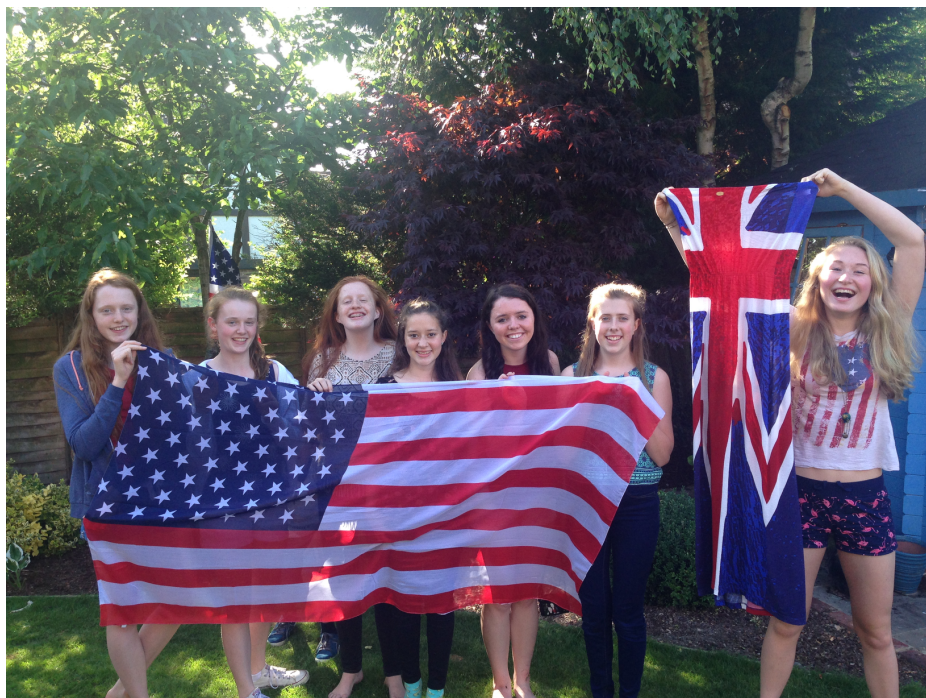




## Network of Sacred Heart Schools

# Upper School Exchange Program Handbook





## **Exchange Program Description**

A unique benefit of a Sacred Heart education is the opportunity to go on an exchange program to another [Sacred Heart school](#), either domestically or internationally. The experience provides educational, social and cultural enrichment for both the individual student, as well as the host school. The opportunity to live and study in another area of the country or world, even for a short time, allows the student to develop independence and deepen cultural awareness. The program encourages personal growth in an atmosphere of wise freedom, while building community and advancing intellectual values. The hope is that participants in the exchange program become increasingly informed, responsible and active members of the Sacred Heart community and greater world.

### **List of Topics:**

- A. What is the exchange program?
- B. Who is eligible?
- C. Where can you go?
- D. When can you go?
- E. How much will it cost?
- F. What is expected of students?
- G. What is expected of families?
- H. What does the selection process involve?
- I. When will you know?
- J. What are the main selection criteria?

### **A. What is the Exchange Program?**

- It is a reciprocal exchange between Sacred Heart schools.
- A SHA (Bryn Mawr) student visits another Sacred Heart school and lives with a student and her family. The host student will then visit our school and stay with our student and family.
- Exchange students become a member of the host family and school. Students are expected to be fully involved with family and school life.
- The bulk of the exchange will occur during school time in the visiting school.
- As it is a cultural exchange, students should also embrace the different experiences offered to them.
- Exchanges are a two week minimum, but may last longer.

## **B. Who is eligible?**

Students who participate in the exchange program demonstrate good conduct, strong rapport with teachers, independence in their learning, positive attitudes and make meaningful contributions to the school community. Any student interested in exchange should consider the following guidelines:

**Academics:** A student should have a recommended 3.0 GPA or better and should consider whether she will be able to make up missed material and work independently.

**Maturity:** A student should be able to adapt to living with a new family. The student must have the ability to adjust to unknown situations and have the flexibility to accommodate other lifestyles and personalities.

**Independence:** A student should feel that she can comfortably leave her family and friends for the exchange period without overwhelming homesickness. She may have to make decisions independently while on exchange.

**Social Skills:** A student should possess the social skills that will enable her to meet new challenges and mingle with new people. She is expected to be polite, responsible, tolerant and open to new situations.

**Age/Level:** Students participate in exchange during their sophomore year. This year is the best match for missing several weeks of school time. International exchanges depend on the partner school schedule. Often, they work best in the summer after sophomore year or the summer after junior year.

\*To qualify for Exchange, the student's account must be in good standing with the Business Office.

### C. Where can you go?

There are approximately [150 Sacred Heart schools](#) in over forty countries around the world and over twenty schools in the United States and Canada, but not all schools are involved in exchanges.

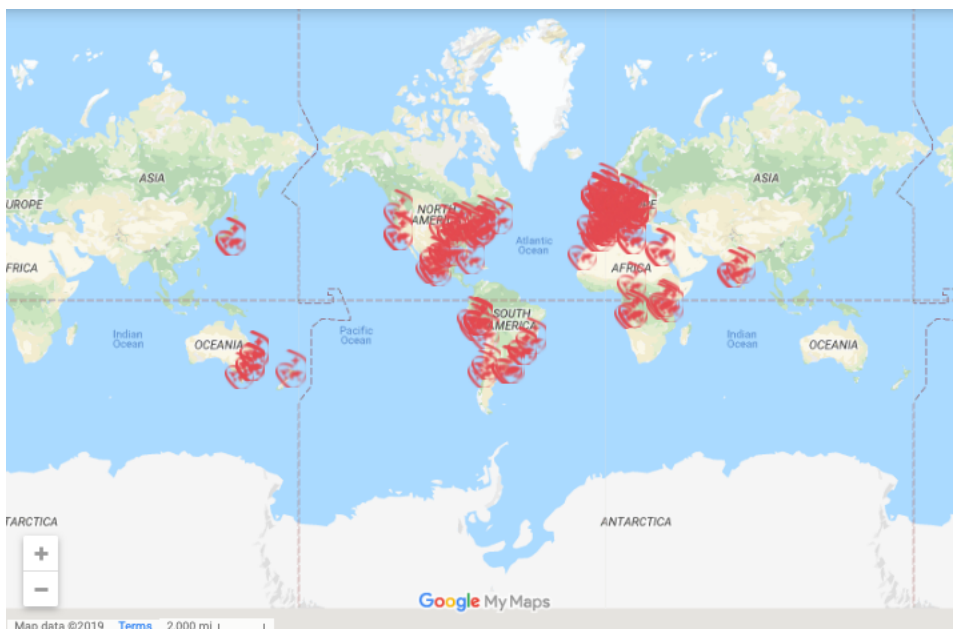
It is best to work with schools with known partnerships.

In the U.S., some of our successful exchanges have been with:

- Duchesne Academy - Omaha, NE
- Academy of the Sacred Heart - New Orleans, LA

Outside of the U.S., some of our successful exchanges have been with:

- Sacré Cœur - Melbourne, Australia
- Sophie Barat Schule - Hamburg, Germany



Note: Not all Sacred Heart schools are single-sex or continue through high school grades.

### D. When can you go?

- Generally, students go on exchange for a minimum of two weeks. The specific quarter of visitation depends on the student and receiving school. Special consideration will be given to students requesting a longer, international exchange.
- Exchange dates are negotiated between the families and schools.
- Flight reservations cannot be made until approval is received from both schools.
- No exchanges are allowed during exam periods.
- In the Upper School, only sophomores are eligible to participate.

- Students are encouraged to plan exchange around school holidays so that they may maximize their visit but limit the missed academic work.
- Some international schools can receive exchange students during our summer break.

#### **E. How much will it cost?**

- Parents/families are responsible to pay air fares, travel insurance, medical insurance, passport and visa costs, as well as personal expenses and spending money.
- The exchange visits are reciprocal; no school fees are payable to the host school. Families will continue to pay tuition and fees to SHA.
- Some international exchanges may involve additional tuition payments to the host school; this would be above and beyond the regular tuition paid to SHA
- Exchange students should take sufficient pocket money to pay for their transportation to school (if needed), occasional meals with friends, movies, etc.

#### **F. What is expected of students?**

- Students are expected to be excellent representatives of SHA and of their families.
- Students must participate in the life of the host family and of the host school community.
- Students are expected to attend classes during the school day.
- Students are responsible for completing all missed class work. They must coordinate missed work with teachers before departure. Each teacher will set expectations that are reasonable for the course.
- Teachers are available via email during exchange and in-person after exchange to help the student. However, if a student needs extensive help after the exchange, she is responsible for hiring a tutor. It is not the teacher's responsibility to re-teach all the content.
- Students should have a willingness to share their experiences with the SHA community, both formally and informally.

#### **G. What is expected of families?**

- Families should be prepared to cover all financial costs and complete all organizational matters.
- In the nature of the reciprocal exchange, the ability to host an exchange student is preferred.
- Families are expected to show the visiting student around the Philadelphia region, but there is no expectation that they take the visiting student on a trip or vacation.

#### **H. What does the selection process involve?**

- Students must be enrolled in SHA for at least one Upper School year prior to exchange.
- The student and family must read and accept the conditions of exchange.
- Teacher input is considered.
- Students complete a written application and personal narrative.
- Students meet all deadlines in the application process.

## **I. When will you know?**

- After the application process is complete, the student is approved for exchange by the Exchange Committee, Director of the Upper School, Director of Studies, Director of Finance and the Head of School.
- The Exchange Committee will work over the summer and through early fall to acquire the exchange placement.
- Successful candidates will be informed as host families/schools are confirmed.

## **J. What are the main selection criteria?**

- Motivation for wanting to be involved in exchange.
- Understanding of the exchange program.
- Personal skills as a representative of SHA
- Knowledge of the Sacred Heart Goals.
- Involvement in and commitment to Sacred Heart activities during her school life.
- Maturity and ability to cope with living away from home.

## **Deadlines**

|   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| Exchange Meeting for Freshman   | February                             |
| Exchange Applications Due   | March                                |
| Exchange Team Meeting to Review Applications                                    | March                                |
| Exchange Adviser will Initiate and Maintain Contact with Potential Host Schools | July-September                       |
| Placement Progress Report From Coordinator                                      | As soon as information is available. |