

International Student Handbook



English

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Abbotsford International Program

Welcome to our International Program and the community of Abbotsford. Congratulations on your acceptance into our program! This handbook contains information on the most commonly asked questions that new international students, their parents, and their host parents may have, especially in the first few weeks of your arrival. Keep this as a resource for the future.

You can find this handbook on our website:

<https://international.abbyschools.ca/how-to-apply/documents>

International Program Staff

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Emergency Contact information

24-hour International Program Emergency number: 604-217-1917
call 911 for Fire, Ambulance, or Police.

If a student or host family calls 911 or has a personal emergency that they need to speak to someone about, also call 604-217-1917 to reach someone in the International Dept.

If a student is feeling unsafe, threatened, or is in serious doubt about a situation call the International Program emergency number. They will direct your call to the appropriate person.

If you have an emergency during our regular office hours: 8:00am – 4:00pm, call someone in our International Department.

International Assistants

At the Abbotsford International Student Program, each student will have an International Assistant (IA). International Assistants (IAs) help international students integrate into the school community. They are a valued support person for every student, and they also facilitate communication between the families, homestay parents, and the schools to have a clear understanding of expectations, events, and issues. They also assist students and/or families with the program renewal process. IAs work in each school that their students attend. The IA will meet their students at orientation and provide them with their business card, contact number, and work hours. IAs do not work on the weekend or outside of their working hours. The IAs duties include:

Intake responsibilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • centralized orientations • individualized orientations • school based orientations 	Attend meetings called by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Program staff • school principals
Documentation monitoring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student information sheets • Renewal and Extension • Bi-monthly Student Homestay Survey (District Homestay only) • Homestay: application, move request and waiver form • Online student exit survey • Online local parent survey 	Home-country responsibilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at supervisor's request, phone parents regarding significant issues • prepare school reports for distribution
Participate in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • training sessions for IAs • some parent-teacher interviews • field trips, when appropriate and with supervisor's permission 	Maintain regular contact with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • students and schools • homestay parents if necessary • contact with parents in Abbotsford and overseas.
Report and maintain records of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intake English assessment scores • student/teacher contact • Incident Reports to supervisor • IA student notes 	Monitor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student attendance • student illness • student progress (academic, social, home)

Communicating Your Concerns

In almost all cases, problems are most easily dealt with at the early stages. If parents have a concern, it should be communicated right away to the person most directly involved with the problem. International students can find the process of integration into the classroom stressful. It varies, but if a child/teen exhibits any signs of withdrawal, anxiety, fatigue, resistance to change, and/or is unresponsive, he or she may be experiencing culture stress. To ensure a successful educational experience for every child, parents/host parents should talk with a teacher or homestay coordinator if they feel their child/student is undergoing any of these behaviours. The teacher may adapt the instruction to help the child feel less stressed. Parents can also talk to a teacher and request the International Assistant to interpret at a meeting, if needed.

Cultural Adjustment

Do you think each person who comes to Canada to study feels stress? If you said yes, you are right! Each person will feel some stress because of the differences between their home country culture and Canada. Some people feel very stressed! Some people feel very little stress! Everyone is different. These are some signs of culture stress: Anxiety, confusion, withdrawal from people activities, silence/unresponsiveness, fatigue, distractibility, resistance to change, feeling disoriented and feeling depressed are all real signs of culture stress!

Some people may become physically ill after a month or two – especially if they are from a different climate. Some people get headaches, stomachaches, or colds. Recognize that these symptoms are real and are a sign that the students need to take care of themselves and talk with somebody who understands. Anyone in the International Program would be available and willing to help any student through the transition and assist in finding a cultural contact if needed and specific kinds of support.

What do you think is the biggest difference between a student's culture and Canadian culture? If you answered food, you are among the majority. Food, weather, language, and different ways of behaving are the top 4 things that students find very different from their own culture.

What qualities or traits helps a student to adjust?

- A sense of humor: Students need to be able to laugh at some of the problems.
- A sense of adventure: students should be willing to try different things even if they discover they really don't like it. After trying something a student can decide not to do it or take part again.

Students should have an open mind to other cultures. Canada is a multicultural country and there are international students and families from around the world. Students should try to establish relationships with people both in their own culture and others!

Participate, participate, and participate! Students should get out and join a club, go swimming. Make Canadian friends.

Students should find out how to solve problems that come up. They should find out who they should talk to about problems. It may be a teacher, a counsellor, or a host mother or father. Expect change. Travelling and studying in another country brings about personal change, so students should expect themselves to change. This is the cycle of change that a student may experience while they are here.



How does a student know they are experiencing culture stress?

Usually, before a student leaves their home country to come to Canada, they probably feel a mixture of excitement and fear! They do not know what they will see and what their experience will be like when they arrive. When they arrive, they may still feel excited and/or afraid – but many people feel very excited and have a high level of interest because life seems exciting and full of new experiences.

After a while, a student may begin to feel worried – many new students are worried about their English abilities and are mostly concerned about not understanding what people are saying in English. They may be concerned that they cannot keep up a conversation in English. They may often feel sick to their stomach or have headaches.

One day, they may feel ‘up’ – then the next day, feel ‘down’. Reactions to a new culture are different from person to person – but everyone will experience cultural stress. Remember, some stress is good for you! It helps a person to learn about the new culture, your new language, and about yourself.

Culture stress can include extreme feelings of being alone. Some people may experience depression (negative feelings about themselves). Many people have negative feelings about their new culture, and may have difficulty if they:

- stay in their room more often than being with family,
- feel like they are alone in the world,
- cry and are not sure why they are crying,
- have a constant headache,
- refuse to change anything about themselves and are angry, especially at their new culture, Then, they are probably experiencing culture stress.

What should a student do if they think they have culture stress?

They should talk to their family and with other international students/parents that have been here for a while; they truly understand about culture stress. A student can also talk to their International Assistant at school, or their school counsellor. They are here to help. Here are some ideas:

- A student should ask themselves what they know about Canadians. Do they know about Canada and Canadians from television and movies? Perhaps they expected something else before they came here.
- Can they laugh at themselves when they make a mistake? They shouldn't get angry with themselves or other people. A sense of humor will help alleviate stress.
- Can a student talk about their feelings to someone? Again, they should talk to their host family, a school counsellor, one of our international program staff, or a friend when they feel lonely, homesick, or discouraged.
- Is a student being critical about Canadians because they do things differently than they do at home? They should try and be open-minded. They should try to understand why things are done differently in Canada than in their home country.
- Can the student change and adapt to the new culture? This does not mean they should completely give up their own culture – but they should listen when people talk about the new culture. Students should learn as much as they can about their new culture.
- Students will not like everything they do or see in Canada. It is natural to feel that your own culture, customs and beliefs are the best.
- Accept that different does not mean better or worse, and that judging Canadian culture as being of lesser value than your own, will create a block to your learning.
- Be respectful. Students should think about the relationship with their host family, teachers, and friends.

By trying to follow these suggestions, you can enjoy your learning experience in Canada!!

International Program Rules and Policies

International Program Refund Policy

In the event that a student does not come to Canada or decides not to attend or to leave Abbotsford School District's International Program, the following terms will apply:

- a. The application fee is non-refundable in any circumstances.
- b. All refunds are subject to a refund processing fee.
- c. For students in their first year of participation in the International Programs, the following will apply:
 - i. the full program fee, less the application fee and the refund processing fee, will be refunded upon receipt of satisfactory evidence that the Study Permit was not approved by Immigration, Refugees, Citizenship Canada (IRCC). Request for refund must include a letter of rejection from IRCC;
 - ii. two-thirds (2/3) of the program fee, less the application fee and the refund processing fee, will be refunded if the student withdraws prior to commencement of the program (the 'program' is defined as the dates specified on the official Letter of Acceptance and the 'program' can be within the same school year or over two consecutive school years);
 - iii. one half (1/2) of the program fee, less the application fee and the refund processing fee, will be refunded if the student withdraws within the first calendar month of commencing the program (the 'program' is defined as the dates specified on the official Letter of Acceptance and the 'program' can be within the same school year or over two consecutive school years); and
 - iv. no refund will be granted, for any reason, if the student withdraws after the first calendar month of commencing the program.
- d. If a student indicates they will be returning to Abbotsford School District's International Program for a second or subsequent semester or year, the following will apply:
 - i. two-thirds (2/3) of the program fee of renewal/extension, less the extension fee (if applicable) and the refund processing fee, will be refunded if the student withdraws prior to commencement of the second or subsequent semester or year of studies;
 - ii. one half (1/2) of the program fee of renewal/extension, less the extension fee (if applicable) and the refund processing fee, will be refunded if the student withdraws within the first calendar month of commencing the second or subsequent semester or year of studies;
 - iii. no refund will be granted, for any reason, if the student withdraws after the first calendar month of commencing the second or subsequent semester or year of studies.
- e. No refund will be provided if a student is dismissed from the program because of a violation of this Agreement.
- f. No refund will be provided if the Abbotsford School District is unable to provide education to any causes beyond its control.
- g. In certain circumstances an international fee-paying student may become eligible to become a non-fee paying student upon their parent or guardian becoming ordinarily resident in British Columbia. A student may only change their status from fee-paying to non-fee paying before September 30 of the applicable school year. No refund of program fee will be provided to any student whose status changes after September 30th of the applicable school year.

Homestay Policy

All students **under the age of 12:**

- A parent must accompany the child, reside full-time in Abbotsford, and provide care and custodianship for their child. If the parent(s) must leave Abbotsford (i.e. return to home country) while the child is enrolled in the International Program, the child must travel with them.
- If requested, the District will permit students under the age of 12 to reside with a direct relative. Direct relative is defined as the parent(s) are related to an individual, by bloodline or by marriage. If the child is to be cared for by a relative as defined above, then the parent(s) and the relative must provide the District with a letter of verification stating that the relationship is in compliance with this policy.

All students **12 years of age and older:**

- The student is not permitted to live independently while enrolled in the program.
- If a student is in Abbotsford without a family member, they must reside with a host family in the Abbotsford School District Homestay Program or in a private homestay arranged and approved by the student's parents.
- If the student is living with a parent, the parent must not leave Abbotsford while their child is enrolled in the program. If the parent must leave Abbotsford, they are required to make the necessary homestay arrangements to cover the time of their absence and notify the international office with information about who is caring for their child(ren).

Note: Failure to follow this policy may result in the student's removal from the International Program.

Drugs

In Canada possession of drugs is illegal, except for Cannabis products which can be consumed for those 19 or older. Students who may turn/be 19 while in the program, must also refrain from any alcohol, cannabis, or any drug use, as per the student participation agreement. The penalties may be severe if a student is convicted of an offence. The penalties could be jail and deportation. Involvement with illegal drugs is grounds for immediate dismissal by the Abbotsford School District.

Travelling

Overnight travel outside the city of Abbotsford must be authorized by the host family and the student's natural parent(s). The International Program is the final authority on any overnight travel outside the city of Abbotsford.

Smoking/Vaping

Smoking and Vaping rules and expectations in the community, at school, and in homestay, must be followed. In Canada, the legal age to buy cigarettes is 19. A store clerk may ask a student for proper identification if purchasing cigarettes or vaping products.

School District rules and legislation from the Provincial Government, prohibit smoking/vaping and possession of tobacco products on school property. If a student is in possession or using a vape or any tobacco products at school, it will be treated as contraband, confiscated, and not returned. Students who smoke/vape on or within school property, shall be considered in breach of the District Student Code of Conduct.

Alcohol/Cannabis (Marijuana)

The Abbotsford International Program has a zero-tolerance policy for drugs and alcohol. This means that any student who is involved in any type of activities related to drugs and/or alcohol may be dismissed from the International Program.

- The legal age to buy and/or consume alcohol or cannabis products is 19 years and over. Students who may turn/be 19 while in the program, must also refrain from any alcohol, cannabis or any drug use as per the student participation agreement.
- If a student is asked to get into a vehicle driven by someone who is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, they should SAY NO! This is very dangerous!
- If a student is in any situation with minors (under age 19) that are in possession or are consuming alcohol or drugs, they may also be charged by the police.
- If someone is 19 years or over and gives alcohol or drugs to someone under the age of 19, they are committing a criminal offence.
- Selling drugs or alcohol by an individual (not a licensed business) is illegal.

Learning to Drive

Abbotsford School District international students must not drive a motor vehicle even if they hold a valid British Columbia Driver's License, unless they are residing with one of their parents.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Seat belts are mandatory in British Columbia. All passengers in a vehicle must wear a seatbelt. A driver or passenger without a seatbelt can be fined up to \$200 and those not wearing a seat belt during a motor vehicle accident, may not receive full insurance coverage for injuries.

School Life

Student Code of Conduct

All students in the Abbotsford School District are expected to behave with respect for others. This is the District Code of Conduct which means all students International or Canadian, are expected to:

be honest and forthright	attend school every day
treat others and their belongings with respect and courtesy	be on time
refrain from lying, cheating, stealing	work to the best of your ability
be aware of and obey all school and program rules	respect school property and equipment

The School District works actively to keep schools free of:

inappropriate computer usage	prejudice/discrimination /racism	bullying-physical/verbal harassment
collusion/cheating	violence	intimidation
weapons of any kind	all illegal substances	plagiarism

Any student, whose behaviour affects a school environment in a negative way, is in breach of the District Code of Conduct. Students who behave inappropriately will receive a reprimand and disciplinary action which will be delivered in a timely and fair manner. This may include suspension from school. In very serious cases, an international student may be asked to withdraw from the Abbotsford School District International Program. Each school can provide students with their specific rules.

Harassment

The Abbotsford School District is committed to fostering an environment where all individuals are treated with respect and are free from harassment. Harassment or bullying is against the District Code of Conduct and will be dealt with severely and quickly.

Harassment or bullying includes inappropriate remarks, jokes, taunting, comments, gestures, and sexually suggestive comments or actions that create an uncomfortable or hostile environment. A bully is someone who:

- uses power to hurt others or harm their possessions,
- purposely scares or intimidates others,
- often hurts the same person repeatedly,
- is sometimes supported by other people who just watch.

Complaint Procedures

If a student is being bullied or harassed, the student and/or a responsible adult should take action to try and stop the harassment or prevent it from happening again. Everyone deserves to feel safe at school.

It is important for a student to tell their parents or homestay family about any incidents of bullying or harassment that may occur at school, school functions, or on their way to and from school. If the bully or harasser is an adult within a school, it is important to report this immediately to a parent/host parent, the IA, or a trusted adult outside of school. The student and the adult should contact the Principal.

The IA assigned to the student and the school staff are there to help students. Students should talk with an IA at their school at any time. It is important to report all incidents of bullying or harassment; however, false allegations are a serious matter and can damage a person's reputation. Information reported should be truthful and accurate.

Abbotsford Schools should provide:

- a friendly school climate,
- an environment where students are academically challenged,
- enthusiastic staff that help students reach their full potential,
- small groupings that allow learners to develop positive relationships with peers, while at the same time maximizing learning experiences,
- schools where all students can explore, experiment, and discover through a variety of learning styles,
- a setting where students are guided to becoming responsible for their own behaviour,
- opportunities for building partnerships between families and the community,
- an array of social settings appropriate for learners,
- a school culture that fosters the celebration of diversity while promoting tolerance and social responsibility.

Our schools advocate for parents as partners in their child's learning. Home support for each child's development in emotional, physical, and intellectual growth is expected. The school will do its best to provide a safe, caring, and stimulating environment where a child may grow in all the above areas.

Parent Advisory Council

Every school has a Parent Advisory Council whose goal is to develop an understanding of the educational process and policies in order to act as a resource center for others. By attending monthly meetings, parents can get a better idea of what is happening at schools. You can find out more about PAC at your school.

Parent Volunteers

Parents are a vital part of the educational process. Schools that have high levels of student success also show high levels of parental involvement. Our schools welcome and encourage parents to assist in school related activities. All parent volunteers are required to complete a criminal record check which is processed at the School Board Office. Some volunteer opportunities are:

- demonstrations of cultural activities, e.g. art, cooking, crafts, etc.,
- service in the library,
- coaching sports,
- classroom help,
- taking part in the PAC sponsored activities,
- helping at elementary schools on 'Hot Lunch' days and other school activities
- volunteer drivers

Attendance

Parents and homestay parents are asked to notify the school, before classes begin, if their child/student is going to be absent for the day. The Abbotsford School District has an automated student attendance management system called SafeArrival. Parents and homestay parents can report an absence by using the SchoolMessenger App or the SafeArrival Website. Each school will provide information on how to use the system.

Emergency Closure of Schools

During emergency situations Schools will be closed to ensure the greatest possible level of safety for students and staff. The Superintendent is responsible for all decisions relating to school closure.

When inclement weather requires school closures prior to the start of the school day, the District will advise as early as possible the details of the closure via the following social media, and radio outlets:

- www.abbyschools.ca
- www.abbynews.com
- <https://www.facebook.com/AbbotsfordSD>
- <https://twitter.com/abbotsfordsd>

Emergency Procedures

All schools follow a comprehensive emergency plan. Periodic fire, intruder, and earthquake emergency drills are held at schools. Students practice specific safe responses to the emergency being rehearsed. In the event of a real emergency, the school staff will notify parents. Do not call the school in a public emergency, as the phone lines become overcrowded and cannot make any outgoing emergency calls. Listen to 107 FM STAR RADIO for local advisories.


Reporting on Student Progress

During the school year, the district requires that student progress be reported a minimum of five times during a full academic year describing students' school progress. The reporting must include at least one formal summative written report at the end of the school year or semester.

Secondary students' (grade 9 -12) formal report cards will be produced at the end of each semester in January and June. They receive letter grades and comments in their reports.

Elementary and Middle School students have a 3-term system; therefore, these students receive official report cards in November, March and June.

Students in Kindergarten to grade 8 receive comments but no letter grades. The comments inform the parents of their child's standing in relation to other children of the same age. In addition, instead of letter grades, a Proficiency Scale is used that uses language which will appear as "Emerging," "Developing," "Proficient," "Extending." This scale uses language that focuses on growth and measures a student's depth of understanding in their learning.

Proficiency Scale				
	Emerging	Developing	Proficient	Extending
	The student demonstrates an initial understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.	The student demonstrates a partial understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.	The student demonstrates a complete understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.	The student demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.

There are Informal school reports that may include telephone calls, student-led conferences, parent-teacher conferences, journal use, e-mail, and Checkmyprogress. Checkmyprogress is an online marks program that is more widely used in secondary schools. The program allows access from any location with internet connection. Teachers, students and parents may access the marks that the teacher has entered at any time.

Teachers are available to discuss student progress during the year and can be contacted by note, phone, or with the assistance of the IA to arrange an appointment.

Ultimately, Schools and teachers determine how they will informally communicate with parents.

Additional Student Fees

International students in full year or half year programs **DO NOT** pay for:

- School Fee
- Workbook
- Curricular, mandatory field trips and any optional field trips that cost \$30 and under.

International students **DO** pay for:

- Additional project material fees in courses such as woodwork, art, etc.
- Athletic fees (to participate on school teams as per school policies, including uniform rentals) and Band fees
- Extra-curricular and optional field trips that cost more than \$30
- Parking fees (if applicable)
- Yearbooks

Textbooks

Classroom teachers loan textbooks to students. Some books can be kept for the duration of the course and some books are loaned for a short time. The student is responsible for returning the book to the teacher who loaned it to them. If a textbook is not returned, or is lost or damaged, the student must pay for the textbook.

English Language Learner (ELL) Service

Elementary and Middle School ELL

ELL services are delivered in numerous ways, including, but not limited to:

- separate ELL instruction, where students are taken out of their regular classroom,
- support services within a mainstream classroom, where an additional teacher comes into the regular classroom,
- ELL specialist support to the classroom teacher, where additional planning and materials may be provided for the classroom teacher.

Integration is the key that allows students to be included in educational settings with their peers, and to be provided with the necessary tools to be successful.

The language learning process is a long one and some students may find school life challenging and exhibit some, or all, of the following:

- enthusiasm that can turn into frustration and anger,
- often feeling unwell or not wanting to attend school,

- refusing to speak any English at all,
- rejecting their own culture and language,
- changes in behaviour at home and at school.

Secondary School ELL

Secondary ELL instruction is a block course and like any other course, it is offered during the instructional day.

- All students are assessed at orientation for their level of English language abilities. Only students with a test score of advanced proficiency will be exempt from taking ELL.
- Students identified as needing an ELL support, will be enrolled in ELL.
- Students should discuss their timetable with their counsellor so that it matches the student's English ability, academic background, and their interests. The International Assistant will assist in this process.
- The amount of time spent in ELL courses will differ from person to person. ELL classes are vital to a student's success in other courses. International students gain valuable English skills in ELL. The number of regular academic classes a student takes will increase as the student's English improves.

Secondary School

Academic Life

International students are expected to take the same courses as Canadian students. Each student must maintain a grade average of C. If not, the student must improve their academic performance. If there is difficulty with a course, they should first talk to the teacher. Private tutoring is available at the student's expense. The Principal has the right to make the final decision about a student's grade.

Course Planning

Course planning is very important, and it can be difficult. The student must find out what courses are needed to meet graduation requirements, and those which meet specific admission requirements for college/university. Students should be realistic, and they should choose what they are good at doing and what they are interested in studying. An appointment with a school counsellor will occur during the in-school orientation period to discuss and support course planning.

School Counsellor

Students will be assigned a counsellor when they arrive at school for their in-school orientation session. The counsellor will help and guide students through the academic program. They also can/will answer questions or talk to students about personal issues. Students should get to know their counsellor and they should keep the counsellor informed of their progress at school.

If a student is having academic and/or English difficulties DON'T WAIT! The student should talk to their counselor and/or their International Assistant as soon as they realize they are having some problems. The longer a student waits to ask for help, the more difficult it is to correct the problem.

Peer Tutor

A Peer Tutor is a student who will help other students in any subject in which they are having difficulties. A student applies for a Peer Tutor through their Counsellor. If a student needs a private tutor, their International Assistant can help them locate one.

Extra-curricular Activities

Students are encouraged to participate in sports, clubs, and activities at their school. It is an important part of their cultural and educational experience. The more involved a student is in school life, the easier the adjustment to Canadian culture will be. Students will make new Canadian friends!

Grades

Grades for each course are based on some or all of the following:

quizzes	classroom participation	work done in class	final examination
projects	homework	mid-term exam	assignments

The following table shows the letter grade, the percentage it represents and description/interpretation of the letter grade.

Letter Grade	Percentage	Interpretation
A	86 - 100%	Excellent
B	73 - 85%	Very Good
C+	67 - 72%	Good
C	60 - 66%	Satisfactory
C-	50 - 59%	Passing
IP	0	In Progress
Fail	0 – 49%	Fail

- The Provincial Letter Grade Order is a standard set by the Ministry of Education. It is important, especially if a student plans to continue to college/university.
- If a student receives a C- on a final exam, the report card will say, 'Pass'.
- Each secondary school varies in its implementation of honor roll status for students.

ELL level 1-3 may not receive letter grades in some academic courses such as Language Arts, Science, or Social Studies.

Application to Renew / Extend

February

Every year, students must reapply to attend school. In February, the Renewal Survey link is sent to parents of international students to collect information for the following September semester and/or school year. The parents respond if their child(ren) will renew or not for the next school year.

If a student wants to transfer to a different school for the following school year, the request must be from the parent and made through the School Transfer Request form. The School Transfer Request form details the reason for the transfer, and it must be sent to the assigned IA by e-mail. The request is reviewed by the International Program's Review Committee, which makes the final decision. Please understand that the committee bases its decision on the student's needs, not the parent's. Closing date for transfer requests is stated in the Renewal Survey link. No transfer requests are accepted beyond that date.

March

The invoice is sent by e-mail to the parents and/or partners who have decided to renew. If the International office has not received payment by the due date, school placement is not guaranteed. We do not accept partial payments (installments).

International Students may apply for either a full academic year or only a half academic year. If a student applies for only a half year and extend their studies later, an additional processing fee will be charged.

September

Students who start school in September and have paid up to the end of the semester are surveyed of their plans to extend or not for the second semester. They are surveyed of their extension plans with an emailed survey link which is sent to parents much like the process of Renewal in February.

Passport Renewal

Students must be aware of their passport expiry date. To renew a passport, a student needs to contact the Consulate of their home country. Phone numbers for Consulates can be found online.

Here are a few:

Consulates

Brazil	1111 Melville Street – Suite 1050, Vancouver, BC V6E 3V6 Phone: 604-696-5311, http://vancouver.itamaraty.gov.br/
China	3380 Granville Street, Vancouver, BC Phone: (604) 734-7492 http://vancouver.china-consulate.org/eng/
Colombia	1340-1090 West Georgia Street, Vancouver, BC V6E 3V7 Phone: 604-558-1775, https://vancouver.consulado.gov.co/
Germany	704-999 Canada Place (World Trade Centre), Vancouver, BC V6C 3E1 Phone: 604-684-8377, https://www.consulate-info.com/consulate/1115/Germany-in-Vancouver
Japan	900-1177 West Hastings Street, Vancouver, BC V6E 2K9 Phone: (604) 684-5868, https://www.vancouver.ca.emb-japan.go.jp/
Korea	1600-1090 West Georgia Street, Vancouver, BC V6E 3V7 Phone: (604) 681-9581, https://www.consulate-info.com/consulate/18995/South-Korea-in-Vancouver
Mexico	411-1177 West Hastings Street, Vancouver, BC V6E 2K3 Phone: 604-684-1859, https://www.consulate-info.com/consulate/14398/Mexico-in-Vancouver
Spain	2185 Capilano Road, North Vancouver, BC V7P 3C1 Phone: 604-770-0087 https://www.consulate-info.com/consulate/24067/Spain-in-Vancouver
Taiwan	Taipei Economic & Cultural office 2200-650 West Georgia Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 4N7 Phone: (604)-689-4111 https://www.consulate-info.com/consulate/26388/Taiwan-in-Vancouver
Thailand	1040 Burrard Street, Vancouver, BC V6Z 2R9 Phone: (604) 687-1143, http://www.thaiconsulatevancouver.ca/

Medical Insurance Coverage:



ALL International Students in British Columbia must have Medical Insurance.

The student's medical insurance is maintained through the International Program.

Phase One:

All new students will be on **guard.me** private medical insurance for the first three months in Canada. If a student is only enrolled for one semester, they will remain on the private insurance until they leave the program at the end of that semester.

If a student is sick or has an accident while covered by **guard.me**, there is a claim procedure. Each student will be provided a brochure explaining complete coverage and claim procedure when they receive their **guard.me** insurance. **guard.me** will reimburse the student or host parent by sending a cheque in the mail or by sending an electronic debit card.

The following clinic will accept **guard.me** coverage and bill them directly.

Abbotsford Village Medical Clinic

#302-2050 Sumas Way, Abbotsford

Phone: 604-504-7145

Hours: Mon-Fri 9am – closing times vary depending on doctor availability.

Saturday, Sunday and most holidays 9am - closing times vary depending on doctor availability.

****Closing times may also vary and be dependent on daily maximum patient limits.**

The clinic recommends coming early in the day.

At the time of treatment at other clinics, the student or the host parent may have to pay for the medical service. If applicable, keep the receipt that is provided at the time of the medical service. File a completed claim form online or mail the original receipts (keeping a photocopy for the student) **within 30 days** to:

Claims inquiries: claims@guard.me

If a student requires medical attention at the hospital while on guard.me insurance, please provide the letter located at the end of this handbook to the hospital staff. If there are any issues about payment, please contact the International Dept. immediately for instructions about payment. Translation services are available through guard.me during their coverage, for critical care and emergency medical situations.

Phase Two:

Most students will be on the Medical Services Plan of British Columbia (MSP) after 3 months of being in Canada. (Reminder: students who are enrolled for one semester only and leaving at the end of that semester will not switch over to MSP)

If a student is sick or has an accident, they need to present their BC Services Card at the time of treatment. The health care service (e.g., the doctor's office or hospital) needs to see the number on the card.

The student will receive their **BC Services Card** from their International Assistant and it can only be used by the student – the person to whom it is issued. The student should always carry their BC Services Card in their wallet or purse and keep a photo of the card on their phone as well. This medical plan pays the health care service directly.

For MSP benefit coverage, please visit their website at:
www.health.gov.bc.ca/msp

*** Students travelling anywhere in Canada are fully covered under MSP. Travelling in the U.S. is covered with restrictions, so students must have added travel insurance for more coverage.

Banking

Chequing / Savings Accounts

This is a safe and convenient way for a student to pay homestay, tuition fees, and other bills. Most students now have their homestay payment made through the International Office, and most have a bank/credit card that was arranged by their parents prior to their arrival. A student will need their passport to open a bank account.

Interac

Many people use the Interac service. Students may use this card at any store when making a purchase and the money is directly debited from their account.

Ask if the Financial Institution can receive money sent from your home country. Some credit unions cannot do this.

Telephone Numbers: Schools

FOR LIFE THREATENING EMERGENCIES, CALL 911 FOR FIRE, POLICE, or AMBULANCE.

****Afterwards, call the International Department Emergency Contact telephone line and report the incident.**

Elementary Schools

Aberdeen Elementary (K-5)	604-856-5137
Abbotsford School of Integrated Arts-North Poplar campus	604-859-3101
Alexander Elementary (K-5)	604-859-3167
Auguston Traditional Elementary (K-5)	604-557-0422
Barrowtown Elementary (K-5)	604-854-5996
Blue Jay Elementary (K-5)	604-852-0802
Bradner Elementary (K-5)	604-856-3304
Centennial Park Elementary (K-5)	604-853-9148
Clearbrook Elementary (K-5)	604-859-5348
Dave Kandal Elementary (K-5)	604-856-7342
Dormick Park Elementary (K-5)	604-859-3712
Dr. Roberta L. Bondar Elementary (K-5)	604-864-8572
Dr. Thomas A. Swift Elementary (K-5)	604-853-7730
Godson Elementary (K-5)	604-853-8374
Harry Sayers Elementary (K-5)	604-852-9665
Jackson Elementary (K-5)	604-859-5826
John Maclure Elementary (K-5)	604-853-6450
King Traditional Elementary (K-5)	604-857-0903
Margaret Stenersen Elementary (K-5)	604-859-3151
Matsqui Elementary (K-5)	604-826-8181
McMillan Elementary (K-5)	604-859-0126
Mountain Elementary (K-5)	604-852-7299
Mt. Lehman Elementary (K-5)	604-856-5083
Prince Charles Elementary (K-5)	604-852-9323
Ross Elementary (K-5)	604-856-6079
Sandy Hill Elementary (K-5)	604-850-7131
South Poplar Elementary (K-5)	604-853-1845
Ten-Broeck Elementary (K-5)	604-850-6657
Terry Fox Elementary (K-5)	604-859-8403
Upper Sumas Elementary (K-5)	604-852-3900

Middle Schools (6-8)

Abbotsford Middle	604-859-7125
Abbotsford Traditional Middle	604-850-3511
Chief Dan George Middle	604-852-9616
Clayburn Middle	604-504-7007

Colleen & Gordie Howe Middle	604-859-8700
Eugene Reimer Middle	604-504-5343
William A. Fraser	604-859-6794

Middle / Secondary School (6-12)

Abbotsford School of Integrated Arts - Sumas Mountain campus 604-850-5207

Secondary Schools (9-12)

Abbotsford Senior Secondary	604-853-3367
Abbotsford Traditional Secondary	604-850-7029
Rick Hansen Secondary	604-864-0011
Robert Bateman Secondary	604-864-0220
W.J. Mouat Secondary	604-853-7191
Yale Secondary	604-853-0778

Community Resources

Recreational Facilities

Abbotsford Recreation Centre -34690 Yale Rd.	604-853-4221
Matsqui Recreation Centre – 3106 Clearbrook Rd.	604-855-0500
Centennial Pool (Emerson Street)	604-855-0500

*Swimming, skating – Call to find out about schedules including inexpensive times for swimming and skating.

Libraries

There is a lot more to libraries than books! Community libraries have free internet access, E-books and audiobooks that can be downloaded to your personal device(s), videos, magazines and access to over one million books! Check out the website at <http://www.fvrl.bc.ca> for great homework sites, current news and entertainment sites.

Clearbrook Library – 32320 George Ferguson Way	604-859-7814
Abbotsford Community Library- 33355 Bevan Ave	604-853-1753

Note: The library offers on-line FREE tutoring for cardholders.

Transportation

Central Fraser Valley Transit (local bus system) (Get your bus schedule and book of tickets at the Library, City Hall, Shopper's Drug Mart, McMillan Pool, Pharmasave, or Abbotsford or Matsqui Pool).	604-854-3232
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Airport Link Shuttle	604-852-2399
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Arts / Drama

Arts Council, enjoy volunteering to teach arts & crafts	604-852-9358
Creative Edge School of Arts (drama/art/music lessons)	604-855-3343
The Reach – Gallery Museum – Abbotsford	604-864-8087

Personal Services

Planned Parenthood / Family Planning Clinic	604-855-7111
Health Unit – 2391 Crescent Way	
(Nurses and a doctor available to answer your questions, confidentially)	
Kids Help Phone Line	1-800-668-6868
Counselling and Mental Health Support	

Letter to take to ER



Dear Hospital Registration Staff:

This student is being brought to the hospital by a caregiver.

The student is covered by **guard.me** private medical insurance as indicated on their insurance card. The District International Program handles all payments for any hospital service. Please invoice our office directly and we will arrange the payment.

Mailing Address:

International Program, Abbotsford School District
2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, BC V2T 4M7

To facilitate prompt payment, the private medical insurance company requires the **“Emergency/Ambulatory Care Clinical Record”**, typically this record is pink. When the hospital visit is over, please give the record to the student.

If you require further clarification, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth

Elizabeth Cho-Frede
Manager of International Program
Abbotsford School District-International Program.
International Office: 604.851.4585
Cell Phone: 604.613.3813