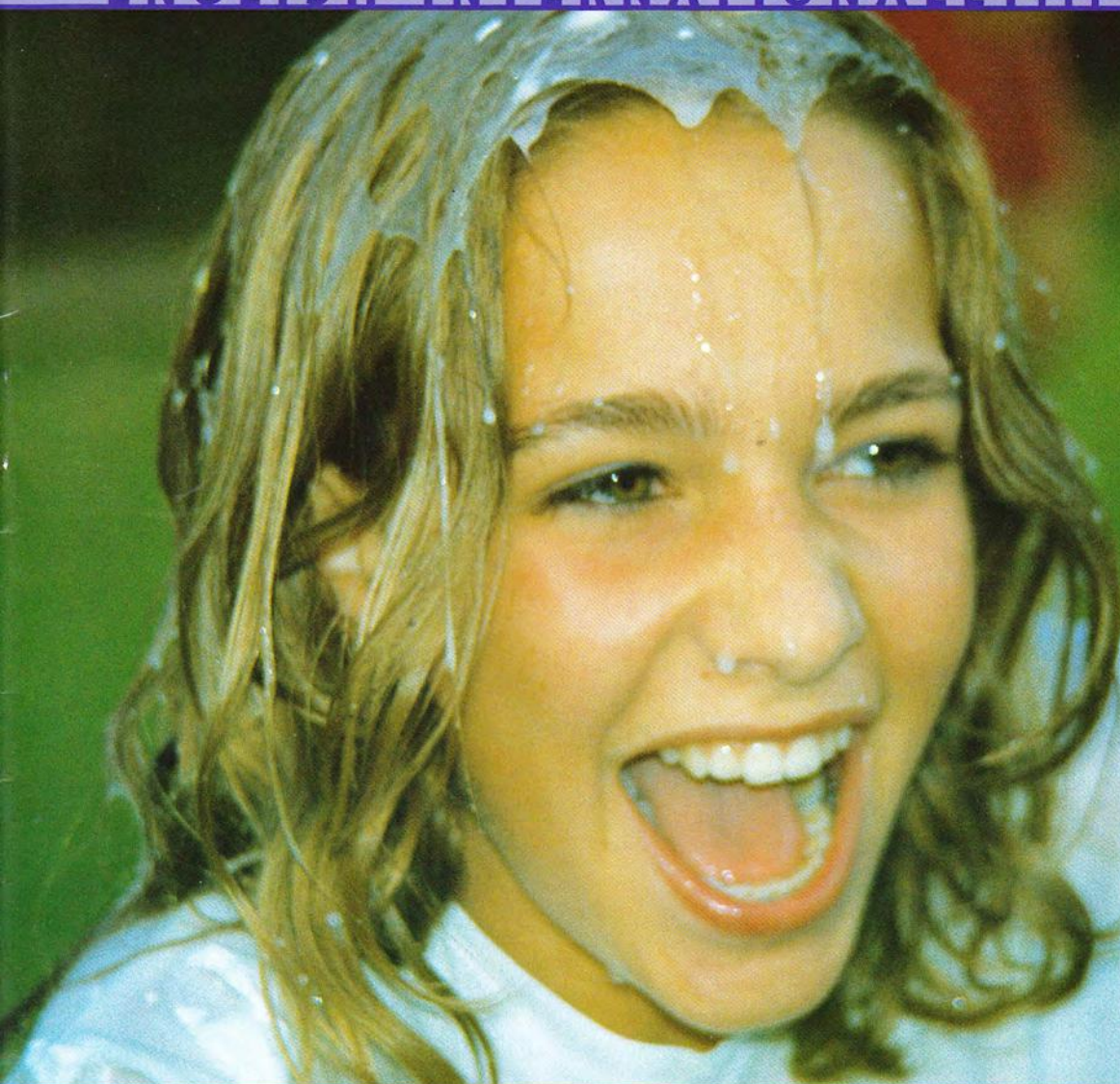


ENGLISH INTERNATIONALLY...



“the investment that
can never be taken
away”

Summer 2003

Vacational
Studies®

www.vacstuds.com



RESIDENTIAL
ENGLISH
LANGUAGE
COURSES

11-17 YEARS

*“I will never forget the great
friends that you were, you
are and you will be”*



THE COURSES

RESIDENTIAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE COURSES

Vacational Studies Courses have been running for 30 years. We have tried in this time to develop an enjoyable balance between 'vacation' and 'study'.

Here is our programme for Summer 2003.



WHAT WE TRY TO DO

Vacational Studies tries to create a totally international Course with students from as many different countries as possible. We avoid accepting a large number of students from any particular country. In this way we try to ensure that English is the main medium of communication among the students. By using English not just as a school subject, but as a living language, we hope our students will realise better its importance and value. When young people want to use English to make friends, this element of self-motivation greatly increases their fluency.

This emphasis on the practical use of English is combined with a full sports, entertainments and excursion programme helping young people to learn 'English internationally...' But it is more than this...

ACCREDITED BY THE BRITISH COUNCIL

Vacational Studies is 'Accredited by the British Council' and is a member of ARELS (The Association of Recognised English Language Services) – a professional body, membership of which is granted only after thorough inspection and re-inspections every four years. We were last inspected in 1999.



ABOUT THIS BROCHURE

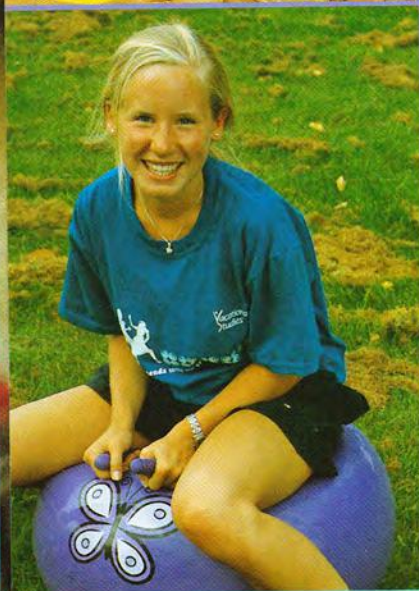
This is an Information Book. The first section gives you a factual overview of the work we do, so you can decide if we are right for your child. The second part ('News 2002-2003') is written in a different style so you have an idea of my personality which necessarily influences the atmosphere on the Courses. It gives a more detailed rationale of the 2003 Courses and what has shaped them, so you and your son or daughter will be fully informed and can prepare for the experience. If your application is accepted, both sections are essential reading. In particular, 'Unrealisable Expectations' in the second section deals with fundamental issues and must be read.



*"I can truly say
that it was the
best summer
holiday of
my life"*



THE COURSES



CHOICE OF COURSE

The Courses all have the same format. The only differences are location and dates. 2003 dates are:-

MARY HARE

8 July – 5 August 2003
(4 weeks)

ELSTREE

10 July – 7 August 2003
(4 weeks)

CHEAM

12 July – 9 August 2003
(4 weeks)



RESIDENCE

The Courses are all fully residential. Students eat, sleep and receive classes in the Schools.

THE STUDENTS

We accept boys and girls – near-beginners, intermediate and more advanced students – aged 11 to 17. As they cannot participate in an international community, complete beginners are not accepted.

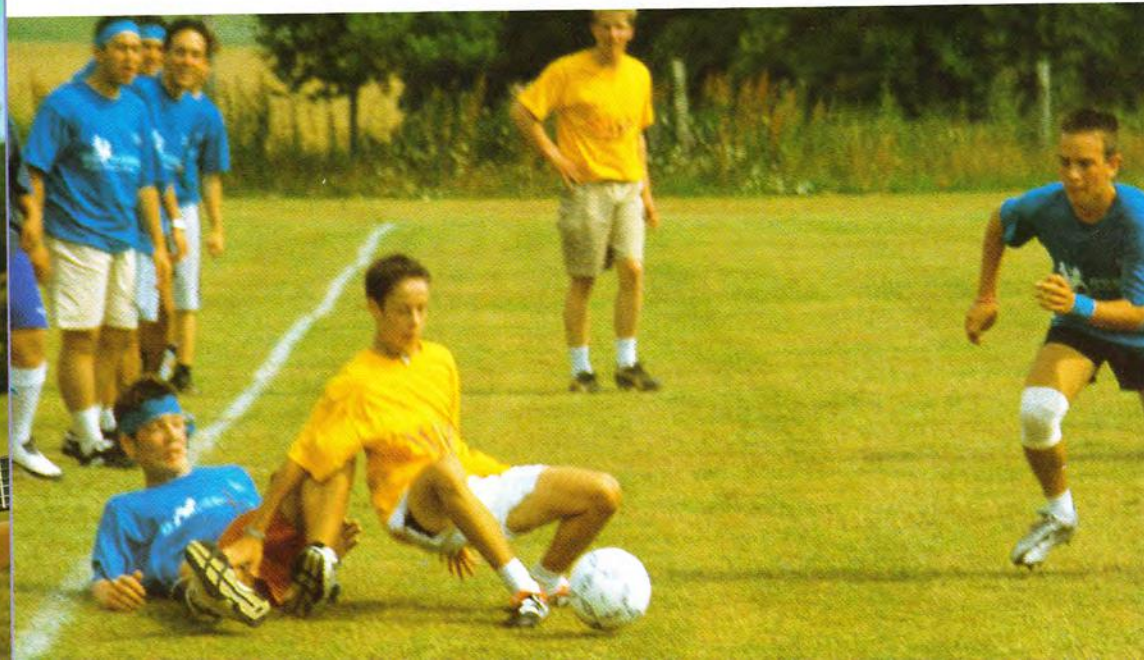
The Courses are sports-orientated and encourage good social development in a community situation.

STUDENTS WHO WILL BENEFIT

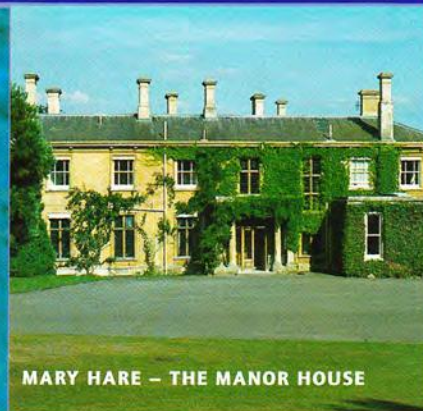
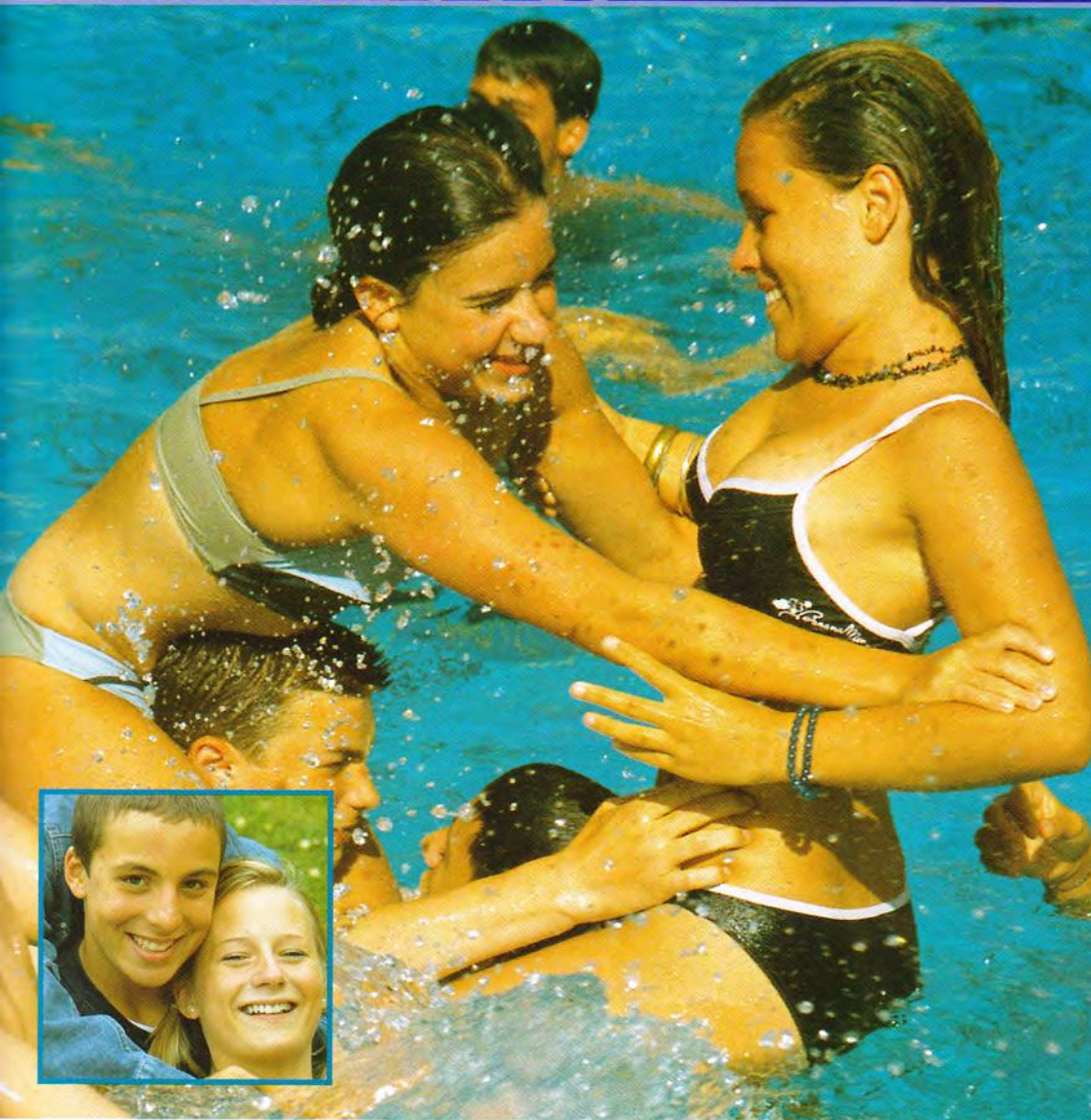
Please make sure that our Course is suitable for your child and that he/she wants to come. Those who will benefit and we enjoy having with us will be internationally-minded, interested in English, outgoing, gregarious and able to function independently. They will also be willing to accept the constraints of community living. We consider it so important that our standards and expectations are understood and accepted that we ask parents to confirm that they and their children have read the rules and that they agree to abide by them. A slip sent with the rules is provided for this purpose.

HOW THEY WILL BENEFIT

We hope that our students will learn a great deal of English, make good friendships and develop a positive international feeling. As well as formal study, we concentrate on the holiday aspect of the Course. While we try to involve students in all activities, we naturally respect the wishes of those who like to read quietly or be with friends. Over the years, we have built up an excellent reputation with parents and young people all over the world. Many boys and girls spend several summers with us renewing old friendships and making new ones. Most students come to us on personal recommendation. The numbers on the Courses are deliberately kept quite small so that the staff can get to know everybody and treat each child as an individual.



THE SCHOOLS



THE SCHOOLS AND SURROUNDINGS

For 2003 we have Courses at Schools near Newbury – The Mary Hare School, Cheam School and Elstree School. Newbury is a small country town in a pleasant part of southern England in the hills of the Berkshire Downs. It is 70km west of London and 45km south of Oxford. The Schools we use are among the best in the area.

THE MARY HARE SCHOOL

The Mary Hare School is a campus comprising several buildings. Since 1982, we have used The Manor House. Recently we have also used Mansell House. Various architectural styles are represented. There are formal gardens and woodland and extensive grounds which include several playing fields, a range of tennis courts, a gymnasium and a large indoor swimming pool.

CHEAM SCHOOL

Cheam School is a late nineteenth century mansion, extensively renovated in 2002. A particular feature is the sunken formal garden. The School's large grounds with playing fields, lawns and woods, back onto Watership Down. There is a recently built sports hall/gymnasium and a range of tennis courts. It has an open-air swimming pool.

ELSTREE SCHOOL

Elstree School is a large eighteenth century country house set in 40 acres of grounds with playing fields, gardens and woods which adjoin Douai Abbey. It has a gymnasium built in 2000. The dining room, kitchens and some dormitories were rebuilt in 1991. There is an open-air swimming pool and a range of tennis courts.

All the Schools have swimming pools, tennis, basketball and volleyball courts, football fields, sports hall, recreation rooms and colour TV/video .



THE PROGRAMME

*I can't think of a
summer without
VacStuds*

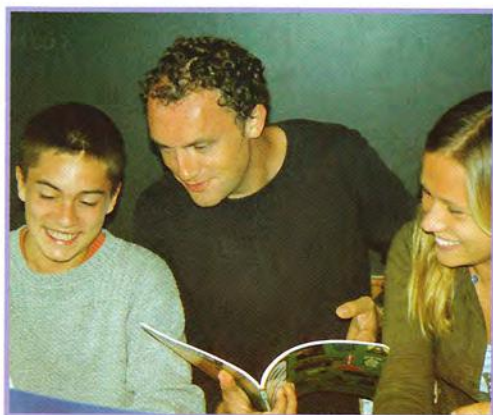


THE TEACHING

A staff of qualified, professional teachers, experienced in the teaching of English, give 4 lessons, each of 45 minutes, every day except Sunday and excursion days. In addition, there is a 30 minute 'supervised study' period each afternoon. Classes are graded according to age and ability in English. Students are placed first in an 'assessment group' and complete a range of oral and written tasks, including a formal multiple-choice placement test. The combined results of these tasks together with the teacher's opinion eventually determine placement in a class. Class placements are constantly reviewed and students may be moved to more or less advanced classes, according to their performance. The teacher:student ratio is approximately 1:13. Maximum class size is 16. We provide all books and teaching materials. Coursebooks include 'Over to You', 'Reward Intermediate', 'Cutting Edge', 'Matters' and 'Panorama 2'. Our teachers are encouraged to work with a wide range of lesson materials and to utilise newspaper and magazine articles, selected TV and radio excerpts, short stories, poems, songs and advertisements.

The emphasis in lessons is to help develop the students' speaking, listening, reading and writing skills through a topic and task-based approach. This involves working with students on a variety of activities centred on a particular topic and helping them with the language needed to complete the activities. They will be expected to complete certain tasks. In this way, we aim to develop our students' confidence in using English to communicate what is important to them and to stimulate their interest in English as the world's common language. We try to give students materials and activities that are different from those in their own countries. Oral and written English are taught and there is an emphasis on conversation practice. A prize is awarded on each Course for academic excellence.

A Certificate of Attendance is sent at the end of the Course. This Certificate is accepted in some countries as justification for a state bursary. In Italy, the Ministry of Education has decreed that a Certificate issued by a British Council Accredited School counts towards the Italian School Leaving Certificate.



SPORTS

Sport is an important part of the Course. Our Sports/Social Organiser arranges a regular programme including football, basketball, volleyball, baseball, tennis, table-tennis, swimming, etc. Competitions run throughout the Course. There is also 'Sports Day' when all the Schools meet for friendly competitions in the major sports.

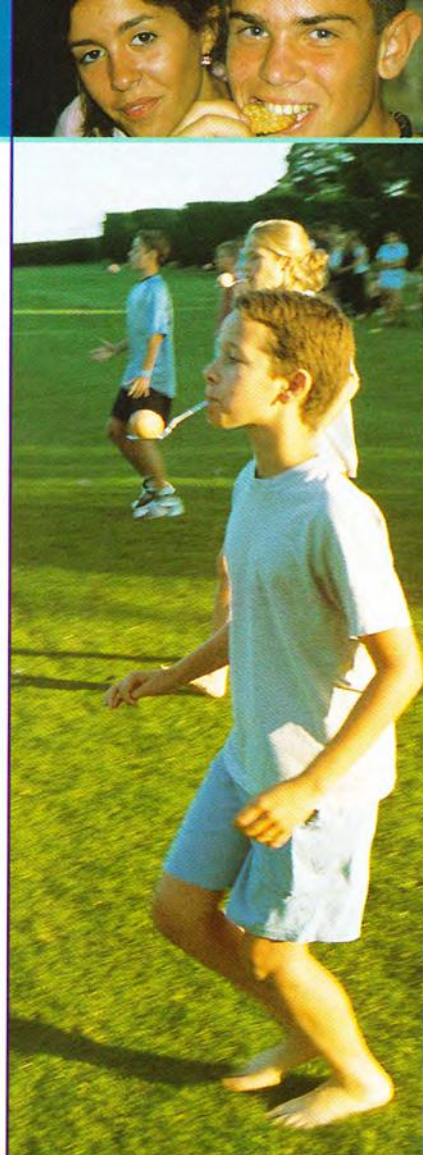
We take all practicable safety precautions – for example, students using the swimming pool are always supervised by a teacher.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

We try to create a relaxed and friendly 'family' atmosphere in which young people will feel 'at home' quickly and make good social contacts. There is a variety of non-sporting activities on the programme – games, singing contests, folies bergères, discotheques, barbecues, concerts, optional theatre visits, etc. The programme is a full one. There is always something to do and students are encouraged to participate.

EXCURSIONS

There are three full days out. One is a visit to London for sightseeing; another is a visit to a designer outlet or town for shopping; the destination for the third excursion is to 'Sports Day'. Travel and staff supervision on these excursions are included in the Course Fee.





THE PROGRAMME

A TYPICAL DAY

08.15	Breakfast
09.00	First class
09.45	Break
09.55	Second class
10.40	Break
11.10	Third class
11.55	Break
12.05	Fourth class
12.50	Break
13.00	Lunch
13.45	Supervised Study
14.15	Break
14.45	Organised sports and games
18.00	Evening meal
19.00	Games, films, etc.
21.00	Hot chocolate and biscuits
21.30	'Club'
22.30	Bedtime (or 22.45)

Pocket money and stamps are obtainable from the Office every day from 13.20 – 13.45 and 14.15 – 14.45.



SHOPPING AFTERNOONS (OPTIONAL EXTRA)

In addition to the organised excursions above (which are included in the Course Fee), there are one or two optional shopping afternoons which are not included in the Course Fee. These are in Newbury or another town near the School. We think it safe for young people to shop in these towns unaccompanied by staff, if parents have indicated their agreement to this on the Application Form. This helps them achieve a measure of independence. Younger students can be accompanied by staff if parents or we so wish. There will be several staff in the town while our students are shopping. Travel is by private coach from the School with accompanying staff. The cost of transport (payable by students if they wish to go) is about £6.

THEATRE VISITS (OPTIONAL EXTRA)

Tickets for smash-hit West End musicals that are booked out months in advance have been requested and we will be allocated a limited number. Students who apply early enough will be able to see one of these shows. The cost of each (show + travel to the theatre) will be about £50. The cost should be added to pocket money. If it is not possible to provide a ticket, the money will be returned with the student at the end of the Course.

CERTIFICATION IN SPOKEN ENGLISH BY THE INSTITUTE OF LINGUISTS (OPTIONAL EXTRA)

The Institute of Linguists has been recognised by the British Government as examiners since 1910. Specially for us, they have devised a Certification in Spoken English which will be externally marked by their examiners. Certification will be on 4 levels, according to the ability of the student. Level 1 is 'Near-Beginner'; Level 4 is 'Advanced'. At each

conversation with the examiner during which the student is giving information and (2) a structured task in which the student is requesting information. Including preparation time, the examination will last about 20 minutes. It will be held in each school at the end of the Course. The Certificate in English as a Spoken Language for Short Courses is an officially validated qualification awarded in each level at one of three grades – Pass, Merit, Distinction. The cost is £39.00.

CERTIFICATION AT LEVEL 3+ & 4+ IN WRITTEN ENGLISH BY THE INSTITUTE OF LINGUISTS (OPTIONAL EXTRA)

As a number of returning and new students achieve such proficiency in English, The Institute of Linguists has piloted in 2001 and will offer in 2003 Certification at Levels 3+ and 4+ in written English (at a cost of £39.00) and optionally in written and oral English combined (at a cost of £58.00).

TENNIS LESSONS (OPTIONAL EXTRA)

Tennis may be played at any time, but we can arrange professional lessons, if required. These are available for beginners or near-beginners only. Six one-hour lessons are given in groups of no more than four students. These must be requested in advance on the Application Form. If tennis lessons are taken, a tennis racquet must be brought.

As these lessons are prearranged, it is not possible to refund the cost of lessons booked, but not taken. Parents are asked to make sure that lessons are really wanted before booking them. If tennis lessons are requested, the cost (£34.00) should be added to pocket money.

FOOD SAFETY

Vacational Studies policy is not to serve any food about which there is any concern for any reason. We serve only what we believe parents would feel safe to serve their own children in their own homes.

MEALS

Food is an important part of the Course. Meals are prepared by professional caterers to a high standard. Our specification for lunch and dinner is a choice of hot dishes (including one vegetarian) or a cold dish, a salad bar comprising about ten different items, a choice of desserts and fresh fruit. Students can have the first choice they want and can return for another choice as 'seconds'. If they cannot find anything they like, they can ask us to





ask the caterer to prepare something special.

There is always a vegetarian option. Other special diets can be catered for. Cold orange juice or other drinks are available at no charge. There is a small 'tuck shop'.

At times throughout the Course, the menu will be varied to include, for example, barbecues (spare rib, sausage roll, jacket potatoes, coleslaw dip, crisps, ice-cream, etc.) There will be a traditional British 'Christmas Dinner' (roast turkey with stuffing, roast potatoes, Brussels sprouts, cranberry jelly). There may also be 'national meals'. If they wish, students from various countries can advise the kitchen staff on how to prepare and serve a meal consisting of dishes from their own country.

Any student can join the Food Committee which meets the Caterer regularly to discuss all aspects of the catering.

HOW WE ENCOURAGE THE USE OF ENGLISH

On each Course there are students from many different countries. We try to ensure a mixture of nationalities in classes and dormitories. We aim to stimulate the speaking of English socially in various ways. Members of staff constantly encourage English-speaking around the School. Our British students do so, too,

Another 'encouragement' to speak English is the 'English Only Prize' with a Vacation Studies watch for the winner. Points are awarded each week to students who have spoken English much more than their own language. Throughout the Course, there are also 'English Only' bonus days. If a student is noticeably using English and is not caught more than once using any language other than English on that day, an extra point is awarded – a 'bonus'. At the end of the Course the points are totalled and a name is recommended to the Director for consideration for the 'English Only Prize'. The more points, the greater the chance of winning the prize. We hope that the prize will be

HERE IS A TYPICAL MENU FOR GUIDANCE:-

Breakfast

Choice of cereal

Choice of various breads, meats, cheese

Jam, marmalade, other spreads

Tea, coffee, milk, fresh orange juice

Lunch

Choice of one cold or three hot dishes

Buffet-style salad bar

Choice of desserts

Fresh fruit

Dinner

Choice of one cold or three hot dishes

Buffet-style salad bar

Choice of desserts

Fresh fruit

Before bedtime:



THE PROGRAMME

*It's a world of our own;
a secret place and it
feels like home*



HEALTH

Minor illnesses are treated by our own staff. There is a Matron in each School. We also use the services of doctors in the locality. The St John's Ambulance Service provides training for all our staff at the start of each Course in the latest methods of basic first aid and resuscitation. We ask parents to give us full health information on the Application Form. We request that children with food allergies come with a 1ml. Adrenalin (Epinephrine) 1:1000 injection pen – an 'EpiPen'. Children of European nationality should bring an E128 form available from their health service, entitling them as temporary residents to the same free treatment under the British National Health Service as British citizens for all, including pre-existing, conditions.

RELIGION

The Courses are interdenominational. If parents so wish, we shall arrange for Catholic students to attend an appropriate service. Please indicate this on the Application Form. Transportation to and from the church is payable by students.

RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION

At all Schools, students sleep in dormitories. Girls are in one part of the house, boys are in another.

INSURANCE

Every student is covered by a special Insurance Policy while they are with us. Details are on the enclosed information sheet. Briefly, the Insurance includes refund of full Course Fees if certified serious illness or accident to the student or parent during the month before the Course prevents attendance on the Course; private emergency medical treatment to the value of £1,000,000; personal possessions and luggage cover to the value of £500; personal money cover to the value of £200; return air fare or repatriation to the value of £1,000,000 if an APEX reservation is lost because of delayed or advanced departure through illness or accident while the student is with us. Personal accident insurance is included.

There is no extra charge for this Insurance. Every student is automatically covered (subject to the stated conditions) when the application is accepted.

HOW WE LOOK AFTER STUDENTS

We understand the concern felt by parents when their sons and daughters are away from home. They are under constant supervision, as far as is practicable, both in the School and on excursions. Our total staff:student ratio of about 1:8 ensures that our students are well looked-after.

In addition to the staff, on each Course there are two older ex-students, 'Staff Helpers', to assist with the sports and entertainments programme. There is also at least one native English-speaking student.

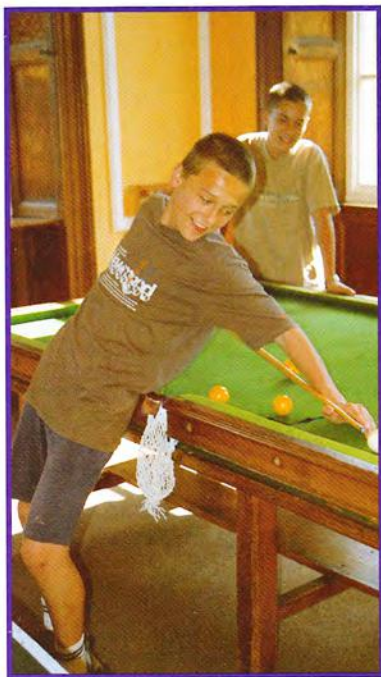
During the Course, progress reports are sent to all parents describing performance in class and also social behaviour. At the end of the Course, all parents are sent a final report and leaving certificate together with a report from the Director on the student's general progress and behaviour.

IF THERE IS A PROBLEM

We shall contact you. Parents must ensure that we have a telephone number through which they can always be reached. If it is an emergency and we cannot reach you, we shall contact the person named in section 8 (our 'emergency contact') on the Application Form. If we cannot contact either of you, we shall assume your authority to act 'in loco parentis' and in a medical emergency, for example, give consent to appropriate medical treatment. We send students a list of rules and standards of behaviour expected before the Course begins. These are straightforward. Basically, we expect students to obey the law, respect the buildings, equipment and the feelings of other people and to show good manners. Students must read and know the rules before they come.

If a student is correctly motivated (see section on 'Students who will benefit'), there should be no discipline problems. If any should arise, we reserve the right to contact parents and, if we consider it necessary, require that the child be taken home at the parents' expense without refund of Fees. We also reserve the right to send the writer of the original 'letter of recommendation' a photocopy of any correspondence we enter into.

HOW TO APPLY



HOW TO APPLY

Answer all the questions on the Application Form and return it to us with (if this is a first application) a letter of recommendation from the school on behaviour and attitude to study. Retain your copy for reference. We shall tell you immediately if the application is acceptable and for which Course. A 'waiting list' operates when the Courses are full.

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

To ensure that all our students are well-motivated and keen to participate, we ask that a brief letter of recommendation from the school accompanies all applications from new students. This should mention behaviour and attitude to study. No such letter is needed for students we already know or, exceptionally, when this might cause conflict with educational authorities.

WHEN THE APPLICATION IS ACCEPTED

We shall write to inform you of this and include our Invoice for the Course Fees. The Invoice can be settled in full immediately, or 50% can be paid immediately and the balance by the date shown on the Invoice. The place is confirmed when the full Course Fees have been received by us. We shall also request travel details.

HOW TO PAY

Please see the 'Course Fees 2003' slip.

POCKET MONEY

Pocket money can either be brought by students (as a £ cheque drawn on a British bank, payable to 'Vacational Studies Pocket Money A/C') or sent in advance to the National Westminster Bank, 30 Market Place, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 5AJ for Vacational Studies Pocket Money A/C 65400100 in £ sterling or A/C 10388494 in € Euros. We also have a £ Sterling Girobank account for personal money. The number is 255 7444. Students will tend to bring about £300. Optional tennis coaching fees, the cost of Certification and the cost of theatre visit(s) should be added (if applicable). Do not send more money during the Course.

CLOTHES AND POSSESSIONS

Notes and advice on what to bring and other information will be sent to parents and students in advance.



THE COURSE FEE INCLUDES:-

- residence at the School
- travel Heathrow-School/ School-Heathrow¹
- all meals²
- tuition
- the sports programme
- the use of facilities
- excursions³
- insurance⁴
- the laundering of clothes⁵

¹At specified times and terminals – see 'Travel'

²Except lunch on excursions, but including lunch on Sports Day

³Travel and supervision, not entrance fees

⁴As described in the 'Insurance' slip

⁵If washable at 40°+, not sensitive to bulk washing/drying and at your own risk

There are NO EXTRA CHARGES except for optional church, theatre or shopping visits and professional tennis lessons. A small (£3) deduction is made from pocket money to provide indoor board games and records, tapes and CDs for the 'Club'. £20 'caution money' will be retained in the student's pocket money account until the last day when it will be returned less deductions for damages (if any.)



THE COURSE FEE DOES NOT INCLUDE:-

- pocket money
- optional church/theatre/ shopping visits
- travel to and from England



TRAVEL



TRAVEL

It is quite usual for our students to fly alone. 90% of our students arrive and depart in this way. There are many cut-price air ticket offers – for early booking, for young people, or for travel on particular flights. We operate a collection and return transport service between Heathrow Airport and the Schools on arrival and departure at no charge, subject to the conditions on our 'Travel Details' form. Our staff can meet students arriving at Heathrow Terminals 1 and 2 (only) and check-in students on outgoing flights from Heathrow Terminals 1 and 2 (only) on the stated dates. Our staff are at Heathrow from 12.00–16.00 on arrival days and from 09.30–13.00 on departure days. If flights arrive earlier than 12.00, students wait for our staff near the Information Desk. If flights leave after 13.00, we explain the procedure and take students to wait in the correct area.



For young children (under 12), airlines operate an 'Unaccompanied Young Persons (UYP)' or 'Unaccompanied Minors (UM)' service on request and look after them. As airlines insist on a named person meeting and returning a child and that the person remains until the flight has departed, parents should note that if they request UYP or UM service, all UYP or UM arrivals and departures must be by taxi at cost. The driver is known to us and has been working with us for many years. He will meet students and check them in personally. It is normally unnecessary for students to be booked to fly UYP or UM. Airlines (especially British Airways) are very helpful with young passengers at any age.

Our free standard service cannot be used when arrival is later or departure is earlier than our stated dates or times, or if the flight is via Gatwick Airport, or if a student is booked UYP or UM, or is on a flight which arrives at or departs from Terminal 3 or 4, or is outside our requested times. We can make special taxi or minibus arrangements on your behalf. We do not charge for making these arrangements, but the cost of the taxi or minibus is payable by the student. (As a guide, a one-way taxi for one person to Heathrow is about £75 and to Gatwick about £95. For two people, the cost is shared). Special requirements should be indicated on the Application Form and details sent separately.

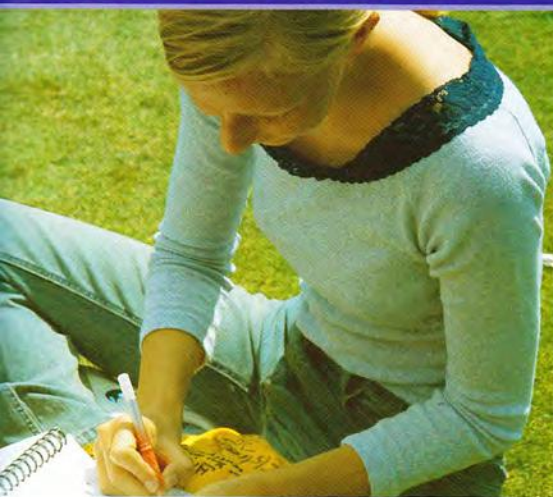
AT THE AIRPORT

Before travelling, we send an identity badge and luggage tags to ensure quick recognition. Our representatives will carry blue Vacation Studies' folders and will meet students at the entrance to the Arrivals Hall after leaving the Customs Hall.

If you do not take our standard collection/return service, but we make other arrangements for you, the same procedure applies.

VISITS TO THE SCHOOLS

Visits to the Schools outside the Course dates may be made only by appointment through our Newbury Office.



THE MARY HARE SCHOOL

From London, follow M4 to Exit 13 (Newbury). Leave M4 and follow signs 'A34 Newbury'. After 1km take slip-road on left signposted 'Curridge/Winterbourne/Donnington', then left signposted 'Mary Hare'. The Mary Hare School is first on the right.

Address for students' letters:

The Mary Hare School
Newbury Berkshire RG14 3BQ.
Telephone (to contact Course Manager):
National: (01635) 244221
International: +44 1635 244221
Payphone (for students):
National: (01635) 244261
International: +44 1635 244261

CHEAM SCHOOL

From Newbury, take the A339 road (signposted 'Basingstoke') for 10km. Cheam School (Front Entrance) is signposted on the right.

Address for students' letters:

Cheam School
Headley, Newbury, Berkshire RG19 8LD.
Telephone (to contact Course Manager):
National: (01635) 268803
International: +44 1635 268803
Payphone (for students):
National: (01635) 268225
International: +44 1635 268225

The telephone numbers and addresses given above are only for use during the Courses. During the rest of the year, please use our Newbury Office address and telephone numbers below.

DIRECTIONS BY RAIL

By train from London, leave from Paddington Station. For Mary Hare and Cheam, arrive at Newbury Station. For Elstree arrive at Reading Station or Midgham Station. There are normally taxis at Newbury Station. If not, there are taxi numbers in the phone box near the Station. There are always taxis at Reading Station. There are no taxis at Midgham Station. Walk to A4 road, then follow road directions.

IF YOU COME BY CAR

Road directions are given after the Schools' addresses. Parents bringing students are asked to arrive at between 12.30 and 14.30. Parents collecting students on the last day are asked to arrive before 11.00.

ON ARRIVAL AT THE SCHOOL

All money is handed in at the Office for safe keeping. Students can withdraw money every day. We keep passports and tickets safely. We cannot accept responsibility for pocket money or valuables not handed to us.

ON THE FIRST DAY

On request, students will be allocated to a returning student who will act as a guide, explaining the layout of the building, the way the Course runs and answering any questions.

SCHOOLS' ADDRESSES AND DIRECTIONS

ELSTREE SCHOOL

From London, follow M4 to Exit 12 (Theale). Leave M4 and follow signs 'A4 Newbury' for 9km to Woolhampton. In Woolhampton, turn right after Falmouth Arms at the 'Upper Woolhampton/Douai School' signpost. Elstree School is 1km along this road on the right.

Address for students' letters:

Elstree School
Woolhampton, Reading RG7 5TD.
Telephone (to contact Course Manager):
National: (0118) 971 0614
International: +44 118 9 71 0614
Payphone (for students):
National: (0118) 971 0616
International: +44 118 9 71 0616

FINALLY...

We have tried to describe the Courses fully and frankly. Please also see the section 'Unrealisable Expectations' in the News Section. The News Section (enclosed) contains more detailed information on various aspects of the Course. It is essential reading for the parents of 2003 Course participants and is not only a résumé of the previous summer. We hope this brochure contains all the information you need to make your choice. Any further details you may require can be obtained from the parents of our past students and past students themselves (the addresses of some of these are on the enclosed list) and the Director. We suggest you contact our 'parental references' as they may offer useful advice.

Our Courses are designed with the benefit of years of experience and we are confident that we can combine the learning of good written and spoken English with an unforgettable and enjoyable holiday.





NEWS

2002 – 2003

'I am very happy that I made a good choice, that the boys have benefited so much from your schools and that they had so much fun being with you. Thank you very much indeed!' This in a letter from a parent. Time was when our young people would also write me heartfelt and considered letters about their memories of the summer. The internet has changed all this. Thoughts and feelings are expressed with a spontaneity never possible before – poured out straight onto the 'Messages Forum' at vacstuds.com as instant emotional reactions to what has been clearly 'the best time of my life'. Spelling and linguistic niceties are all sacrificed to immediacy, but this is an object-lesson in the use of English as a practical communicative medium. These reactions are all in English and are all round the world in nanoseconds. Here is a taster:- 'It was a blast' (a Norwegian student); 'Just wanted to thank all of you for being such a great bunch of students and helping me to spend the greatest summer of my life. Just wanted to thank the staff who did a great job. Simply – I love you all!' (a Monegasque student); 'It was 'spiffing' ... (If you know what I mean...)' (a German student); 'Just a day has gone and I already miss everyone' (an Italian student); 'I miss everyone so much and everybody is cool and now I am going to cry... So bye bye. I'm the weakest link' (a Dutch student); 'An unforgettable month' (Norwegian students); 'A brilliant month' (an English student); 'I miss that stupid bell! I miss those meals with all those people, I miss you all guys' (Portuguese student); 'Afterwards it's just like you are alone in the world; everything is so boring' (an Icelandic student); 'I miss you so much. In the airplane I went to cry because I was so sad. I couldn't control myself (another Icelandic student); 'It's so boring being at home having nothing to do' (a Norwegian student); 'Don't you think that these four weeks were the best days of your life?' (a German student); 'I've just read every single message from all of you guys and it just made me feel in pain 'cause I'm really missing you, my family. I just don't know any more how to eat at a normal table without any noise and having nobody to eat my apple pie while I'm not looking' (a Portuguese student); 'It is so weird to be at home without all of you around me! I miss waking up with my roommates'; (a Norwegian student); 'We want to say that we miss you all a lot and we want to say that they were the best weeks in our life' (German students); 'One week passed... it seems one year! It's impossible not to miss the routine, the bell, the English queue, the meals all together. They were wonderful days and it is hard to come back to our real life, but I will never forget the great friends that you were, you are and you will be' (an Italian student.)

I am so proud to have been the originator of all this. For almost all our students in 2002 this summer has, indeed, been 'the investment that can never be taken away'.

The year since the previous Courses ended has been a strange one. The fear and threats of war that emanated from the events of 11 September 2001 had a dramatic effect on international travel. In some countries, the news media hyped the fear so that parents held off making application until it was too late. Also, just after publication, I heard that Cheam School would have to rebuild its kitchens to satisfy the Government Inspectors. The work would take until after the summer. A school without a kitchen would be students without food, so I felt I had to cancel the Cheam Course. The result was a slightly larger Elstree and a rather larger Mary Hare than last year. Had it been a year with a normal application pattern, we would have filled two schools in February. As it was, we filled both in May. It is important that I have the wide

range of nationalities that we are noted for. International incidents affect clients in some countries far more than others. If the 'war against terrorism' is extended, I may decide to reduce to two schools again at short notice so that the Courses remain multinational.

'I don't think I've been on a Course where there has been such an overriding sense of community, where divisions between age groups and nationality have been so unobtrusive. I feel privileged to have had the opportunity to have met so many genuinely nice people, both student and staff.' So writes Will Cole Sports/Social Organiser after two years as an Assistant at Cheam and a stint as British student there. He should know.

'Caring' Course Manager, Francis McIvor, temporarily transferred his allegiance from Cheam to Elstree in his seventeenth summer with us. In 'real life', he has now transferred himself across the Atlantic and will be teaching in the US for a year or so. What Francis does not know about running a VacStuds Course can be written on a postage stamp, so I shall try to persuade him to return for an eighteenth. Also transferring from Cheam were teachers Chris Spencer (now ACM) and Sophie Alder in their third year with us. Peter Blood is now in his seventh year teaching with us at Elstree. Anna Eames returned for her fifth as teacher and now as Course Tutor. James McCrory was back teaching for his third summer at Elstree and Paul Ilott for his second. They were joined by debutante Alex Miller. Julia Tingle and Buster were back from last summer at Mary Hare as Matron and companion. With the exception of a case of chicken pox (mistranslated as 'smallpox' by a student to his bemused parents across the North Sea), the students stayed healthy. It is unusual for brother and sister to work on a Course



together. It turned out well. Will's sister, Victoria, joined the Sports Crew as the new female Assistant. The male member was guitar-playing Guy Dowdeswell, school-friend of Will's and remarkable 'Miss Elstree' competitor. Back again as Staff Helper was the talented, Tim Albers (Netherlands), also a noted entrant in 'Miss Elstree', who has now sampled the delights of Douai (as a student) and Cheam (as SH last year). Joining him was hard-working first-time SH, Marta Arnaldos (Spain) in an auspicious debut. I am glad I pressed for a Talent Show this summer. I have always thought that, just as parents choose to invest in our Course, they will identify and develop their children's talents. I was not wrong. The Talent Show was a tour de force of concert class piano-playing, trained singing and dancing that was gymnastic in its physicality. These skills were wasted in a subsequent Folies Bergères that was the most dismal and dubious piece of entertainment I have ever seen on one of my Courses, cobbled together by a group of students who seemed to be in love with their own eccentricity. Staff representation on the Folies Bergères Committee will be obligatory henceforth. All-in-all, though, Elstree 2002 was a good year with some charismatic young people and great teaching and sports/social programmes.

'Make me smile, Mary Hare' to the 1969 Foundations' tune 'Build Me Up Buttercup' was Mary Hare's winning entry to the New Song Competition at Sports Day. Although I am told my decision to award the prize of a new Club music system to Mary Hare is because I have execrable musical taste, the students burst into that song after every major evening event and I know it keeps running through the heads of those who were there this year. Mary Hare was bigger and better than ever. Liz Morris, now in her ninth summer with us, was Course Manager again. Liz has a wonderful ability not only to appear composed and in control at all times, but to actually be so. Even when aroused in the early hours to deal with pranks, she remains unruffled. And pranks there were. Some enjoyed the Course so much they tried to extend it into bed time and discovered the cost of security. The teachers were a far more cohesive and adaptable group than in the past few years. Course Tutor was Sarah Khan, back for her second summer with us, ten years after her first. Also returning for a seventh time was Steve Sugden, for a third, Phil Sams, and for a second, Craig Foxall.

Newcomer teachers were Rajeev Bakshi, Julia Clarke, Jenny Grewcock, Casper Jones and Pete Lang. In charge of the Sports/Social programme was the talented Camilla Woolsey-Brown, back after two years as an Assistant. Several of her innovations have been included in the new 'Notes for Sports Crews' as 'activities that work'. A number appear on the video. Her adaptation of 'Big Brother' is one I missed while I was elsewhere. Assisting her were returnee Nick Johnson, newcomer Lucy Rivett and ex-student Gabor Podmaniczky. Diana Haltermann (Spain) whose energy knows no bounds and first-timer Stefan Muthspiel (Germany) – he of the revealing quotes – completed a successful team. Back for her first Mary Hare summer after four at Cheam was Sabine Burdeyron-Dyster as Matron and Liz's ACM. She organised the domestic side of the Course so smoothly that, whatever illnesses or incidents with the laundry there may have been, nothing intruded on the smooth running of the Course. The students had a great time, gelled splendidly and showed their talents in an enjoyable Folies. And there was 'that' song. While the lyrics clearly struck a chord with those new to us, I hope the old familiar 'Friends will be Friends' will not be usurped. That for me is the essence of Mary Hare.

Also a familiar sight at both schools, although mainly attracted to Mary Hare, was support teacher, Suzanne Mellor. Liz Fidler provided tennis coaching for the twenty second summer and Mark Thatcher 'dj-ed' at the discos for the twenty fifth year. My new PA this year was Fred Dutton who steered unscathed the trusty Scorpio through Newbury's traffic and the back lanes of the wilds of west Berkshire.

And there was me. I have to say I loved having only two schools both with experienced Course Managers. Although the bi-turbo could propel me wherever with amazing velocity, this time I could enjoy what was happening where I was without thinking I should be at two other places instead.

SPORTS DAY

This was an altogether more civilised day this year. With just two schools and one neutral referee, VacStuds' designer Stephen Green, there were none of the animated confrontations on the field that have made previous Sports Days more like tribal warfare than friendly rivalry. The chants were chanted, the shouts shouted and the fleeting contacts made as ever. It was held on one of the hottest and most humid days of the year. Even those from warmer climes wilted. After the team sports came the three-legged race, the wheelbarrow race and the relay. The 'Spectaculars' that first made an appearance ten years ago were again performed to the warm applause of the rival school. Elstree cleverly re-created the story lines from 'Grease' with several being given cameo parts. I wonder why it is that the fictitious 'me' always makes a recalcitrant student clean my car. I never allow anyone else's hand on a wash leather near it. Mary Hare were more conventional with 'Moulin Rouge' dance routines. Everyone had their turn 'on stage', performing in front of 100+ people. Good for confidence-building, I would say. The song competition introduced last year was held again. Impromptu renditions of Mary Hare's entry could be heard until the end of the Course. Elstree's remake of one of the main songs from 'Jungle Book', while skillful, thoughtful and tuneful, was never heard again. Mary Hare gained the prize of a new music centre for the Club. Maybe next time the element of competition will be removed.

CATERING

Catering was entrusted to Sodexo at Elstree where the manager was Riaz Bibi. We could not have wished for a more pleasant and obliging staff. Mary Hare's own caterer, Jean Monger, prepared excellent meals to a really high standard. Everyone was treated to this at Sports Day. The multiple-choice food questionnaires were again completed by students and again I see that, for some, there was no food at all. From my research, I deduce that young people generally react





instinctively to food. They will eat it and maybe enjoy it, but their recollection is that, because it was not like the food they are accustomed to, it was not good. So doubtful am I of the statistical value of these responses that I am no longer publishing an analysis of the results.

WORKING FOR THE CATERERS

Xavier Margenats (Cheam 2000) took me up on my suggestion. The best way of learning a language is working in it. Anyone beyond the age to be a student wanting to try it, let me know and I shall put you in touch with the caterers.

THE ENGLISH STUDENTS

Our multinational Courses cannot be multinational unless England is represented among the students. Over the years, we have built up a relationship with Norwich School in Norfolk. Traditionally we offer places to two 15/16 year-old boys recommended by their Housemasters at each School. They take part in the Course just like all the students, but are used as a 'teaching resource' by the teachers and move from class to class. From their point-of-view, they make friends all over the world. For our foreign students, this is a chance to hear real young people speaking young person's English. Alex Chadd and Rob Hedge were the English students at Elstree. Sam Sampson and Tom Siddiqui were at Mary Hare. All did a fine job and were excellent ambassadors.

THE FUN OF VACSTUDS

We expect our students to join in. We assume this is why their parents have sent them to us. The sports/social programme is a full one. There is something for everyone. We try to provide gentle encouragement rather than compulsion. Occasionally, however, we oblige students to be active for their own good. As this is a structured experience for which we provide the structure, we feel we should also provide the impetus if this is not forthcoming from the student.

THE 'STUDIES' IN VACSTUDS

With the plethora of resources, teaching materials, ideas contained in the Programme of Work, a trained Director of Studies and experienced Course Tutors provided, teachers tend to create focussed and stimulating lessons. That they are task-based makes them different from lessons at students' own schools. Some make tremendous progress. Prizes for Academic Excellence –

for the best-presented folders – were awarded to Lara Santos (Elstree) and Nori Szabo (Mary Hare). The Essay Writing prizes were awarded to Dolly Chagoury (Elstree) and Maggie La Francesca (Mary Hare).

'ENGLISH-SPEAKING PRIZE'

As a result of 'English Only' days and general observation, the staff put forward to me the names of those who had impressed them with the linguistic use they made of the international environment. I chose the winner accordingly. Prizes for the speaking of English on a day-to-day basis were awarded to Harald Rosenström (Elstree) and Piotr Piechocki (Mary Hare). Each prize was a VacStuds watch.

IOI CERTIFICATION

The Institute of Linguists Certificate in Spoken English for Short Courses with three grades of attainment (pass; merit; distinction) at four levels was offered. More than 50% of parents opted for this. Several students whose parents had not opted for it, chose to take it when they saw how much progress they were making. At three of the four levels, it is an entirely oral examination and is based largely around the experiences the students have on the Course. As before, the examiners commented on the very high standard of English generally and the enthusiasm with which the candidates talked about the Course. This is a real qualification from Government-approved examiners. This year we offered a new, written certification at Level 4+ (the highest level). This could also be combined with a spoken paper.

For 2003, oral certification will be offered at Levels 1, 2, 3, 4 and also at Levels 3+ and 4+ as a written paper and at Levels 3+ and 4+ combining oral certification with a written paper, all with three grades of attainment. We hope the parents of every student, except those with less than one year's English, will opt for certification.

VACSTUDS CERTIFICATES

The examination certificate is not the only valuable piece of paper our students have at the end of our Course. The final report and leaving certificate from a British Council Accredited School is now accepted by the Italian Education Ministry as counting towards the student's matriculation. Maybe where Italy has started, other countries will follow. In Monaco, a certificate issued by us will count towards a state bursary. There may be other grants that I am not aware of in other countries.

PARENTAL CONTROL CONDITION

Most students keep (more or less) to the rules that they have signed their agreement to in the 'Agreement and Travel Details' form. We must assume that they will keep their word, otherwise we will become law enforcement officers rather than educators. Nevertheless, there are some students who will try to do what they want to do regardless of the consequences and without considering the effect it will have on the community. A few young people are self-centred, have 'attitude', think they know their 'rights', have no idea what they are missing by insisting on freedom and do not have the responsibility or social awareness to use it wisely. They also have no idea that we are required, under English law, to protect them under our 'duty of care'. Parents have decided to invest in our Course and we are keen that everyone who comes to us gets the full benefit. I believe it is a partnership. For this reason, I have written a 'Parental Control Condition' into the contract we have with parents. In brief, I say 'we will do our best to fulfil our 'duty of care' under English law based on good will and the trust established by your and your child's agreement to the 'rules' as evidenced by the signed 'Agreement and Travel Details' form. If your child's attitude or behaviour is such that we find that we cannot exercise the control required to fulfil our 'duty of care', we shall pass responsibility for control to the parent either by requesting the parent's presence or by telephone contact with the child. If this fails and we decide the child is beyond control, we shall expel.'

In effect, this means that if we sense that a student has problems that are likely to result in trouble, we contact the parent before real trouble results. We contacted parents on five occasions this year. In every case we had 100% support. The parents talked to their children in a rational way in their own language and helped the child see the way forward.

ENGLISH LAW

I state on the Application Form that this applies. There is nothing sinister about the inclusion of these words. We are de facto in loco parentis in the summer. We accept responsibility for looking after a large number of other people's children. We take this responsibility seriously. Parents trust us to make wise decisions. Sometimes, however, we receive requests which we consider unwise. For example, we are asked to let children be unaccompanied by staff when we consider they are not responsible enough to



be unaccompanied. Children feel that, if they ask their parents to request something from us, we must comply with a parental request. We are the ones closest to what is happening. We know what a prudent parent would do and would not do in certain circumstances. Legally, we are expected to fulfil the role of a prudent parent – no more, no less. Sometimes we do not agree with what a parent is asking us to do. We shall use our discretion in all matters. Under English Law a parent may not sign away a child's rights. This includes the child's right to be protected by adults. We shall do what we think is right for the child. This is why I state that English Law applies.

UNREALISABLE EXPECTATIONS

It is important that all parents read this paragraph. We do what we can to encourage students to learn and use the Course to advantage. We do our best to look after them. We make no other claims. We cannot force a child to integrate. While we provide encouragement, they must help themselves. They will find others who speak their language and they may be tempted to take the easy way. They may come with friends from home. We cannot keep friends apart when they are at the same School. They must decide to broaden their international horizons, mix and use English. Parents may make requests, but we reserve the right to place students in what we consider to be appropriate classes and dormitories. The final report we write will be our frank assessment. As the teaching/learning situations are different, it may not be similar to the school report you are accustomed to. The Course is a communal experience. Individual freedom is restricted. Our school buildings are boarding schools – not hotels.

Accommodation, washrooms, etc. are shared. Bedrooms are boarding school dormitories and these may be sparsely furnished. Our schools become co-educational only in the summer, so bathrooms may be away from dormitories and boy/girl rotas for their use are sometimes needed. Clothes storage space may be limited. All sorts of compromises have to be made, but for most young people this is part of the fun. We also ask parents to accept that telephone contact with their children, especially in the first few days, is not a good idea. We are not being difficult, just putting into practice what we know from experience works. In effect, what we are requesting is a partnership between us based on our expertise and parents' trust in us. What we provide and the parameters of what

the assumption that parents and students read it all. If your child is interested in drinking, smoking, going out at night and leading an independent life, please choose another organisation less restrictive than ours.

Ours is a new, exciting and active environment. Parental control appears absent. Our students are a long way from home, without the constraints and responsibilities that tend to check behavioural excess. No doubt there is also the desire to impress one's peers. They may call it 'being carried away'. Whatever the causes, some of our students indulge in behaviour that is simply anti-social. If they get caught, they may feel they have little to lose. Protected by this feeling that no one of importance will ever know, I am aware that some students have broken our rules and even the law. All students come to us after a 'letter of recommendation' has been written about them by their school. To remove this feeling of anonymity and to encourage students to take responsibility for their own actions, we reserve the right to send the writer of the original 'letter of recommendation' a photocopy of any correspondence we have with parents about children in our care.

PHONING STUDENTS

The students who adjust best are those whose parents phone them only on the two 'Telephone Sundays'. If these parents wish to know how their child is adjusting, they phone the Course Manager and ask.

There are some parents who feel they must speak to their children frequently. We ask parents who must speak to their children outside 'Telephone Sundays' to phone the payphone, not our School Office number. We cannot search for children in a large building and campus. The payphone may

ring unanswered. A student may answer it. If so, that student can be asked to search for a student. That student may comply with the request...

MOBILE PHONES

About half of this year's students came with a mobile phone, even though we requested that they should not be brought. They are a real nuisance. Most were handed into the office as requested and only used outside the building. Some were not. They have become a way of life for some parents as well as their children. The two homesickness problems we had this year were exacerbated by near-constant contact with parents by mobile phone. We even had a parent phoning her child at midnight becoming very concerned because he was involved in a pillow fight. For all young people, the Course is a social as well as linguistic experience in which they do some growing up. I know this is a reason parents choose to send their children to us. Part of the growing up experience is working out 'problems' on your own. In the case of homesickness, relationships with new friends or awkwardness in adjusting, a mobile phone removes this self-reliance. The UK Education Department has directed that the use of mobile phones in schools be discouraged for health reasons. We ask parents not to send one. We do not accept liability for any loss or damage to any mobile phone whether in our care or in the care of the student or for any charges incurred in its use. Any mobile phone that is brought will be kept in the Office and can be used only with the Course Manager's permission outside the school and outside class, sports and social events periods. Mobile phone battery chargers may not be connected to the electricity supply in dormitories and can only be charged by the Course Manager in the Office.





MARY HARE 2002



TRIPS

We cannot please all the students and all their parents with our choice of trip. Even when students choose the trip, not everyone can be pleased. I realise that parents and students expect to see London. For 2003 one of the trips will be a visit to London with a trip by open-top bus included (weather permitting). A second trip will be for shopping, either to a shopping area of a large city or to a designer outlet. The third trip will be to 'Sports Day'. Any other trips will be arranged at students' request for either a full day or a half-day, payable from pocket money. Students can ask us to arrange a trip to events in which they have a particular interest. Bowling, 'paintballing', the cinema and the open-air theatre have all been popular. We shall obtain group booking rates where possible, but entrances will be payable from pocket money. If a large enough group wishes to go somewhere, we shall make the arrangements and send accompanying staff.

Whether or not we allow children on excursions to be unaccompanied is subject to our discretion as well as the parents'. A student (and sometimes a parent) may have a view on supervision which is more relaxed than ours. Our view must, of course, prevail as we have to take the responsibility, as mentioned above.

THEATRE VISITS

Most students requested a visit to the theatre. They are asked to choose which show they wish to see in order of preference on a form which shows the Invoice number. The earlier the application, the lower the Invoice number. Tickets are allocated by Invoice

number. The lower the Invoice number, the greater the chance of getting one's choice of theatre visit. 2003 Invoice numbers start at 11974. A 'Theatre Visits' choice list will be sent out in March or later.

PROPERTY

We ask that items with a used re-sale value over £40 in value be listed on the 'Valuable Possessions' form. At the end of the Courses we send back every item of property left behind that was named. Un-named items are also returned if we have a good idea to whom they belong. Property not given to us for safe-keeping and lost other than when in the student's possession on a trip is not covered by the Insurance policy we include as part of the Course Fee.

HEALTH & E128

All students are entitled to free emergency treatment under the Medical Insurance policy included in the Course Fee for illnesses or accidents that happen in Britain. EU and EEA residents are entitled to free treatment under the National Health Service for illnesses or accidents that happen in Britain. Pre-existing conditions are not covered by our insurance. No one (not even an EU or EEA resident) is entitled to free treatment under the NHS for a pre-existing condition unless they have an E128 form for temporary residents. E128s are available from Social Security or Health Department offices overseas. These overseas offices decide whether or not to issue an E128. If an overseas Social Security or Health Department office states that an E128 is not needed because free treatment for a pre-existing condition is available for anyone in the EU or EEA on a short stay, that advice is wrong and the office should contact Mr Ineneji at the Department of Health on +44 20 7210 5318 for confirmation. In some countries, those who have private medical insurance are not allowed an E128, so treatment for pre-existing conditions must, therefore, be paid for and claimed from the family's insurers later. All other students in the EU and EEA must come with an E128 form. This will entitle the bearer to free treatment

under the British National Health Service for any health-related condition, pre-existing or otherwise, exactly like a British resident. An E111 form is not an alternative to an E128. An E111 is not required in the UK.

VACSTUDS VIDEO

This has been edited and sent to those requesting it. Each school has its own E-180 'VacStuds 2002 All Over Again'. For those students wishing to relive the summer and for those parents trying to find what made it 'the best summer of my life', here is an instant walk down Memory Lane. Parents of 2003 students who would like a preview can request a copy. It is absolutely not a promotional video. I had hoped 'VacStuds 2002 All Over Again' would be on DVD rather than the antiquated videocassette which is easily damaged in the post. Most families in the UK have DVD attached to their TVs or in their computers. From a question on the 2002 application form, I am informed that very few families outside the UK can play DVDs. I am asking the question again on the 2003 form in case DVD has suddenly gained in popularity. When most parents have DVD, we shall discontinue providing the video on cassette.

BEFORE AND DURING THE COURSE

Parents are welcome to contact me on any matter. In July and August I tend to be at my desk from 08.00 (English time) until 10.00 and then I travel around the schools. For practical reasons, therefore, it is best to make contact with me during the Courses via the Course Manager. Just before the Course, I send each parent 'last minute' information with my GSM phone number. This mobile phone never leaves me, so I can almost always be reached – sometimes in surprising places. If there is a problem, I can take immediate action – as long as I know about it. Mobile phone reception in Woolhampton is awful, so if there is no response, please assume I am at Elstree and try later. During the period before the Courses, letters are replied to immediately. I shall probably not be able to reply to letters received during July and August until after the Courses, however. If parents could telephone children only on the two specific Telephone Days mentioned in the 'Notes for Parents', this would be appreciated.

STAFF HELPERS

Traditionally, we have two former students on each Course as unpaid helpers, providing a link between staff and students. They tend



to be 18-21 and to have left a gap of one summer after being a student. SHs are chosen at the end of the year. Potential SHs should contact me in November. If we use the expression 'leadership potential', or similar, in the report, this is the clue that an application may be fruitful. Occasionally SHs may graduate to Assistant status and more, but this is not generally the case as we look for native English-speaking staff.

AFTER THE COURSE

Please feel you can contact me about anything connected with Britain. For example, parents ask for my advice on continuing their children's education in Britain. I am happy to help. No charge! I see this as a natural extension of my work with young people. Students ask for information, sometimes ten or twenty years later. No problem!

There are three other extensions to my work – The Jörg Weise Association, Giotto and the Vacational Studies Foundation:-

THE JÖRG WEISE ASSOCIATION

(www.vacstuds.com/jwa)

Briefly, the history of the JWA is that in 1979 one of our first students, Jörg Weise, who was with us in 1971, died at the age of 21 in a motorcycle accident. It was particularly tragic as he had shown promise as an actor and was already involved in international work. His father was on the Board of Directors of Bayer AG in Leverkusen, Germany. In the name of his son, I invited Prof. Dr. Weise to nominate a young person for a place on one of our Courses. He agreed, but went further. He asked that he be permitted to nominate and pay for a place in his son's name in perpetuity. He also agreed to the sculpting of a trophy that would be awarded annually in his son's name to a student or students making an outstanding contribution to the international aims of our Courses. The recipients of the Trophy were invited to a gathering each year and, in time, the group grew to a sizeable number. Such a collection of talented young people from many different countries needed more of a reason for being than just an annual get-together, I felt, and in 1985 I put to them the idea that they could form themselves into an Association that would work towards giving other, less privileged, young people the opportunity to cross frontiers. The Jörg Weise Association (JWA) was born. It is now a charitable Foundation, registered in Germany, for the advancement of

and has a well-organised social programme. For those who would like to know more, the Chairman is Manfred Gottschalk (Fontanestraße 21, D-51373 Leverkusen, Germany. Tels: +49 214-45702 and 56481; Fax +49 214-503606; E-mail: info@buchhandlung-gottschalk.de.) The next JWA Meeting will be in Hoeve Biestheuvel from 17-23 April 2003.

The Jörg Weise Trophy is occasionally awarded for 'an outstanding contribution to the international ideals of the Course'. It was not awarded this summer.

THE JÖRG WEISE SCHOLARSHIP

(www.vacstuds.com/jwa/scholar)

We continue to be associated with the Jörg Weise Memorial Scholarship. The Scholarship is a place on any of our Courses, return air ticket from anywhere in the world, pocket money, theatre tickets and tennis lessons. The recipient of the Scholarship will be the sort of student outlined above who will benefit from attending the Course, but who is unable to apply for a place in the normal way for financial reasons. The Scholarship Committee will take steps to verify the financial situation of candidates. We welcome nominations for the Scholarship in 2003 which should be sent in confidence, and without informing the projected recipient, to Vacational Studies. I shall forward nominations to the Scholarship Committee of the JWA.

INTERNATIONAL CONTACT – THE HISTORY OF GIOTTO

(www.vacstuds.com/giotto)

The 2003 'Giotto Site' is in its 17th year and contains over 2500 names. Listing is provided at no charge for those who wish to be included. Name, birthdate, e-mail address and brief profile only are included. It is totally financed by Vacational Studies as an adjunct to our work in helping make the world a smaller place. Giotto was started in 1986, the year of Halley's Comet. It seemed to me a pity that the strong international contacts made by our students in their teens should disappear with the passage of time. It is not that they did not wish to keep up the contacts, it is just not easy to continue correspondence after the shared experience of the Course has faded from the memory. Nevertheless, I felt that these contacts, good in one's teens, could be even more beneficial later on. I decided to contact all our past students to see how they felt. It was my biggest-ever mailshot and the response was

huge. I named this organisation Giotto after the collaborative European space-probe, Giotto, which was sent up in February 1986 to observe Halley's Comet. No one knew at that time if it would succeed or fail. In fact, it succeeded. The probe Giotto was so named because Halley's Comet features in a work by the Florentine painter, Giotto. When I decided in 1986 to collate the names of our students from 1972 to date and create this international organisation, I did not know if it would succeed or fail. From 1986 to 1997, there was an increasingly heavy 'Giotto Book', posted worldwide. In 1998, there was a 'Giotto CD', light to post, but complicated to install and use. From 1999, Giotto has existed only in cyberspace.

www.vacstuds.com/giotto is an ideal medium for it.

THE VACATIONAL STUDIES FOUNDATION

(www.vacstuds.com/foundation)

The Vacational Studies Foundation was registered as a Charity under English Law in January 2000 to assist talented young people.

THE NEW VACSTUDS.COM – AN ON-LINE MAGAZINE AND MORE

The magazine was created for my then assistant to edit. Following his departure from my employ last December, I have edited it myself. It may be that someone else would enjoy editing it. I am open to suggestion.

AND FINALLY...

My thanks to all those who have entrusted their children to my care. I am enormously proud to have been part of your children's development. I look forward to the time when my three small sons can also take their place in a wide international community.

IGM – Autumn 2002





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“An experience for life”

Vacational Studies®

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Ian Mucklejohn – who, as the Director, co-ordinates the Schools – was born in London. He is a graduate of the University of London with an Honours Degree in English Language and Literature, is an Associate of the College of Preceptors and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. He has had many years experience in teaching. He is the founder of Vacational Studies and has three young sons of his own.

The British Council inspected and accredited Vacational Studies in July 1999. The Accreditation Scheme assesses the standards of management, resources and premises, teaching and welfare and accredits organisations which meet the overall standard in each area inspected (see www.britishcouncil.org/english/courses for details). This language teaching organisation offers residential vacation courses for students between the ages of 11 and 17. Points of excellence were noted in pastoral care the leisure programme and aspects of general management. The inspection report stated that the organisation met the requirements of the Scheme.

Accredited by the

