

Shady Side Academy Residential Life Program
5-Day Boarding

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the weekly schedule?

Boarding students arrive on campus between 5:00 pm – 10:00 pm on Sundays and return home after the last school commitment on Fridays (usually by 6:00 pm).

What is the morning schedule like for a boarding student?

Like most teenagers, boarding students prize their sleep! Boarders usually wake up between 7:30 am – 8:00 am, take a quick shower in a shared bathroom on the hallway, eat breakfast in McCune Dining Hall if they wish, and then head off for their first period classes by 8:15. Students with a first period free period may take a “sleep in” and get themselves off to class as required.

What are meals like?

The boarding fee covers both room and board. Boarding students eat breakfast before classes begin at 8:15am, take lunch with day students as scheduled, and come together for dinner at 6:15pm. At Monday and Wednesday dinners, students and teachers sit together at assigned tables to socialize and catch up on the day. Dinners on Tuesdays and Thursdays are less structured, but equally communal.

After school snacks are available for purchase in the Dining Hall, and occasional dorm “feeds” (evening snacks just for boarding students), help hungry students get an extra bite.

Meals themselves are quite good! There are always lots of options, with vegetarian entrees, poultry, meat, and fish dishes, nutritious vegetables, salads, desserts and other student favorites, too.

What is the evening schedule like?

Boarders finish dinner around 7:00 pm. From there, they return to the dorms to relax, socialize, or get a start on homework. All students have required Study Hours for two hours each night, usually from about 8:00 pm – 10:00 pm. Underform students (those in grades 9 and 10) study together in a structured, supervised environment in the Benedum Student Center (BSC). Upperform students (those in grades 11 and 12) are allowed to study in their own individual rooms in their dormitories, supervised by the dorm parent on duty who patrols the halls but gives students more freedom to study in a mature fashion on their own. Students are also able to attend evening sessions in the campus Art Studio during this time. During Study Hours, teachers in all of these different venues are

on duty to provide extra help, maintain a studious environment, and monitor students' work habits. Since Shady Side students are highly motivated and dedicated to their studies, this time is quite productive. For those with less practiced study skills, Study Hours helps them internalize the habits of academic success.

After Study Hours are done, students may continue working, socialize a bit, participate in structured recreational activities such as Open Gym or Open Swim or go to sleep. By 11:00 pm, all underform (9th and 10th grade) students are required to have their lights out. Juniors' lights out are at 11:30pm, and we suggest that Seniors and Prefects turn in by 11:30pm as well. Students can request Late Lights, if they have been working steadily.

Where do teachers live?

Currently, four teachers reside in faculty apartments in Croft House, the boys' dormitory, and Morewood House, the girls' dormitory. Every night a teacher is "on duty," meaning they are an active and visible presence throughout the dorm, both for supervision, extra academic help, mentoring, and advice.

In addition to teachers who live in the dorms, the campus is home to teachers and Academy personnel who represent almost every academic department. These teachers live in homes on campus (or on the nearby Middle School campus), eat dinner with students, and provide additional supervision and academic assistance in the late afternoon and evening.

All Residential Life Program staff members are active educators, and all receive additional training to help them with their duties in addition to many years of experience working with young people in a variety of educational settings.

Will my child have a roommate?

Because the Residential Life Program's mission is to provide an academic and social experience, we believe students benefit from learning to live with a roommate. Living with a roommate is a great opportunity to learn about similarities and differences while preparing for an aspect of the college experience at the same time. To that end, most students will have a roommate. Juniors and seniors typically earn the privilege of living in single rooms.

Can I visit my child during the week?

We welcome family members to visit! A family commitment, special dinner, or doctor's appointment can always be accommodated. We ask that you schedule these visits on Tuesdays and Thursdays so that we can gather as a complete community on Monday and Wednesday Community Dinners.

What if my child gets sick?

If a student is running a fever or is otherwise contagious, we will call a family member to arrange a pickup so the student can convalesce at home. The School typically employs an on-call nurse, who is available for consultation after hours. If a student is sick during the school day, he or she should report to the nurse's office for medical attention or time to rest. Students are not allowed to remain in the dorm alone when they are sick.

Does my child need a computer?

Internet access and Shady Side Academy network access are provided through a computer lab in each dorm, and individual student rooms are internet accessible as well. Many boarding students bring computers with them for use in their own private spaces, but the dormitory computer labs allow students to do any and all required academic work that they might encounter as Shady Side students. And, due to our powerful "fire walls", students are able to study and search for information on-line without the distraction of Instant Messenger, unmonitored websites, and the like. The internet connections in student rooms are protected by the same powerful "fire walls" that prevent students from accessing inappropriate sites or information as well.

Does my child have to board for the entire year?

Shady Side Academy offers boarding for the full year, and most students in the dorms take this option. Space permitting, we also offer boarding for a single term, such as winter term, with its extra demands of morning swim practice, hockey practices, basketball, the musical and the possibility of inclement weather.

Please contact Ms. Wendy Skinner, Director of Residential Life and Dean of Student Life, at (412) 968-3087 or wskinner@shadysideacademy.org with any further questions.