



THE AMERICAN SCHOOL IN ENGLAND



WHAT TO LOOK FOR WHEN CHOOSING AN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

In our global society, families moving around the world regularly face the challenge of finding the right school for their children. Thanks to the Internet, the moment you find out you are relocating you can start your search and begin to collect the information needed to make this important decision. However, if at all possible, you should also plan to visit at least two of the schools on your shortlist.



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REALIZE WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR

It is important to realize that you are looking for an international school not just for your children, but for the whole family – the community will become yours as much as theirs. If you are excited and positive, and make your children part of the process, they will be excited too.

During your visit, the Admissions team should communicate the essence of the school and make your tour around the campus pleasant and informative. Every person you encounter – faculty and students – will influence your final decision. With notice, the school may also give your children the chance to experience a few lessons and/or meet students their age. A conversation with the parents of children in the same year groups can provide essential information about the school and reassure you about your decision. Ask for contact details.

The way the parent community integrates with each other and the school is especially important for expat families as they adjust to a new country, culture, and language and make new friends. Some international schools, like TASIS England, offer an amazing parent support network to help make the transition period less stressful. Buddy families can assist new arrivals with advice on many of the practical aspects of relocation.

A parent association that proactively supports spouses who do not work and promotes involvement in the school community will have a positive impact on any new expat family's experience.

If you ask some parents why they chose a school for their children, they might say it was love at first sight. A school might “tick the right boxes” but it was their intuition that told them it was the right place for their children. Asking the right questions will help you find a school that not only provides an excellent academic experience for your children, but also provides a community in which they will be happy and develop as caring global citizens.

**FIND OUT MORE AT www.tasisengland.org
or contact ukadmissions@tasisengland.org**



BEFORE YOU VISIT YOUR NEW LOCATION:

- Ask colleagues who have lived there for school recommendations. Trust what they say, but understand that their choices and opinions reflect their circumstances.
- Find out about transportation options and the work commute to determine where you may want to live, but do not choose a house before the school. A long commute to school every day is in no one's interest.
- Armed with this information, start your internet research to collect basic information about each school. Compare what they offer and which best fit your family's needs.
- Refer to websites and prospectuses, and contact Admissions departments for information about the curriculum, accreditations, availability of places, etc.
- Most schools offer a good education but to discover “the life of the school” – authentic content about activities, fieldtrips, concerts, sports fixtures, etc. – look at their Social Media channels. What happens outside of the classroom can be as important as the learning within.
- While a series of bad reviews should certainly be a “red flag,” do not be discouraged by the odd negative review. It is normal to find a mix of opinions; schooling is a very personal choice, and everyone's perspective is different.
- Current parents are an excellent source of information about any school. Ask the Admissions department to provide contact details for some of them.

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WHAT TO ASK DURING YOUR SCHOOL VISITS

Even if you think you have determined which international school will be best for your family, confirm your intuition by visiting at least two of the schools you are considering.

Choose a regular school day, when the campus is alive with students moving between classes, interacting with the faculty and each other. A parent related that one of the things that convinced her to choose our school was the smiles of the students during break time.

The Culture

Many international schools reflect a national identity which may be clear from the school's name and/or curriculum, or may be less obvious.

Diversity

The opportunity to have an international experience is a gift that will stay with your children forever. A diverse student body helps to ensure that they will be joining an internationally-minded community.

Curriculum

Your anticipated length of stay, children's age and character, previous school experience, language, and so on will influence which curriculum you prefer.

Language Support

Does the school offer assistance to help international students improve their skills in the language of instruction, so they can cope with the subject content as soon as possible? While parents are right to be concerned about how their children will cope with learning in a different language, it is surprising how quickly most students adjust with the right support.

University Destinations

The universities that graduates attend will indicate the academic level of the school.

Facilities

A campus tour is about much more than ensuring that the facilities are appropriate for the learning experience. Whether a school is brand new or boasts historic buildings, as you walk around you may get an immediate "gut feeling" about whether your family will be happy there.

TASIS The American School in England offers a challenging American curriculum with Advanced Placement (AP) courses and the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme to day (ages 3-18) and boarding (ages 13-18) students. On its beautiful Surrey campus, students from more than 50 nations are emboldened to flourish as principled, open-minded, and compassionate members of a global community.

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