

**Dear Parents and Guardians,**

**Re: Boarding at Rikkyo School**

As Director of Pastoral Care at Rikkyo School, I am pleased to introduce myself and provide an update on the ongoing development of our boarding provision. I was appointed to this role in September 2024 and have since been working closely with the Headmaster and the Board of Trustees to refurbish and enhance the Boarding experience at our school.

It is a privilege to support Rikkyo School in shaping a high-quality, British-style Boarding environment. I bring with me 18 years of experience in British boarding schools, having previously served as Senior Deputy Head (Pastoral), Head of Boarding at ACS Cobham International School, and Assistant Head. I hold a PGCE from the University of Oxford, an Advanced Certificate in Pastoral Care and Boarding Management from the Boarding Schools Association, and an MA in Boarding Education. I also serve as a Team Inspector for the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI), conducting inspections on behalf of the UK Government.

Rikkyo School is committed to delivering a nurturing, modern Boarding experience that meets the needs of pupils in the 21st century. Since my appointment, I have led the development of a strategic plan that aims to preserve the warm and welcoming character of Rikkyo Boarding while significantly enhancing the quality of pastoral care and facilities.

**Refurbishment and New Boarding Houses**

During the Spring Break, we undertook a comprehensive refurbishment of the Boarding Houses. Rikkyo School now proudly offers British-style boarding across three newly restructured and refurbished houses:

- **Garden House** – for girls
- **Oak House** – for senior boys
- **Maple House** – for junior boys

Each house has been designed to provide a ‘home away from home’—a safe and supportive environment for Japanese pupils during term time. A detailed **Boarding Handbook** is attached with this letter to provide further insights into how Boarding life operates.

**Housemasters and Housemistresses**

In line with British Boarding traditions, each house now has a dedicated Housemaster or Housemistress who provides consistent, 24-hour care. This marks a shift from the previous rota-based staffing system, ensuring stability and deeper relationships within each house.

- **Maple House:** Mrs Foley has been appointed Housemistress, supported by Mr Goto as Deputy Housemaster.
- **Oak House:** Mr Shimazu serves as Housemaster, living in the house with his wife and young family. He is supported by Mr Yuasa and his wife, also resident within Oak House.
- **Garden House:** Mrs Yuka Okuno is the Housemistress, bringing her extensive experience at Rikkyo School. She is supported by Miss Mukaigawara and British Deputy Housemistress, Miss Megan Cooper.

These Houseparents act *in loco parentis*—a Latin term meaning “in the place of a parent”—and play a vital role in supporting pupils’ day-to-day academic, emotional, and social wellbeing. To further support this system, a new Boarding Office has been established. It includes a wellbeing area, private consultation space, and secure storage for confidential materials.

## **Matrons**

We have also preserved the valued British tradition of appointing Matrons in each Boarding House. Matrons ensure the smooth operation of house life, overseeing everything from daily routines and pastoral care to practical support such as organising laundry, arranging medical visits, and planning birthday celebrations.

- **Maple House:** Mrs Woolbridge
- **Oak House:** Miss Croft
- **Garden House:** Mrs Andrews

Their warm presence and tireless efforts are instrumental in creating a supportive and well-organised living environment.

## **Common Rooms**

Each Boarding House now features a newly designed common room, situated on the ground floor to encourage social interaction and accessibility. These rooms are furnished with colourful sofas, comfortable chairs, books, games, and kitchen areas where students can make tea or prepare light snacks. Early feedback from pupils has been overwhelmingly positive, and we are delighted to see these spaces already serving as vibrant social hubs.

## **Health Centre and Laundry Facilities**

Our Health Centre has been relocated to a larger building and fully refurbished. It is overseen by an experienced British nurse, Mrs Sandra O'Donnell, and includes:

- Consultation room
- Overnight hospital beds
- Isolation rooms
- Refurbished bathrooms
- A dedicated Wellbeing Room

Additionally, we have upgraded our laundry provision with a new centralised service, ensuring efficient and hygienic support across the Boarding Houses.

## **Upgraded Bedrooms and Study Areas**

To meet the modern standards of British boarding schools, all bedrooms have been upgraded with new beds (featuring integrated storage), refreshed duvet covers, and individual study desks to foster good academic habits. We are currently preparing for the final phase of renovations, scheduled for the summer holidays, which will focus on the loft rooms in Garden House. This final phase will include new wooden storage beds, improved air conditioning, and a modernised bathroom with sinks, showers, and toilets.

I hope this letter has provided a clear and helpful overview of the recent improvements to Boarding at Rikkyo School. I look forward to keeping you updated on further developments as the academic year progresses.

**Yours Sincerely,**



**Mrs Jennifer Overton**

**Director of Pastoral Care**

Rikkyo Boarding Project 2025



Upgrading the facilities at Rikkyo School. April 2025.



Garden House



Oak House



Maple House



New common room, Oak House



Refurbished bedrooms, Maple House