



Frequently Asked Questions

While many of you are familiar with some of the regular features of life as a Shawnigan parent, below are some answers to the most frequently asked questions to help guide you as you begin a new year with us.

1. Where should we stay when we visit the school? Where should we eat?

There are many local Bed & Breakfast style establishments in the area. Some suggestions from current families are: Marifield Manor (marifieldmanor.com), Shawnigan Shores (lakebb.com), The Prancing Horse (prancinghorse.com), The Old Farm B&B (oldfarminncowichan.com/index.html), and the Whistle Stop B&B (southvanislebnb.com/whistlestop). Also along the Malahat, about 20 minutes south of the school, is the Malahat Mountain Inn (malahatmountaininn.com/accommodations.htm). Another area about 20 minutes north of the school is Cowichan Bay where you will find the Travellers Inn Oceanfront Grand Resort and Marina (www.thegrandresort.com). Some families also enjoy staying in Victoria, which is less than an hour's drive from Shawnigan Lake. The Empress (fairmont.com/empress/), The Hotel Grand Pacific (hotelgrandpacific.com) and The Aerie (<http://www.aerie.bc.ca/>) are popular with our families.

There are also many great restaurants in the area. In Shawnigan Lake village there is *Steeple* (a favourite restaurant for some of our students on weekends!) and *Amusé*. Also close to the School is another restaurant on the lake called *The West Arm Grill*. On the way to Mill Bay there is *La Pommeraié Bistro* at Merridale Cider Works (merridalecider.com/la_pommeraié.html). In Mill Bay is *Baytown* restaurant. Fifteen minutes north of the School, in Cowichan Bay (where there are plenty of places to stay as well), there is another quality restaurant, the *Masthead*, and the local seafood favourite, *Rock Cod Café*. Also located in Cowichan Bay is a great bakery, a cheese shop and an ice cream parlor, where products are all locally produced. Fifteen minutes from Shawnigan, heading north towards Duncan on the Trans Canada Highway, is the *Pioneer House*.

2. What does my child need to bring to Shawnigan?

In addition to what you have already been advised to bring, here are a few items that students have found particularly useful, but are not mandatory:

- laptop (first choice among our students) or desktop computers. Note: There are computers available for all students to use in each House as well as several computer labs on campus. Often, however, these are difficult to access as they are being shared by many. If possible, a personal laptop or desktop computer is advised
- jump drives (portable hard disk. Can be found at A & B Sound, London Drugs, Staples, Future Shop, etc.)
- fan (small, portable)
- extra hangers
- bedding (1 set is fine). Should include a fitted twin sheet, duvet, duvet cover and 2 pillow cases - students are permitted to choose their own pattern and style
- pillows
- plastic drawer units (small for the bathroom, large for clothing or for school supplies on or beside the desk)
- small standing mirror for dresser
- shoe rack (maybe a sweater/t-shirt rack)
- speakers for computer or iPod hookup
- movies for rainy weekends
- posters (push pins for hanging on the wall)

Students have also mentioned that for those sports requiring specific equipment, the following are useful: bikes and helmets (school policy and mandatory by law), hockey gear (in the fall), ski or snowboarding gear (to include a helmet and to be brought back to the school after Christmas Break), and golf clubs (in the spring).



3. What clothes, OTHER THAN the uniform, should my child pack?

- 3 pairs of jeans (no holes or frayed cuffs and not too baggy)
- sweat pants (most students purchase a pair of Shawnigan ones from the store)
- shorts
- tank tops, t-shirts, long sleeve shirts
- “smart-casual” (ie. semi-dressy) shirts (for dances, birthday dinners, House, outings etc.); cardigan, skirt, pants, khakis/cords (for boys), dresses
- pajama pants (the most common pants worn during Prep!)
- sweatshirts/hoodies
- rain jacket, winter jacket (school issued winter jacket is mandatory during school hours), scarf, hat, gloves
- flip flops, running shoes, boots, flats
- bathing suit
- 2-3 bath towel sets

ALSO, we have many school spirit days and events, so stock up on BLACK and GOLD gear and items in House colours – lots of fun accessories. Some suggestions are: fun shirts, face paint, head gear, ribbons, funky outfits, socks, shoes, belts. Get creative and raid your local thrift shops!

4. What kind of school shoes should we purchase?

Boys: **Black** shoes, lace up or slip-on, with no design and that will take a shine.

Girls: **Black** dress shoes, lace-up or slip-on, low-heeled shoes, with no design and that will take a shine. “Ballerina” flats are not recommended (even though they are in style!) as they simply do not provide enough support or durability for our campus terrain and weather. Shoes should also not have an open back.

Keep in mind that your child is wearing these for eight hours a day, 5 days a week and they walk a great deal to and from classes over the course of the school year! Leather is preferable in order to withstand the West Coast climate and for durability purposes. The shoes should be able to be polished for the #1 uniform worn on Saturdays.

During September and also from the start of the third term, students are permitted to wear Birkenstock sandals with their summer uniform. The Birkenstocks must be brown in colour with two straps. Please do not purchase the style that has the strap around the heel. An inexpensive version of the sandal is available in the store.

5. What school supplies are useful?

- Pencils
- Pens
- Highlighters
- Erasers
- Pencil case
- Ruler
- Calculator (Graphing Calculator for Grade 10-12)
- 1 binder per subject
- 3-hole lined paper
- Graph paper
- Dividers
- Notebooks
- Post-it notes

The School’s store is well stocked with school supplies. They are available year round for purchase. The store is also stocked with toiletries, snacks, sports needs, etc.



6. What is the process for student laundry?

Each House is assigned a particular laundry day. Students take their laundry down before breakfast (7am) and it is ready for pick up later that day. Sports clothes can be dropped off daily for washing.

7. What about pocket money for my child?

Weekly allowance is available from the store. Any money that is needed in excess of the student's weekly allowance can be obtained with a "money order". This slip is available with the permission of the House Director who normally receives your blessing, depending on the amount and regularity. These amounts will be indicated on the monthly billing.

The School also operates an ATM in the Commissary. The charge for individual transactions is \$1.00. As another option to student allowance, parents may prefer to set up a limited bank account from which students can make ATM withdrawals. On-line review of this account by parents gives immediate information as to how much cash the student is using without having to wait for monthly student billing statements.

8. Who do I contact in regards to my child's account?

Please contact Heatherann Macintosh in the Accounting Department. She is in charge of all financial matters related to your child's account.

Phone: 250-743-6452

Email: hmacintosh@shawnigan.ca

Fax: 250-743-6269

9. Do all students have computers in their rooms?

91% of our students have their own computer and internet access is available in all rooms. Typically they are laptops since students like to use them when doing group projects outside of the House. Students can use either a Mac or PC. Those students who do not have computers have access to the House computers and other computers around the campus.

NOTE: During Prep time, 7-9pm, certain websites are restricted such as Hotmail, Facebook, My Space, You Tube, all gaming, and chat websites. Additionally, the internet is turned off at bedtime* until breakfast the following morning.

*Internet Shut Off Times

Grades 8, 9, 10 10:00pm

Grade 11 10:30pm

Grade 12 11:00pm

10. Is a printer necessary?

Printers are not mandatory, since there are printers in the Houses, library, and computer labs, but it can certainly help with projects and essays, especially if it is something that needs to be printed in colour.

11. Are students allowed a fridge in their rooms?

Only grade 12s are allowed to have a fridge in their rooms, but all House kitchens have one or two large fridges for food storage. All House kitchens have microwaves (and some have a dishwasher).

12. Can students have food in their rooms?

Although there is plenty to eat for snacks and meals, students like to have some food on hand in their rooms. Typical food choices are: instant noodles, microwave popcorn, crackers, drinks, and any snack food that comes in a box. Just a hint: students LOVE to receive care packages from home!



13. Where do students store their luggage and boxes?

Students bring their belongings in suitcases, trunks, boxes, duffel bags etc. Each House has a storage area for suitcases, etc. Long term storage (over the summer) is limited. As you make your plans for the year, note what items can be purchased locally and left at the School over the summer months.

14. When do parents get to meet the teachers?

Parents are invited to Shawnigan in the fall for our Parents' Open House. During that time parents will have a chance to meet with teachers, the House Director and advisor. At any time other than this, parents are welcome to set up meetings with teachers through their child's advisor. It is also acceptable to contact a subject teacher directly by phone or email to discuss progress in a particular subject area.

15. If I am in the area, when is a good time to visit or take my child out?

Parents are free to visit the campus at any time. When planning a visit, we ask that you contact your child's House Director. The House Director will give your child "leave" permission. The telephone numbers and email addresses for House Directors will be available on Opening Day.

16. When can my child come home?

Generally there are breaks every 4 to 6 weeks (these are listed on the School Calendar) and they range in length from 4 to 20 days depending on whether they fall mid-term or at the end of the term. Especially on the shorter breaks, students look forward to simple things: sleeping in their own bed, having some of their favourite meals and just spending down time with family and friends. It is a good practice to set aside time for them to do just that. They are very busy here at school and many demands are made on their time and energy. They really look forward to relaxing at home.

When making your travel plans, pay particular attention to the posted times for departure and return. The Transportation Office will help guide your travel decisions. You may also rely on the advice of the House Director who you may contact to clarify any details relating to permissions.

17. What are the guidelines for "Leave Weekends"?

In between the breaks, there are opportunities to go home for an overnight (these are also posted on the School Calendar). Leave weekends begin following sports on Saturday with students departing campus by bus at 3:00 pm to catch the 5:00 ferries from Swartz Bay or Nanaimo. They must return by 10:00 pm on Sunday. Students coming from Vancouver should take the 7:00 pm ferries from Tsawwassen and Horseshoe Bay. A bus will meet them here on the Island to bring them back to the School. On occasion, the School will schedule a "double overnight" for all students. In this case, leave begins after school on Friday with students leaving again at 3:00 pm for the 5:00 ferries. The return time is the same on the Sunday of a double overnight. While these are very short visits, again, they offer some time for students to go home or visit a friend's house to relax.

If a child needs to be absent overnight at a time other than scheduled leaves, permission must be sought well in advance from Jo-Anne Kingstone, Deputy Head. This is "special leave" and permission is generally given only for major family occasions (weddings, memorials, significant birthdays or celebrations) or emergencies. Absences from classes for concerts, family holidays or conveniences should not be requested.

18. Who do I call if I have questions about my child's progress in the first few days or weeks?

Two of the most important adults in your child's life will be their House Director and their advisor. If you have questions or concerns about homesickness, roommates, visiting campus etc, you should contact your child's House Director. If you have comments, questions or concerns about academics and your child's teachers, you should contact your child's advisor.



19. What should I do if I have a question about my child's academic programme?

Again, your first point of contact for academics is the advisor. The advisor will help answer your questions and also connect you to the appropriate person if you have questions specifically related to a subject teacher, tutoring, support from the Learning Centre, University Guidance or course selections.

20. When is it okay to call or email?

In short: anytime. We are here to help you and your child make this the very best experience possible. You know your child very well and have had the courage and foresight to send him or her to us here at Shawnigan. We are happy to work with you and share in the responsibility of educating and nurturing your child. For that reason, the more we communicate with each other, the better. If you have any question or concerns, please do not ever hesitate to contact any one of us who can help.