

Woodstock School

Student Recruitment and Admissions

Questions frequently asked by expatriate families

Decisions, decisions. . .

Decisions about children's education are amongst the most difficult for parents who are moving to work outside their home countries. Are there high-quality schools available? Are the programmes and qualifications compatible with those of the home country? Will there be a great culture clash? Will my child find it difficult to adjust to different teaching styles and expectations? Will the climate be a problem? Will my child be able to gain a real experience of the host country, or will he/she be in a completely Western environment?

As a boarding school with a 150-year tradition of caring for and educating the students of expatriate families working in the subcontinent, we are well aware of the concerns of parents placing their children in residential education for the first time. We have collected here our responses to the kinds of questions we are often asked. If you have other questions, please email our Admissions Office at admissions@woodstock.ac.in. We will be glad to respond individually or to put you in touch with someone in your home country who knows Woodstock well as a parent or former teacher.

Why should I put my child into boarding?

Residential education is a special kind of experience that is very influential in shaping young people and preparing them to succeed. The Association of Boarding Schools has gathered some interesting recent research about the positive impact of boarding schools.

“Contemporary boarding schools serve a diverse body of motivated and well-rounded students who study and live in supportive, inclusive academic communities where they learn about independence and responsibility—traditional values that help them achieve success at higher rates than private day and public school students—in the classroom and beyond.”

(<http://www.schools.com/theTruth/truth2.html> . Or view the report as an animation at <http://www.schools.com/theTruth/truth.cfm>).

Many of the key points in the report are corroborated by Woodstock's experience:

- Woodstock provides an academically challenging environment, with a 24/7 focus on enabling students to grow intellectually, physically, emotionally, and spiritually.
- The time devoted to homework and personal study is substantial; because of the time savings in travel to and from school and the lack of distractions, private study becomes a natural part of a very full life.
- Leadership development—much vaunted in education today—is an everyday occurrence at Woodstock, with numerous opportunities for taking responsibility.
- The independence and inter-dependence fostered in a boarding school are ideal preparation for college life. Students live alongside peers from many countries
- and cultures and learn respect and mutual understanding in an environment no day school can offer.

Woodstock has prepared a brochure about the boarding experience, which you can download by copying and pasting the following link into your browser::

<http://www.woodstock.ac.in/info/downloads/content/SchoolDocs/BoardingAtWoodstock.pdf>.

Our main observations are the following:

- A boarding school provides a sense of community, where shared values and clear policies create stability for children, as well as consistency in academics.
- Residence staff members—professional teachers or counsellors whose status in the community is commensurate with teaching staff—coordinate students' extracurricular and weekend activities so that they complement and enhance the academic program.
- Woodstock's commitment to values such as service, peer leadership, and experiential learning through hiking and outdoor education—as well as its roots in the international community, India, and the particular cultures of the Himalayan region—give students a basis for developing a world view that is intellectually sophisticated and service oriented.
- Woodstock is careful to cultivate cultural, economic, and demographic diversity. The school culture emphasizes mutual respect, egalitarianism, and a moderate lifestyle, with sensitivity to people who have limited resources.
- Woodstock offers a healthy environment; students soon become fit, walking from their dormitories to classes and back, some 500-600 feet per day. The school's professional chefs prepare wholesome, well-balanced meals and snacks, and access to junk foods is limited. Students are encouraged to make wise, healthy lifestyle choices in all aspects of their lives.

How easily will I be able to contact my child?

Woodstock School was described earlier this year (May 2006) in one of the foremost Indian computer magazines as “the techiest school in India.” This means that, apart from the academic and administrative use of technology, we have excellent worldwide communications. Every student from grade 3 onwards has a unique email address; there are over 150 computers exclusively available for our 470 students, including in every one of the student residences, and we have a reliable, multi-line telephone system. We are currently installing a campus-wide wireless computer network, so emailing will become even easier. Woodstock's campus is also covered by India's major mobile phone networks, and there are inexpensive options for cell phone use.

For keeping in touch with your child's social activities, Woodstock has a website where weekly news is posted, and we are developing photo galleries, with private access for parents, that will cover the day-to-day life of the school. We are also installing NetClassroom, a web-based facility through which you can monitor your child's academic progress.

How far is Woodstock from Delhi? Are there good travel options?

Woodstock is approximately 280 kilometres northeast of Delhi, about 6 to 8 hours by car. There are daily flights from Delhi to Jolly Grant airport, Dehradun, which is a 2-hour drive from Woodstock School. There are daily express trains from Delhi to Dehradun (approximately six hours), and the Dehradun train station is about one hour's drive from the school. There is also an overnight train. The school provides (for an extra fee) escorted travel to and from Delhi at the beginning and end of each semester and at quarter breaks. Students travelling overseas or within India by air are accommodated in Delhi and escorted to and from the airport.

Will my child really be well prepared for college back in our home country?

The Woodstock High School programme is based on the University of Cambridge's (UK) IGCSE syllabuses and examinations in Grades 9-10 and on the College Board's (USA) Advanced Placement programme for Grades 11 and 12. All tenth graders take a minimum of 4 IGCSEs, and seniors take an average of 4 APs. After graduating from Woodstock, 95 percent of our seniors attend colleges or universities. About 50 percent go to the United States, 25 percent to India, and 25 percent to the rest of the world (UK, Australia, Switzerland, Singapore, Korea, Japan, and

elsewhere). Woodstock's combination of an American high school diploma, together with a range of US College Board Advanced Placement Examinations, means that students are well prepared academically for college entry in most countries. We also offer SAT and PSAT tests, as well as the American College Test (ACT) for those seeking entry to US colleges. Our three college guidance counsellors cover the US, UK, and India; the range of countries represented by the Woodstock staff (including Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa) means that specialist advice for other countries is always available.

An important factor in college entry in North America and other countries is the extent of the student's activities and involvement outside the academic curriculum. By studying at Woodstock, your child will have access to a wide range of experiences. From Model United Nations to hiking, from leadership positions to service trips, from Indian culture to musical ensembles and choirs, a plethora of opportunities for personal growth and skill development are available.

What are the advantages of Woodstock School for a non-Indian child?

Sometimes parents moving to India or South Asia can be very concerned about maintaining a Western quality of education and lifestyle, to the detriment of entering fully into the vibrant culture of the host country. Woodstock has been part of India for over 150 years. Our two histories are inextricably intertwined, from the days of the Raj, through Independence, and up to today's high-tech, fast-growing economy. Woodstock is part of India, and students are exposed to many aspects of Indian culture, from learning musical instruments such as sitar and tabla, to studying Hindi, to participating in Activity Week trips to local villages and tourist destinations, to wandering in the friendly, colourful local bazaar.

The climate in India can be a major worry for parents. Woodstock, at 6,500' in the Indian Himalayas, is free of the heat, dust, and pollution of the major cities. There is no lengthy commuting to school. Woodstock parents are free of concerns about how their children are spending their time—our students don't wander around malls or sit for hours in front of the TV. Personal development and academic achievement success are high priorities, linked with extensive opportunities for outdoor pursuits and the development of interests and skills.

After graduation, students become part of a truly worldwide alumni network. We are in touch with more than 3,500 former students and staff in almost every country of the world. Our interactive alumni website helps members plan reunions, exchange resumes, offer jobs, and connect with friends. Wherever work or leisure takes you, there will be a Woodstock alumnus or alumna to welcome you and make you feel at home. The world of tomorrow will belong to those who can easily and comfortably cross geographical and cultural borders—this is the lasting legacy of Woodstock to our students.

Tell me more

Woodstock School's website (www.woodstock.ac.in) gives more information about the school's curriculum, our residence life, and our student outcomes. There are weekly postings of news from the school on <http://www.woodstock.ac.in/News/>. Our prospectus and other documents can be downloaded from www.woodstock.ac.in/Publications/.