

Rossall International Study Centre (ISC) Curriculum Policy

Rossall International Study Centre provides a supportive, welcoming and stimulating environment in which international pupils are encouraged to develop their language skills, self-confidence and academic knowledge whilst at the same time developing cultural awareness and understanding of what it means to live and study at a traditional UK boarding school. We also provide academic, social and cultural preparation for students wishing to continue their education in mainstream independent British schools, or schools in other English-speaking countries.

Rossall ISC key values

We support the following key values of Rossall School:

- The pursuit of excellence
- The importance of innovation
- An education based on challenge
- The combination of formal academic education and personal education
- A belief in Christian kindness

Aims

The ISC curriculum places great emphasis on the development of English language skills, alongside other core subjects such as Maths, Science and IT in line with a mainstream British education. Because our students are studying through the medium of English as a foreign or additional language, we try to provide a varied, interesting and challenging curriculum whilst avoiding overload. In addition to these core subjects, students may also study a small range of other subjects including Geography, Business Studies, Art, and Foreign Languages, depending on age and ability. We also provide lessons in PSHE to develop an understanding of essential life skills which will prepare them for adulthood.

In addition to the academic curriculum, students are fully integrated into the Senior School extracurricular activities programme where they have the opportunity to mix with British pupils and develop a range of sporting, artistic, musical and cultural interests. Pupils have further opportunities to integrate at all meal times, Monday morning assembly, Tuesday morning chapel, school social events, sports teams and during their free time. ISC pupils are currently accommodated in their own boarding house – Lugard Boys and Lugard Girls.

The ISC provides full-time supervised education for pupils from the age of 12 to 17, which gives them experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education, appropriate for their age and ability. One of our main priorities is to help all our pupils develop their skills in speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy.

Rossall ISC also aims to:

- Provide the highest standards of teaching and learning
- Develop pupils' understanding of British culture and cultural expectations
- Develop pupils' awareness of what is expected within the educational context of a British school in terms of behaviour both inside and outside the classroom
- Develop an understanding of teaching and learning styles in a British school
- Provide students with advice about their ongoing education, including information about suitable courses and, where appropriate, other educational establishments.
- Provide pupils with careers guidance for the future and advice about what subjects or course they may therefore need to consider.
- Provide a safe and supportive environment conducive to effective study in which all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make the best possible progress
- Prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life

- Encourage pupils to become more independent as learners, and as individuals
- Encourage pupils to become confident in exploring new ideas and developing new skills

ISC pupils may spend varying amounts of time with us, ranging from half a term to a full year or more. However, although most are with us for a relatively short period within the scope of their lifelong education, we aim to ensure that when they leave us, they will have:

- Become more confident as individuals and have a positive self-image
- Become more confident in their use of English
- Developed their knowledge in other subject areas
- Formed positive relationships with staff and other pupils
- Learnt about life in a UK boarding school
- Developed their understanding and experience of British culture
- Participated in a range of new activities or developed new skills
- Improved their social skills and developed an awareness of the importance of qualities such as patience, tolerance and co-operation with others
- Be better equipped for the challenges of the next stage in their education

Entrance Policy

Our aim is to ensure that pupils accepted onto ISC courses will be able to benefit from the education we provide, and be challenged, happy and comfortable in our school community. We accept our duty to welcome diversity and to work to overcome prejudice of any kind. We do not discriminate on the grounds of gender, race, religion, or for any other reason.

As members of the wider school community, ISC pupils are expected to co-operate with the teaching and support staff to promote the welfare of all within our community. We also seek to work closely with parents in order to promote

the greater welfare of our pupils. In return we expect parents to keep us informed of any Learning Support requirements or medical conditions known to them when their children enter the school, or at any time afterwards.

We are unable to offer places to those pupils requiring specialist support of a nature that we cannot provide within our own pastoral and learning support systems.

Rossall ISC is a largely non-selective school and we accept students across the whole ability range. However, where possible, students will be invited to attend for interview with the Head of ISC.

All prospective ISC students are required to take the Rossall entry test for international students in English and Maths which they must pass to a satisfactory standard. Students applying from outside the EU who require visas must have a high enough level of English on the Council of Europe Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) to satisfy the UK Border Agency requirements. All our students prepare for Cambridge exams at the appropriate level, passing up the scale as their English improves.

Students are also required to provide satisfactory reports from their current or most recent school. We reserve the right to contact a pupil's previous school directly regarding their previous performance.

Induction of new students

Our greatest intake of new students takes place in September, and we have an induction programme designed to help them settle in and find their way around. Details of a typical sample programme are included here.

ISC Induction programme: September 2009

Tuesday 1 st Sept	All day from 9.00am: tutors available in houses and ISC to meet and greet new students and their parents or guardians as they arrive
Weds 2 nd Sept	<p>8.45am: roll call in house 9.00: Welcome assembly in ISC with Head of ISC 9.15: students divided into 2 groups Group A – tour of whole school Group B1 – tour of ISC followed by Ross Shop for uniform and sports kit fittings Group B2 – visit Ross Shop followed by ISC</p> <p>10.15: Group B – tour of whole school Group A1 – as B1 above Group A2 – as B2 above</p> <p>11.30: settling into rooms 12.30: lunch</p> <p>2.00pm: students meet in ISC Hall and then go on guided walk to Cleveleys with teachers and existing students</p>
Thurs 3 rd Sept	<p>8.30am: roll call in houses 9.00am: placement testing for all ISC pupils in English and Maths</p>
Fri 4 th Sept	<p>8.30: roll call in houses 9.00am: Junior and year 10 students meet in Museum Theatre for team building activities Year 11 students meet in ISC hall to discuss subject option choices 9.30am: Year 11 join Year 10 and Junior students for team building and familiarisation activities 12.30: lunch 1.30: roll call in houses 1.45: meet in ISC library for IT sign-up and to receive timetables, stationery packs, yellow books and merit books</p>
Sat 5 th Sept	Normal school day – all ISC pupils in lessons

The programme will include a tour of the school and local town so that students can familiarise themselves with the campus and their immediate surroundings. It will also include a series of team building activities to help students get to know their teachers and peers and start to form friendships, as well as developing confidence. Placement testing will not take place until the 3rd day when students have had a little time to acclimatise and tune in to hearing English all day.

Those students who arrive at later stages in the year are helped to settle in by their houseparent and tutor, and usually one or two more experienced students will be assigned informally as “buddies” to help them find their way around.

Points of entry

Most students will start their studies with us in September when we have a large intake of new pupils. The majority will stay for a full academic year, but a key feature of the ISC is our flexibility, and some pupils will come for just a term or even half a term for an enriching cultural and educational experience with the added aim of improving their English. We generally have a significant number enrol in January at the start of the Lent term, and again in April at the start of the summer term. As students arrive during the academic year, we test them and place them in the most appropriate available classes.

We encourage ISC pupils to move on into Rossall Middle School or Senior School when we feel that they have made satisfactory progress and developed their language skills to an appropriate level. For most this will be at the end of an academic year, but may take place during the school year for younger students in particular. However, transfer into the main school is not guaranteed, and will sometimes not be in the best interests of the child. In these cases we will inform parents or agents, and offer advice about appropriate alternatives. This may mean continuing with their education in the ISC for a little longer.

All the pupils who join the ISC must agree to follow the school rules, and the Standard Terms and Conditions of Rossall School.

Placement testing

On arrival, our students take a very thorough placement test in English which allows us to assess their strengths and weaknesses in the language, and to put them in the most appropriate class according to age and language ability. The test is based on elements of the Cambridge KET, PET and FCE exams which are widely respected, researched and moderated. The test covers

reading, writing, listening and use of English. There are 6 versions of the test. The students repeat the test 2 weeks after first arrival to check that we have them in the correct class, and to allow for the effects of initial culture shock. The test is repeated again at the beginning of each term to monitor progress over time, and to ensure that students are still in the most appropriate class.

Timetable and weekly schedule

ISC pupils study 26 academic lessons a week of 60 minutes' duration. They have 5 hours of lessons on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, and 3 hours of lessons on Thursday and Saturday mornings. Lesson timings follow those of Rossall Senior School, except Thursday afternoon when ISC pupils have activities after lunch instead of academic lessons. Like in Senior School, lessons on Friday mornings are only 50 minutes long.

After lessons during the week from Monday to Friday, ISC pupils participate in a wide range of extracurricular activities with their peers in the main school. This provides an important opportunity for integration as well as being an important part of a rounded education. Many of these activities are sporting or physical in nature and allow pupils to develop physical control and co-ordination, as well as their tactical skills and imaginative responses. It may also help them to evaluate and improve their performance, and develop their understanding of fitness and health.

In addition to academic lessons and the extracurricular activities programme, ISC pupils participate in a wide range of weekend trips and activities. These regularly offer the opportunity to mix with pupils and teachers from other areas within the school, as well as providing the opportunity for social and cultural enrichment. Some of the trips and activities, such as jewellery-making workshops or visits to art galleries, offer pupils an aesthetic and creative experience.

The Curriculum

Pupils are taught in small classes with a maximum of 10 per class, thus ensuring that all pupils receive a great deal of individual attention from their teachers. ISC pupils have 26 hours of tuition per week. English is a core part of the ISC curriculum, with students receiving between 5-12 hours a week of English lessons, depending on their age and ability when they arrive. All English courses will aim to develop pupils' reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. In addition, teachers will focus on grammar and vocabulary teaching to develop greater accuracy and range of expression. Specific details of courses followed can be found in the ISC English teaching handbook (see Appendix for syllabus information).

While one of our main aims is to develop our students' English language skills, we are also trying to prepare them to continue their education in the British Independent school sector, with many of them intending to go on to sixth form study and ultimately university in the UK or another English-speaking country. It is important, therefore, for them to keep pace with their peers in mainstream education and continue to develop the range of skills and concepts required in other subject areas in order to provide a more rounded academic preparation for future study.

Intensive year 11 course

Most students entering the ISC will be enrolled on a one-year intensive course leading to (I)GCSE exams the following summer. They should be aged 15 or over on 1st September in the year of entry. Students aged 16 and occasionally 17 may also be offered places on this course.

Students on the one-year intensive course will follow a core curriculum of English (5-9 hours a week), Maths and Science. In addition, students can choose an extra 1 or 2 subjects from Art, Business Studies or Geography, depending on language ability. We also offer lessons in First Language

English to cater primarily for those students who may require it for their continuing education in their home country. In addition, we offer lessons off-timetable during lunch, evening or activity times in French, Spanish or Latin for the minority of students who require these subjects. Many students can also take a GCSE in their native language where this is offered by the relevant exam boards.

Year 10 course

Students enrolled on our year 10 course will normally be aged 14 or over on 1st September of the year of entry.

Students on the year 10 course develop the knowledge and skills (at key stage 3 or 4) that they need to continue with the one-year intensive course the following year. Students have 12 hours of English, 3 hours of Science, 4-5 hours of Maths and 1-2 hours each of Art, Geography and Business Studies. There is more focus on developing language skills in this year so that students are well-prepared to tackle the challenges of the demanding year 11 course.

Junior Class

The ISC Junior class is a mixed age and ability class for students aged 12 or 13 on 1st September of the year of entry. We do occasionally accept younger students on a case-by-case basis.

Students in the Junior class follow a similar timetable to the Year 10 students (based on key stage 3), but at a level appropriate to the age and ability of the class. There is an even greater focus on developing language skills in this year group, and one of our key aims is to try and transfer students into the main school as soon as we feel they are ready to cope socially and academically. Where possible, we try and organise taster days so students can gain experience of what mainstream education will be like. It also allows teachers to assess a student's readiness for transfer. In some cases a series of tasters may be organised over a period of time, slowly building up to a full transfer.

Pre-sixth form course

This course runs in the summer term and is designed to prepare students for sixth form study in September. Some students enrol directly onto this course from April. However, those who have joined a year 11 intensive course from January onwards are generally considered to have missed too much of the course to be able to sit the (I)GCSE exams. These students are also, therefore, transferred onto the pre-sixth form course in the summer term. Students on this course will be 15 or over.

For the first 3 weeks of this course students follow an intensive programme of English with academic study and research skills, which includes writing an extended essay, supervised by a specially-assigned tutor. After this period, students have individually-tailored timetables based as far as possible on what they intend to study in sixth form. The timetables may include a small number of free study periods to help pupils develop time management and independent study skills.

All courses

All ISC students also have 1 or 2 hours a week of IT so that they can develop their technological skills in using a range of programs, and in using the internet effectively and responsibly.

Students also follow a PSHE programme, details of which follow.

PSHE

Michaelmas 2009

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| Week 1 | Whole school chapel service |
| Week 2 | Going through the Student Handbook and school rules |
| Week 3 | Settling in at Rossall ISC |
| Week 4 | Personal care / Hygiene (Part 1) |

Week 5	Personal care / Hygiene (Part 2)
Week 6	Illnesses and Healthcare
Week 7	You and the Law
Week 8	Half Term
Week 9	Drug Awareness (Part 1)
Week 10	Drug Awareness (Part 2)
Week 11	Children in Need 2009
Week 12	Study Skills and Exam Rules
Week 13	End of Music Marathon

Lent Term 2010

Week 1	Year 11: Sixth Form Options
Week 2	Illnesses and Healthcare
Week 3	Equal Opportunities: How People See Me/ How I See People
Week 4	Study Skills : Ways to aid memory
Week 5	Half Term
Week 6	Equal Opportunities : Gender Discrimination
Week 7	Racism
Week 8	Bullying
Week 9	Healthy Eating (Part 1)
Week 10	Healthy Eating (Part 2)

Subject specific course information

Further details of the subject-specific content of each course are included in the appendix, and in the relevant subject handbooks.

Teaching

Rossall ISC teachers are well-qualified and experienced professionals with appropriate knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught. Some of them have many years of experience in working with international pupils.

When appropriate training courses have been identified, ISC teachers are encouraged to attend so that they can keep up-to-date with current educational theory and practice. In addition, ISC teachers participate in the Senior School INSET programme.

ISC teachers are full members of Senior School subject teaching departments, and therefore participate in the Senior School appraisal (or audit) system which aims to support teachers and help them improve their performance through lesson observations and discussion with their line managers.

Within the ISC we have an established system of peer observation which we try to implement every year. This allows English and non-English teachers to support and learn from each other.

Most ISC teachers have recently completed the Government of South Australia course: *“Teaching ESL learners in mainstream classrooms: language in learning across the curriculum.”* The course constitutes 50 hours of professional development.

The ISC is also a founder member of BAISC (The British Association of International Schools and Colleges) which holds an annual conference. A key feature of this conference is the opportunity to participate in a range of workshops and seminars and share experiences with colleagues working in similar contexts to ourselves.

All of the above measures help to ensure that teachers:

- deliver well-planned lessons
- employ effective teaching methods
- use a variety of suitable activities
- manage classroom time effectively
- make good use of a variety of appropriate classroom resources of suitable quality, quantity and range
- keep up-to-date with current theory and methodology

We aim to ensure that pupils acquire new knowledge and make progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and ability in the subjects we teach. We also encourage our pupils to apply intellectual, physical or creative effort to their studies in order to achieve their best. Our small class sizes help our pupils to build their self-confidence and develop their communication skills so that they can engage in class-based discussion. We actively encourage them to develop their abilities as independent thinkers by questioning the world around them, and as independent learners by developing a sense of responsibility for their own learning.

Assessment

Teachers are expected to set regular tests to assess pupils' progress in their subject, and to keep up-to-date records of their results, alongside marks for relevant classwork and homework. Where possible, test and exam results are kept electronically, especially English test results, end of term exam results and mock (I)GCSE exam results.

Information from tests and exam results is used to plan future teaching so that pupils can make progress onto the next unit of work.

Teachers have access to pupils' records so that they can be informed of prior aptitudes, needs and attainment of pupils as far as possible.

Discipline procedure

Rossall ISC has its own academic discipline procedure based very closely on that of Senior School but tailored to take into account the different backgrounds of our pupils. We aim to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning and this discipline procedure is designed to help teachers employ effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to behave responsibly so that they can maximise their learning in class. A copy can be found in the appendix.

Evaluating pupils' progress

Pupils receive half-term reports and end-of-term reports with up-to-date comments from their teachers on their performance and progress, together with advice and recommendations for improvement where appropriate. These are normally sent to parents by email, but we can post paper copies on request. We can also send reports to agents or guardians if requested.

Rossall ISC actively encourages parents to visit us so that they can meet teachers to discuss their child's progress. This can be arranged at any mutually convenient time during term-time. We aim to keep parents, agents and guardians fully informed of anything relating to their child's academic progress and general welfare.

Prep

Prep, or homework, is an important part of the curriculum and allows pupils to consolidate what they have learned in class, or gives them the opportunity to develop independent research skills. Pupils are expected to complete 3 lots of homework each evening Monday-Friday, lasting 40 minutes each. Homework may also be set at the weekend, when appropriate.

Merit books

We encourage pupils to take pride and interest in their work, and reward them for this. In order to motivate pupils and encourage them to strive for excellence, each student is given a merit book. Teachers can award merits for completion of good work: this may be academic work, homework or

classwork. However, teachers may also decide to award merits at their discretion for other forms of positive action such as helping others, good teamwork, community spirit, or participating in house competitions. On completion of each merit book pupils receive a badge, a distinction card, and in the case of year 11 students, a “free pass” out of school on Thursday afternoons after activities. Merit books are graded as follows:

Merit book 1 (orange) – 25 merits – bronze badge

Merit book 2 (green) – 50 merits – silver badge

Merit book 3 (blue) – 75 merits – gold badge

Work of the week

In a further attempt to encourage excellence, pupils or their teachers, are invited to submit work for the “work of the week” competition. Pupils submitting winning entries are given merits, and their work is displayed on the noticeboard.

