



Shady Side Academy: Five-Day and Seven-Day Boarding Residential Life Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

For Five-day boarders, what is the weekly schedule related to coming to and departing from school? Five-day boarders must be out of their dorm by 6:00 pm on Fridays and are welcome to return after 5:00 pm on Sundays with an open invitation to dinner in the dining hall for a nominal charge (\$5). Five-day boarders ***must sign out of the dorm*** when they go home on Friday. Five-day boarders are expected to return to campus and check in at the dorm no later than 10:00 pm on Sunday evening and must sign into the dorm immediately upon their arrival on campus so that every student is accounted for. We recommend that five-day boarders return to campus in time for Sunday evening study hours to prepare for school the next day. If this is not possible and the student will return on Monday morning, the student must notify the dorm advisor on campus by 7:00 pm on Sunday evening.

Five-day boarders may request permission to stay on campus for Friday and/or Saturday night for the purpose of fulfilling an Academy commitment on Saturday and/or Sunday by completing REACH “Request to stay on campus – weekend” request by noon on Thursday. The fee for a Friday or Saturday night stayover with no specific Academy-related commitment for five-day boarders is \$40. (This fee will be waived on occasions when the student is obligated to be on campus or for events such as Homecoming Weekend.)

What is the morning schedule like for a boarding student? Like most teenagers, boarding students prize their sleep! Boarders usually wake up between 7:00 – 8:00 am, take a quick shower, eat breakfast in McCune Dining Hall if they wish, and then head off for their first period classes by 8:15 am. 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 8:15 am, take lunch according to their class schedule, and dinner is served from 5:30-7:00 pm. At Monday dinners (6:15 pm) students and Residential Life faculty come together for Community Dinner, a meal at which the entire Residential Life community sits together at assigned tables to socialize and catch up on the day. Regular dinners 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 excellent!* There are always lots of options, with vegetarian entrees, poultry, meat, and fish dishes, nutritious vegetables, salads, desserts and other student favorites, too. On Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings, there is a tasty a la carte menu that students can order from as well.

What is the evening schedule like? The boarding community has time after dinner to play games on the quad, relax, socialize, or get a start on homework. All students must check in with the dorm advisor on duty by no later than 7:45 pm. Following this check-in, all students have required Study Hours for two hours each night from 7:45 pm – 9:45 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 advisor on duty who supervises the halls but gives students more freedom to study in a mature fashion on their own. 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, students may continue working, socialize a bit, participate in recreational activities or go to sleep. All boarders must check in with the dorm advisor on duty by 10:30 pm, and by 11:00 pm, all underform (9th and 10th grade) students are required to have their lights out. Juniors' lights out are at 11:30 pm, and we suggest that Seniors and Prefects turn in by 11:30 pm as well (though final lights out for these students is midnight). Students can request Late Lights, if they have been working steadily over the course of the evening.

Where do teachers live? Four dorm advisors, who also teach at the Academy, reside in faculty apartments in both Croft House, the boys' dormitory, and Morewood House, the girls' dormitory. Every night a dorm advisor 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 the dorm advisors*, 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.

What is life on campus like on the weekends for seven-day boarders? Starting at dinner Friday evening through dinner on Sunday, a team of Residential Life faculty are assigned to provide an active and engaging experience for those students on campus. The activities planned by the Director of Student Activities, the Office of Residential Life, and student prefects - both on and off campus - will cater to students of different cultural backgrounds and their varied interests. Most weekend activities are offered free of charge to seven-day boarding students.

May seven-day boarders leave on weekends to stay with friends? Yes. With proper parent and host permissions seven-day boarders who wish to leave campus overnight for the weekend after their last commitment of the week can request permission for an off-campus overnight from EITHER Friday through Sunday OR Saturday through Sunday.

What happens on Snow Days? The Dean of Student and Residential Life, in collaboration with the Dorm Heads and Director of Student Activities will schedule duty teams, activities, and meals on snow days. The dormitories will remain open, and meals will be served, albeit on a modified schedule that is similar to a weekend. Our approach will be "if there is snow, we should play outdoors!"

May my child either drive his/her car or ride in one off-campus during free time? With proper permission granted by a parent and by a member of the residential faculty, boarders are allowed to travel off-campus at appropriate times. Form V and Form VI (juniors and seniors) boarding students are allowed to have a car on campus (with parental permission).

Where will my child do laundry? Each dorm has sets of laundry machines in the basement for use by boarding students. Parents will find that five-day boarders usually take their laundry home on the weekends.

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. If there is room, singles are assigned first to Prefects, then to Seniors in order of the length of the time in the boarding program and/or roommate pairings.

Can I visit my child at school? We welcome family members to visit! A family commitment, special dinner, or doctor's appointment can always be accommodated. Should your visit include an off-campus trip for dinner, we ask that you not schedule these visits on Mondays, as that is our Community Dinner night. Parents and families may visit the dormitory before 7:00 pm and must limit their visits to no longer than a ½ hour in duration out of respect for all of the residents of the dorm (some of whom do not have the benefit of relatively local parents).

What if my child gets sick? The School has a day nurse, and an on-call nurse who lives on campus and is available for consultation after hours. If a student is sick during the school day, they should report to the school health center for medical attention or time to rest. The Nurse will either send the student to class, keep the student in the health center, or for five-day boarders, call the parent(s)/guardian and ask them to pick up the student and take them home.

If a parent has a concern about her or his child's health, s/he should contact any member of the dorm staff, the Nurse, or the Dean's Office. Parents of boarding students may not call in to excuse a student's absence due to illness unless they have brought the student home as a result of that illness the night before.

In the event of a more serious medical problem requiring hospital attention, a student will be transported to University of Pittsburgh Medical Center St. Margaret's Hospital nearby in Aspinwall. The student's parent(s) will be notified, and if located in the Pittsburgh area, asked to meet their child and the SSA representative at the hospital. The Academy has made arrangements with Foxwall Emergency Medical Service to provide emergency medical help and transportation for all residential students. ***In any life-threatening situation, 911 will be called immediately.***

What kind of campus safety and security measures are in place at Shady Side Academy?

We are fortunate to have a Campus Security team that provides our campus with twenty-four hour a day coverage. During the school day there are a minimum of two officers on campus and at least one officer during the remainder of the day and night. These officers are highly trained and several are former law enforcement professionals who have served in a variety of contexts, including campus environments. In addition, both dormitories are locked twenty-four hours a day and additionally alarmed from midnight to 6:00 am. Boarders gain access via a fob system that is personalized to them and programmed to provide access to their respective dorms only. The dormitories are alarmed each evening.

Does my child need a computer? Computers are necessary learning tools for our students; therefore, each dorm has WIFI access. Most of our boarding students bring their own computers with them, but a computer is not required. Each dormitory is protected by school firewalls to provide each student with a safe environment and a productive learning experience. In addition,

there is a printer in each dorm common area and a small number of Chromebooks that boarding students can utilize in the dorm when needed.

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 Pam Boehm, Dean of Residential Life, at pboehm@shadysideacademy.org with any further questions.