

Sixth Form FAQs

Years 12-13

Summary of Year 12 School Places

	Tailored Boarder	Flexi-Boarder	Day Student
Applications	Register with OSH through our online portal		
Entry requirements	Boarding interview, school reference and grade requirements		Grade requirements
Hours	Routinely stays overnight (number of nights to be determined) but can have exeats when needed	Can arrive for breakfast (7.10am) and stays until at least 6.30pm during the week. Can stay later. Stays over 3 to 4 nights per term	Arrive in time for registration which starts at 8:25am and finish after lessons at 3:45pm
Boarding facilities	Full access to all boarding facilities with own dedicated bed, storage and study space	Full access to boarding facilities. Own locker and desk to use for prep time etc. but not a dedicated bed	Access to Day Student common room
Meals and activities	All meals and majority of activities included in boarding fees		Can opt in to purchase school lunch each term and take part in trips that are organised as part of the school day, but there is no option to buy in to evening and weekend trips or to stay overnight
Boarding fees	Yes – £13,320 pa (£4,440 per term) for 2024/25	Yes – £6,660 pa (£2,220 per term) for 2024/25	None
Breakfast/come in early	Yes		No
Lunch	Yes		Yes, if purchased for that term
Lunchtime clubs and activities	Yes		
Lunch	Yes		Yes, if purchased for that term
Tea & cake after school	Yes		No
After school clubs	Yes		Can take part in school representative activities as part of competitive sports team or orchestra/choir
Prep (Homework)	Supervised prep after school		Prep at home
Supper	Yes		No
Evening and weekend activities	Yes		No

For more detail and further FAQ's please see overleaf

Are you an independent school?

OSH is a state school and we are very proud of this fact. It is one of 34 schools in the country that offer a boarding education within the state system. We share, with all good schools in the state and independent sectors, a belief in high standards of achievement and discipline and a commitment to providing an excellent education in the broadest sense.

Why does the School have 'hospital' in its name?

The School was founded in the seventeenth century, when the term 'hospital' indicated a charitable institution rather than a medical one. Hospital meant 'hospitality', or board and lodging. We retain the traditional name as part of our unique heritage and because we are a boarding school.

Where is OSH located?

The School is based in the West Midlands, in the town of Stourbridge. We are about 15 miles from Birmingham City Centre and there are excellent rail connections from the local station which is only few minutes' walk away from the School. We are also very close to the motorway network and just a 30-minute drive from Birmingham International Airport, or two hours from London Heathrow.

Is OSH Sixth Form open to both boys and girls?

Yes, both boys and girls can join OSH in Year 12 as either Tailored Boarders, Flexi-Boarders or Day Students.

Do you have a catchment area?

No, we welcome students from all over the world as long as they have UK nationality or have other approved residential status within the UK.

How many GCSEs do I need to join OSH?

For any course of study all applicants require at least 6 GCSE at grade 5 or above, including English and Maths. Specific subjects also have additional minimum grade requirements and the details of these requirements are listed in our admissions policy which you can find on our website at www.oshsch.com.

Grade requirements are the same for internal students and external applicants.

What if I did qualifications other than GCSEs?

For Sixth Form applicants who did not sit GCSEs an equivalent can be submitted, and you should contact the School to ascertain the acceptability of those equivalents.

What happens if I do not get the grades?

Subject to there being places available in the Sixth Form, and on the required course, candidates who applied but did not meet the entry criteria can discuss the courses that they want to follow with the Director of Sixth Form and may be awarded a place. This will be particularly relevant for candidates who have had their education interrupted for some reason.

How many A levels will I take?

Most of the students joining OSH at Sixth Form will follow an A level timetable consisting of three subjects.

What is the difference between Tailored Boarding and Flexi-Boarding?

A Tailored Boarder can stay at School for all or some nights in each week of term including weekends. How many nights they stay, and which nights they stay, is agreed by parents with the Housemaster. It doesn't have to be the same nights each week, we know that there will be occasions and reason for boarders to go home from time to time, for example, to attend specific sports training. Our approach to boarding is tailored to meet the needs of busy families, it can be adapted to fit around their working lives, allowing an integrated family life alongside and offering all of the benefits of boarding life. It gives the freedom to decide whether to stay over or to come and go, before and after the school day, to fit in with home life.

A Flexi-Boarder does everything that a Tailored Boarder would do, with the exception of staying regularly at the School. Flexi-Boarders are required to stay at the School 3 to 4 nights per term. They can arrive for breakfast, take all of their meals at school, have access to the boarding house before school, break times, lunch time and after school, they can do their prep at school and take part in the co-curricular life of the boarding community.

What is a boarding interview?

All boarders, both Tailored and Flexi-Boarders must be assessed as suitable to board and we make this assessment based on a short interview, taking up a reference from their school and considering any other information provided by parents or the Local Authority or that comes to our attention.

How much are boarding fees?

Tailored Boarding fees (as at September 2024) are £13,320 per annum which can be paid termly or monthly.

Flexi-Boarding fees (as at September 2024) are £6,660 per annum which can be paid termly or monthly.

Fees are reviewed annually and published by the start of the summer term for the following September.

Do Flexi-Boarders get their own bed space and desk?

Flexi-Boarders will get their own locker but not a dedicated bed, as they do not use a bed each night. They are provided with a desk to use for prep time etc.

How often can Flexi-Boarders stay over and how can we organise this?

Flexi-Boarders can stay up to 4 nights per term and nights need to have been agreed with the Housemaster in advance.

Can Flexi-Boarders “purchase” additional nights to stay over?

If there is space in the boarding house and the Housemaster can accommodate this, then yes.

How do I register for a school place?

You can do this by registering with the school using the online portal housed on the School's website.

Do Day Students pay fees?

Day Students do not pay fees however they may, for example, take individual music lessons, rent locker space, purchase printing credits or opt in for school lunches for a termly charge.

The items we do charge for include replacement ID cards, work experience risk assessments and a nominal contribution toward materials costs for food technology, art and design & technology.

There is a full list on our website.

At what times will Day Students be at school?

All students must arrive in time for registration which starts at 8:25M. Their day will normally finish after lessons at 3:45pm.

Can Sixth Form students leave the School premises at lunch time?

Yes. Students also have the option of bringing packed lunches if they wish. Students who wish to have school lunches will need to make payments via the Evolve payment system at the start of each term. They must sign in and out at the book on Reception.

Can Day Students go home during study periods?

Students are encouraged to study in the Sixth Form Learning Resource Centre during their study periods. Day Students have the option to study at home, with permission, if their study period is the last lesson of the day and their attendance and grades are secure. They must sign in and out at the book on Reception.

Will Day Students have somewhere to store their belongings during the day?

Day Students can rent locker space and details of how to do this will be given in your joining instructions.

Can Day Students stay after school?

Day Students may take part in trips that are organised as part of the school day, but evening and weekend trips are for boarders and they are not open to Day Students.

Day Students cannot attend boarding activities and clubs. They can stay after 15:45 if they are participating in activities that require them to represent the School e.g. representing a sports team or the school orchestra or representing maths and science teams for the Olympiads.

CCF is available to all students, including Day Students, from Year 8 and similarly they may all start their DofE Bronze in Year 9.

Do Day Students have access to boarding houses?

Day Students do not have access to boarding accommodation, but they do have use of their own common room for break and lunchtimes.

Is there a Sixth Form Prospectus?

Yes you can find it here: <https://www.oshsch.com/sixth-form-school-west-midlands/>

Does OSH have a house system?

There are currently three senior boarding houses (Foley, Foster and Potter Houses) and one junior boarding house (Prospect House) for boys. Girls have their own house – Dudley House. Each house has a boarding house team made up of a Housemaster, a Matron and a team of boarding tutors. Sixth Form students are encouraged to act as mentors to the younger students.

We also have houses for competitive and representative sports and events, separate from the boarding houses, so that all the School community can join in.

How do the new Sixth Form students integrate?

Students are usually invited to a Sixth Form induction morning before term starts. This provides them with the opportunity to meet the Sixth Form team and their fellow students. There are also many other opportunities for students to become involved in the School community through co-curricular activities, volunteering and fundraising events.

Does the School have aims for boarding?

Old Swinford Hospital aims to maintain a boarding community that ensures the safety and welfare of all boarders in an environment where they can be both healthy and happy and which supports their learning. With an extensive and varied co-curricular programme, peer mentoring and pastoral support structure every boarder should have the opportunity to thrive, be healthy in mind and body and achieve. Boarders will enjoy a gradual increase in independence within a supportive and caring environment to enable them to develop as individuals whilst growing up in a well-ordered community.

How can I find out about financial support for boarding?

The web site www.educational-grants.org will take you to a list of charities that may be able to assist and our Finance Department may also be able to put you in touch with other potential sources of support and advice.

In addition, our Foundation, depending upon the circumstances, do consider applications for grants towards boarding fees for students who have a particular need to board but where the family's financial resources cannot meet the full boarding fee. Applicants for Foundation assistance must be British citizens resident in the UK. Awards from the Foundation form no part of the admission process and applications for these awards are not processed by the School.

Do you offer support to Forces families?

If you are entitled to claim the Forces' Boarding Schools Allowance – Continuity of Education Allowance (CEA) – you will be pleased to know that our school is on the approved list. Please note that Forces children could also be eligible for three free return journeys a year to visit their parents serving on accompanied tours overseas. OSH has much experience in the education of children from a Forces background. Indeed, the Headmaster went to a British Army School himself.

Do you award scholarships?

No, as a state school we are not able to do this. Our Foundation has some financial support for students who have a boarding need, and parents and families may apply for bursarial support, but this would not cover the entire boarding fee.

Is there a free bus service to OSH?

OSH does not provide a bus service. The School can be accessed easily via public transport and is a short walk away from Stourbridge Junction train station. Students may be eligible to apply for a 16-18 travel pass from their Local Authority. The pass will allow students to purchase child rate tickets for travel to and from OSH.

What are the timings of the School day?

Breakfast starts at 7:15am and finishes at 8:10am. Day Students arrive between 8:10 and 8:25am

Registration and/or assemblies are 8:30–8:50am

2 lessons until 10:45am when we have break until 11:05am

2 lessons until 12:55pm when lunch starts

Lunch is from 12:55pm to 1:50pm

Afternoon registration is 1:50-1:55pm

2 more lessons from 1:55pm to 3:45pm

Day students go home at 3:45pm

4pm evening activities for Tailored and Flexi-Boarders

6.15pm supper

Can I visit the School and would I be able to meet staff?

You are welcome to visit the School on any of our open events or by appointment for a boarding tour. Depending on the timing of your visit you will have the opportunity to meet members of the Senior Leadership Team, teachers and boarding staff, who as a team are responsible for the education, safeguarding and welfare of OSH students.

How do you define Boarding Need for admissions?

Boarding need is one of our priority oversubscription criteria for boarding places. If we have to use oversubscription criteria, and you feel your child has a boarding need, you should provide evidence of that need. In determining whether or not they consider that a particular candidate has boarding need, the Governors will review each application on its own merit. In each case, it is the responsibility of parents/carers to provide the information required to enable the Governing Body to decide. In particular, the names and contact details of a person from whom the School may seek corroborating evidence must be given.

Please note, the boarding need criteria we set out is for admissions purposes. It is not necessarily the criteria used by other charities or the Foundation in determining boarding need for the purposes of making any grant towards boarding fees and each source of support will apply their own criteria in assessing grants.

Examples of boarding need for admissions purposes may be:

- a) The main parent/carer is a member HM Armed Forces, is serving with a UK Government Department or international government body of which the UK is a member on terms which may include deployment overseas or frequent changes of posting within the UK, or is employed by a UK based company where they are required to frequently travel overseas or be resident overseas.
- b) The candidate is the subject of a voluntary agreement between the Governing Body and a Local Authority or Charitable Trust to provide a boarding place for reasons of boarding need.

- c) The candidate is in the care of a grandparent or other person, whether or not a relative, other than their natural parent, step-parent or adoptive parent.
- d) The primary home is in a remote rural location where appropriate education is not available within a reasonable daily travelling distance and therefore lack social interaction with children of a similar age.
- e) The main parent/carer has been diagnosed with a medical or psychological condition which seriously impairs their ability to care for the candidate.
- f) The candidate or their main parent/carer has been the victim of a serious crime or family circumstances, or reasonably fears that they may become the victim such an act.

Please note this is not an exhaustive list and is in no particular order of priority.