include places such as Vancouver, West Edmonton Mall, Seattle, Whistler, and one major international overseas trip during Spring Break.

Each trip is optional, requires parental consent, and the charges are applied to a credit card on file. The cost of each trip depends on the number of students participating, the location, activities provided and exchange rates.

8.5 Boarding House Closures

The boarding house is closed for the three-week Winter Break, the two-week Spring Break, and summer holidays. All boarders are required to be off-campus during these breaks.

Parents are encouraged to book flights early to ensure travel dates fall within the designated holiday dates. All students are expected to remain in School until dismissal on the last day of each term. Any special requests for early departure must be made in writing to the Junior School Principal or Deputy Head of School. The boarding house remains open for all other holiday weekends.

The weekend before a boarding house closure is considered to be a "soft" RED Weekend. The focus is on cleaning, packing and organizing boarders' rooms.



Extended Holidays

Students are not permitted to miss classes for extended holidays. Please arrange family holidays and events within the posted School Calendar, which is accessible on the QMS website qms.bc.ca. Unexcused absences in the Senior School will disqualify students from receiving Merit Roll, which is pre-requisite for Honours or Honours with Distinction standing.

8.6 Holiday Homestay Placements during Boarding House Closures

Holiday Homestay placements can be provided upon request for Christmas and/or Spring Break. Please forward Holiday Homestay requests to our House Directors as early as possible as there are limited spaces available. The deadline to request Holiday Homestay for Christmas Break is **Friday, November 17, 2023** and the deadline to request Holiday Homestay for Spring Break is **Friday, February 9, 2024**.

The School only uses homes that have been personally screened by our Director of Boarding. Placement is based on both student and homestay profiles. Matching family/student interests and personalities to ensure your child's time is enjoyable and rewarding is important to us. All adults living in the home must provide the School with a current criminal record check prior to a student's placement with the family.

The Homestay family will be responsible for the day-to-day care of your child during their visit. For more information regarding Homestay, please refer to our Homestay Handbook. This document will be sent to you upon receipt of your request for Homestay placement.

If a student's family requests transportation to or from the airport or ferry terminal and the host family is able to accommodate, the current QMS mileage guideline will apply.

For Holiday Homestay placement during the Breaks, an administration fee of **\$250** per student will be applied to the student's family account. The host family will receive **\$100** per day (or part day), which will be charged to the student's family account.

If families cancel their child's Holiday Homestay placement after the arrangements have been confirmed by both the School and the student's family, full charges may be applied to the student's family account.

8.7 Use of Taxis

Local taxi companies are used for transportation to and from the school for local shopping, going to the theatre, etc. If a student has prior permission from their parents to charge the taxi fare to their school account, they are to ask boarding staff to make pick-up arrangements. The student will then receive a taxi slip for travel to their destination and one for their return trip. If two or more students share a taxi ride, the total amount will be shared equally only by the students who have parent permission on file.



8.8 Use of Personal Vehicles

QMS boarding students are not allowed to have or use a personal vehicle while enrolled and living on the QMS campus. In very exceptional circumstances, permission from the Deputy Head of School may be given to a boarding student to bring a vehicle for a specified period of time, but that vehicle should remain parked in an approved location and the keys given to the House Director.

8.9 QMS Transportation Charges

Scheduled transportation is organized to and from the ferry terminals, to and from the Victoria and/or Nanaimo airports, and for weekend Victoria shopping trips. School bus and driver rates for transportation are as follows and will be applied to the student's School account:

	Victoria (including Airport)	Victoria Ferry Terminal	Nanaimo (including Airport)	Nanaimo Ferry Terminal
QMS Scheduled Transportation ~ Minimum 5 students, charge per student	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50
~ Below minimum of 5 students, total cost shared among # of students	\$250	\$250	\$250	\$250
Unscheduled Transportation	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$150
Excess Trip Time Charge**	\$30/person per additional hour	\$30/person per additional hour	\$30/person per additional hour	\$30/person per additional hour

**Trips to and from the destination are scheduled to be completed within 2 hours. Additional hours required will be charged at \$30 per person.

Transportation will be scheduled between Friday at 3:00pm and Monday at 8:00am. Unscheduled transportation outside these hours must be approved in advance.

If school transportation is not available, the student/parents will be responsible for booking and paying for their transportation. An alternate transportation company that the School recommends is:

Encore Limousine Service: 250-710-3928 or encorelimousineservice@shaw.ca.



9.0 Working Together

Parents and staff have the same goals for each student: to be academically challenged and successful, to learn to be socially responsible, to grow and learn about self and others, to be happy and healthy and to be a contributing and valued citizen of the world.

To support these goals, we must work together. This means communication is very important. There will be times when we need to compromise and sometimes decisions may affect not only your child, but all other students and families. Building a community is about trust, accountability, commitment and dedication. Together, we are stronger. Together, we will see your child flourish!

We welcome you to ask questions, provide insight and discuss situations. We understand it is not easy being far away and not physically close to your child, but we ask that you trust we are here to support their growth and ability to be a strong and confident leader.

Welcome to the QMS Boarding Life Program!



10.0 Major School Dates Calendar

Please note that students are not permitted to leave classes early for travel purposes, unless given prior written authorization from the Junior School Principal or Deputy Head of School.



QMS MAJOR SCHOOL DATES 2023–2024

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<div><div>Boarding House Break Details</div><div>Christmas Break</div><div>Dec. 15 Boarding students depart</div><div>Dec. 16 Boarding Houses close</div><div>Jan. 7 Boarding Houses open and boarding students arrive</div><div>Spring Break</div><div>Mar. 7 Boarding students depart</div><div>Mar. 8 Boarding Houses close</div><div>Mar. 24 Boarding Houses open and boarding students arrive</div></div>		<div><div>May 2024</div><table><tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td></tr><tr><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td></tr><tr><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td></tr><tr><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td></tr></table></div>	S	M	T	W	T	F	S				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		<div><div>May 17 Professional Development (ECE Closed)</div><div>May 20 Victoria Day (School Closed)</div></div>																																																	
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