



## **The Brockwood Park School Agreements**

Dear Student,

You are interested in joining Brockwood, so it is important you understand what the School stands for and what is expected of you.

Here we are a community of more than one hundred people from many countries of the world who are living together differently. We are interested in understanding ourselves and each other so that we can live intelligently, without conflict and with affection. This is what the world needs, faced as it is with many problems.

To live together well we must all be able to change. It is easy to be absorbed with our personal concerns, demands and desires, but can we also understand and go beyond them? To do this we must be prepared to learn about and question our behaviour, beliefs, likes and dislikes, and that of others.

So as to support this learning, we have arrived at a number of agreements which we ask you to uphold during your time here if you wish to join us at Brockwood. Please read them and think about them carefully. Our reasons for these are shown in the following pages of this letter. If you do not understand either the agreements or the reasons given, do ask questions about them. The agreements do not cover every aspect of life at Brockwood, but they provide a framework for an intelligent way of living in the light of the School's intentions.

Whilst living at Brockwood, you are expected to:

1. begin the day at the agreed time
2. assist in caring for the School and for each other
3. care for your health, cleanliness and appearance
4. adopt a vegetarian diet during the whole of each term
5. negotiate a programme of studies that you apply yourself to
6. respect 'wing times' and remain in your bedroom at the end of the school day
7. refrain from exclusive relationships and sexually inappropriate behaviour
8. not smoke cigarettes, drink alcohol, or use recreational drugs
9. limit the use of electronic media to agreed places and times

## **Reasons for our Agreements**

### **1. Begin the day at the agreed time**

In order to ensure the smooth running of the School we begin the day at an agreed time, generally also the start of breakfast. You need to be up and out of your room by then, but you are encouraged to attend the Morning Meeting which occurs ten minutes before breakfast. This is a time when staff and students gather quietly, occasionally someone might play a piece of music, or read a poem or extract, but generally the time is spent together in complete silence and stillness. The Morning Meeting allows each one of us to learn about our own inner world, and better understand the movement of our thoughts and feelings.

### **2. Assist in caring for the School and for each other**

Within a family caring occurs naturally, but sometimes in larger communities its importance is forgotten. Brockwood is our home and we are all involved in caring for it and for each other. This ranges from practical matters such as cleaning the house, washing dishes and assisting with duty, through to helping a fellow student with homework, or taking meals to them when they are ill. Care is generally a natural expression of awareness, affection and sensitivity, and Brockwood encourages us to see beyond our self-centred concerns and behaviour and to nurture this care.

### **3. Care for your health, cleanliness and appearance**

We want you to be as healthy as possible at Brockwood and therefore we want you to eat well, get sufficient sleep and take regular exercise. You will be responsible for laundering your own clothes and keeping yourself and your room clean. We encourage you to reflect on your appearance and the choices you make regarding clothing and jewellery, recognising that Brockwood is simultaneously your 'home' and a place of work and an international school in which many cultural norms have to mix harmoniously. Our dress code is 'tidy casual' and we ask that hair is only dyed a natural colour and that any body-piercing is discreet and restricted to ears and side of nose.

### **4. Adopt a vegetarian diet during the whole of each term**

The School adopts a vegetarian diet out of a general respect for living things and in keeping with the wishes of the founder. Although this may require you to make adjustments to your previous eating habits, the School provides a wide range of nutritional opportunities, and considers our vegetarian ethos to be an essential part of our approach to education and inquiry.

### **5. Negotiate a programme of studies that you apply yourself to**

At Brockwood we want you to discover what you love to do and to challenge yourself in the process; therefore, at the beginning of each school year, having learnt about all of the courses on offer, you will have the opportunity to negotiate your programme of studies with the guidance and assistance of a member of staff. Once the timetable for the whole school is completed and classes begin, we expect you to commit to punctual attendance of the classes and to completing the classwork and homework required in order to get the best out of your educational experience here. Classes can only be changed via a process of consultation.

### **6. Respect 'wing times' and remain in your bedroom at the end of the day**

'Wing times' are the times when boys are no longer permitted to visit girls' rooms and vice-versa. Furthermore, at the time given as the 'end of the day' all students are expected to return to their own rooms and remain there until the morning. The school day is very busy with many social interactions, so it is important for students to have some quiet time at the end of the day, to get adequate sleep, and to establish a rhythm for the working week. The School also has a 'duty of care' which requires that we know you are safe and secure after nightfall.

### **7. Refrain from exclusive relationships and sexually inappropriate behaviour**

At Brockwood we discourage exclusive relationships that cause you to be unavailable socially to the rest of the community.

Learning about sexuality is an important part of your education, but modern society gives a lot of emphasis to sex and, as a teenager, we would like you to meet this pressure intelligently, questioning and considering the issues carefully; otherwise, you are likely to be pressured by them into imitating others before you are ready to decide for yourself. We feel that full sexual intimacy at too early an age is not conducive to the well-being of a young person, and that in the context of a boarding school it can have a detrimental impact on one's studies and one's relationships with fellow students and staff.

**8. Not smoke cigarettes, drink alcohol, or use recreational drugs**

At Brockwood we wish to encourage good health and clear thinking and we consider that the use of these substances does not support these aims. We feel that the School offers you a lifestyle that is in many ways more free, open and enjoyable than many other Schools and that for us to preserve this we must insist on these restrictions.

**9. Limit the use of electronic media to certain places and times**

In terms of what Brockwood is trying to do with regards to an all-round education, we feel passive entertainment (via electronic media: laptops, ipods, mobile phones, etc.) has become one of the biggest obstacles to students developing good relationships, study habits and attentiveness. In order to support full engagement in school life, and to encourage students to make good use of their time and energy, we limit the use of these items to places and times made known to the student at the beginning of the year.

## Sanctions at Brockwood

We hope that you will uphold these agreements because you understand the need for them. Please consider them carefully before you come to Brockwood because if you break them there are consequences, which may include one, or more, of the following:

1. A conversation with your tutor; a change in courses taken; a change in bedroom; restricted access to certain rooms (such as the Computer Room) or to certain areas (such as the Wings); a requirement to contribute more to school life through a project or activity; seeing a counsellor
2. Suspension from the School for a period of time during which you are encouraged to reflect on what has happened, to discuss this with your parents/ guardian, and to write to the School
3. Expulsion, or exclusion from the School.

### Note:

Suspension or expulsion are likely if:

- You bring in, or use, alcohol and illegal drugs at Brockwood
- You are unable to live by the School Agreements and do not respond to the steps mentioned in 1 above
- Your behaviour is such that staff feel they can no longer trust you in the School, or take responsibility for your being here. This usually occurs after a serious incident, if you are believed to be a risk to others, or yourself, or because of a serious breach of English law.

The purpose of preparing this letter is to help you know what will be expected of you whilst living at Brockwood. Please consider it carefully as a whole, and ask us to clarify any doubts you may have so that we can begin the year with a strong sense of working together.

**Adrian Sydenham**  
**Co-Principal**

**Gopal Krishnamurthy**  
**Co-Principal**

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### ***THE SCHOOL AGREEMENTS***

I have read, understood and will comply with the agreements.

Date : .....

Name of Parent or Guardian : .....

Signature of Parent or Guardian : .....

Name of Student : .....

Signature of Student : .....

***If parents or students wish to add any comments concerning the Agreements, please do so on a separate sheet of paper. Before travelling to Brockwood, return this signed slip to:***

***The Admissions Officer, Brockwood Park School, Bramdean, Hants, SO24 0LQ, UK***