



Founded 1125

6th September 2019

Dear Parent/Carer,

**Chinese Students – Request for Host Families
Thursday 3rd October – Wednesday 16th October 2019**

In October, we welcome 33 students and 2 staff from Suzhou Science and Foreign Language School <http://en.sfls.com.cn/> and Changshu International School <http://www.csints.org.cn/>.

We are delighted to offer you the opportunity to host a student or students from our link schools in China. Whilst this is **not a school exchange** and we are at this stage **only hosting our Chinese counterparts** this can bring immeasurable benefits to our pupils giving them the opportunity to gain insight into the lives of our Chinese contemporaries, improve communication and social skills and increase confidence. Hosting a student from another country can be the most rewarding experience in the world creating many memories.

One in five of the world's population is Chinese, this will provide your son and you as a family the chance to gain in-depth knowledge about Chinese culture. Welcoming a student from China can increase understanding between cultures in a unique and deeply life-changing way.

It is also part of our strategy to ensure that Reading School students benefit from having a more global outlook. The introduction of the Mandarin Excellence programme for selected students in year 7 this year is a further aspect of our drive to increase knowledge and understanding of other cultures and languages.

Purpose of visit

The Chinese pupils are visiting England to immerse themselves in English culture and to meet and mix with families and students to learn more about life in the England and to improve their spoken English.

About the students

The students from our link schools, part of the Lunhua Educational Group, are aged between 12 and 14. Almost all of the children are weekly boarders and live in school during the week. Therefore, your visitor will be used to being away from home. Our link schools in China are private schools which have a strong international ethos.

All of the Chinese students are learning English and they are coming to Reading because they are keen to practice and improve. They may be a little shy about using their English at first as it always takes a while to adjust to a different language being spoken so you will need to be patient and encourage speaking in English.

Mandarin Chinese (the national language) is spoken by more than 70% of the population and is also used in Singapore and Malaysia. China has 55 different ethnic groups, each with its own language or dialect.

Your visitor will almost certainly have an English name in addition to his or her Chinese name.

Cultural differences and settling in

Our programme is a great way for British and Chinese students to gain a greater understanding of each other's culture and ways of living. Reading School and the Chinese teachers will do all they can to help your visitor to settle in and answer any queries you may have.

Officially China is an atheist country, although it is not unusual to find some small religious groups as Taoists and Buddhists. Muslims represent 1% – 2% of the population and Christians 3% – 4%.

The Chinese have a strong sense of family, and they respect hierarchy and interpersonal obligations. Parents expect to know when their children are going out and where they are going. Because parents tend to take a keen interest in their children's education and expect them to study hard, they will typically set limits on going out or on recreational activities that might interfere with schoolwork. Families generally include one child, and it is not uncommon for a grandparent to live with the family.

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Chinese students spend a great deal of their day in school engaged in studying. As described above, much of a Chinese teenager's life revolves around his or her school. When not at school or engaged in school activities, teenagers get together at friends' homes, go to movies, watch television or play sports. Soccer, ping-pong, handball, volleyball, basketball, Chinese traditional martial arts, and dance are all popular pastimes.

Payment for Hosting

We appreciate that having a Chinese student will incur costs, for instance, meals and transport. We can therefore pay £150 per week for each visitor totalling £300 for two weeks. This payment is not taxable income, but rather to recompense for expenses of hosting.

Boarding only

Please note this opportunity is also open to Boarders whereby a Chinese student would be can be hosted in your son's boarding house, but you would be expected to entertain and host the Chinese student at the weekends. Therefore, you would only be entitled to a partial cost of hosting at the weekends.

If you are interested in hosting one or more Chinese student(s), please complete the link [here](#) by **3pm on Monday 9th September**.

Further details regarding hosting will follow once we have an indication of interest. If you have any further queries in relation to hosting a Chinese pupil please contact Emily Turner (eturner@reading-school.co.uk).

I hope your son will join in on this experience and potentially making a lifelong friend from China.

Yours sincerely,

Mr AM Robson
Headmaster