



International policy

Last updated by senior leaders

September 2026

Last reviewed by advisory board

September 2026

Next review due

September 2027

Internationalism at St. John's

Through our rich international focus at St. John's Preparatory and Senior School, we offer our pupils a range of experiences both within and in addition to classroom teaching which:

- enhances their learning
- raises awareness of their national and international identities
- equips them with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.

Since September 2021, St. John's has been accredited by The British Council for its commitment to embedding international awareness and understanding across the school through achievement of The International School Award.

- Our languages teachers, who are almost all native speakers, provide this international focus through facilitating cultural experiences, workshops and school exchanges, both abroad and via pen-friend letter correspondence.
- St. John's Senior School has a long-established school partnership with Collège Jean-Baptiste de la Quintinye in Noisy-Le-Roi in France, with whom the 4th Form pupils can enjoy an exchange abroad and absorb the French culture first-hand by staying within a host family and attending their partner school. This exchange is led by the lead French teacher Mrs. Virginie Hopp. Other optional cultural and historical trips abroad take place in Berlin and Athens for KS4 pupils and Paris and Rome for KS3 pupils.
- St. John's Preparatory School has established two pen-friend letter exchanges with both our French and Spanish partner schools. The French partner school is École Saint Jean-Baptiste de la Salle in Vitry-le-François and the Spanish partner school is Col-legi Virgen Milagrosa in Avinguda Porto Saler.
- French and Spanish are part of the taught curriculum at the Preparatory School and French and German are available for study through to 'A' Level.
- At the Senior School, from Year 8, pupils also start to learn German and Mandarin is available at 'A' level for sixth-form students.
- Pupils typically progress quickly in languages and are given extra opportunities to practise their vocabulary during international cultural trips.
- During Prep time and lunchtime, clubs in languages are available to all G.C.S.E. pupils and some Lower School pupils. We focus not only on language aspects but also on cultural aspects.
- Our sport clubs, such as football, visit European countries and China, training in collaboration with international schools, as well as taking the time to explore the countries' culture and history.

- Our staff, who are from various countries, share their experiences and cultural knowledge, as a matter of routine.
- Our 4th Form pupil exchange programme in France with our partner school allows pupils to develop links with other pupils near Versailles and welcomes them to our school. This encourages interest and motivation through the provision of first-hand experiences of life in another country for them, as well as for our own pupils and staff.
- We also promote communication and exchange of cultural information through writing pen-friend letters and emails to other pupils abroad.
- Other activities, such as dance and theatre workshops, develop cross-curricular activities with an international theme for all pupils.
- We hold an international day at the Preparatory School and a European Day at the Senior School on an annual basis.
- We welcome pupils from China annually, as part of our international partnership.

Our international focus therefore:

- provides pupils with an informed awareness of countries, cultures and languages other than our own
- develops curiosity about other cultures including those of pupils' peers, their families and of the school community
- enables pupils and staff to experience daily life in other countries
- provides an added opportunity for the promotion of equal opportunities, racial equality, mutual respect, tolerance and citizenship
- enables the exchange of information and the meeting of people from varied backgrounds and cultures.

Impact of our international approach

The positive impacts are various, including the following.

- First-hand experiences through exchanges, cultural and historical trips abroad, workshops, activities, international / European days enhance the knowledge acquired in pupils' language lessons by making a real connection to learn and practise languages.
- In particular, the 4th Form exchange programme helps pupils to develop their language skills and their confidence to use French in daily life, which helps towards their oral examinations at G.C.S.E. In addition, it provides pupils develop a real and unique experience of attending lessons in a French school and living with a Parisian family.

- Pen-friend letter exchanges help pupils to build relationships with other children their own age in other countries by using the vocabulary learned during their language lessons on various topics, such as hobbies, holidays, traditions, festivals, music and school life.