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# Welcome to International House Torquay

My name is Alex, and I am the Social Programme Organiser at the school.

My role is to enrich your experience by offering a vibrant and different Social Programme at our school.

I am dedicated to enhancing the students' journey outside their classroom by organising memorable and engaging social activities.

My primary mission is to ensure that your time in Torbay is not only productive academically but also culturally enriching and fun.

## Here's what you can expect from me:

### Diverse Social Programme

I design a calendar of events that showcase the rich heritage of Torbay and provide opportunities for cross-cultural interactions. From local excursions to cultural festivals, I ensure that there will be something for everyone.

### Student Centric – Approach & Feedback

Your input is invaluable. I actively seek your suggestions and feedback to tailor our Social Programme to your preferences and needs, making sure you have a voice in shaping your experience.

### Collaboration

I believe in teamwork, and I collaborate closely with local organisations, clubs, and associations to maximise our resources that broaden your horizons.

### Inclusivity

The Social Programme is designed to be diverse and inclusive to celebrate the various backgrounds and perspectives that make our student community unique.



Alexander Fogden  
Social Programme Organiser

## Why Choose Our Social Programme:

### Variety & Cultural Immersion

Our events will vary from cultural showcases to adventure trips. We want you to fully immerse yourself in the local culture, and our social programme is your gateway to that experience.

### Community & Connections

We are not just an international school; we are a community. Our programme will promote connections with people from all over the world, making friendships and expanding your global network.

### Memories

We hope you will leave here with unforgettable memories, as our activities are designed to provide a balance between academia and recreation. We create opportunities for you to make memories that you will cherish long after you leave Torbay.

### Your Voice Matters

Your satisfaction and personal growth are at the core of everything we do. I will encourage you to share your ideas and opinions, ensuring that the Social Programme reflects your interests and aspirations.

In conclusion I am committed to promoting a transformative experience that make your time at our school truly exceptional.



## Our mission

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Our mission is to help every student and colleague realise their potential. We do this by creating opportunities to develop on a linguistic, cultural and professional level in a supportive, safe and environmentally friendly setting. We endeavour to inspire lasting relationships with our students and provide them with the tools to achieve their goals.

# Social Programme Overview

The Social Programme at International House Torquay is thoughtfully designed to offer students a holistic experience during their time at the school and often incorporates flexibility, considering the diverse needs and preferences of the students. This includes elements such as a cancellation procedure and a pay-as-you-go system.

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### Diverse Activities

The Social Programme includes a wide range of activities to cater to different interests, preferences, and backgrounds. This encompasses cultural, recreational educational and social events.

The activities may include city tours (such as Torquay, Brixham, Exeter and Plymouth), visit to stately homes, historical sites, and museums (Kents Cavern, Greenway, Stonehenge), informal language exchange sessions (Pub tours and Bowling), outdoor sports (Football, Sea kayak), coastal walks, movie nights and themed parties.

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### Regular Schedule

The programme typically follows a regular schedule on a monthly basis. This consistent system allows students not only to have plenty of opportunities to engage in extracurricular activities but also to plan their participation in advance.

A calendar of events is designed and is made available to the students through the school's website, so they can participate in activities that interest them. In addition, each week, the social events (such as a games evening) will also be posted on the school's social board, which is easily visible to everyone.

Every Monday, we run a free tour of Torquay, which is aimed at our new students to help them become familiar with the town that they are staying in. Every Sunday, we run a trip to Dartmoor, this is one of more popular excursions, and we believe that everyone should have the opportunity to visit the national park.

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### Thematic and Seasonal Events, and Involvement of Local Partners

The Social Programme includes special thematic events, such as holiday festivities (Halloween and Christmas parties), cultural festivals (International Agatha Christie Festival), and seasonal celebrations (Air Show exhibition, beach parties).

The school collaborates with local businesses, cultural institutions, and organisations to offer a genuine taste of the destination's culture and activities.

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### Student Input and Flexibility

The Social Programme is designed with the active input from students who are encouraged to provide suggestions and recommendations for activities they would like to see included. This ensures that the programme remains student-centred and responsive to their preferences.

Regular feedback forms and sessions are conducted to assess the success of past events and make improvement. A copy of relevant handout of each activity will be provided for the students to complete through a QR code system obtained from the handout. The feedback received will be used to improve the quality of the Social Programme.

The programme is also flexible to accommodate the evolving needs of the students. Changes and adaptations may be made based on the students' feedback.

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### Inclusivity, Promotion and Communication

The Social Programme is planned to be inclusive and celebrate the diversity of the student body. Informal language exchange sessions are a common feature, allowing students to practice their languages skills and to share different culture and traditions in a relaxed social setting.

Information about upcoming event is communicated through multiple channels, including school notice board, social media and in-person announcements.

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### Risk Assessment and Safeguarding Procedures

The Social Programme is designed by considering risk assessment and safeguarding measures which are put in place to ensure the safety and well-being of our students taking part in our social activities.

Both risk assessment and safeguarding measures help identify and mitigate potential risks, provide protection for all participants, especially for students under 18 and group of young learners.

We also ensure that leaders are trained and well-prepared to handle any unexpected situation, especially in outdoor activities where additional precautions like first aid kits can be vital.

Risk assessments are periodically reviewed and updated, especially if circumstances or conditions change and if any new potential hazard is identified.

For outdoors activities, we include a well-equipped first aid kit as a safety measure accessible to the activity to make sure that medical attention can be given in case of injuries or emergency.

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### Pay-as-You-Go System

The pay-as-you-go-system is a convenient way for students to participate in the social programme.

Students pay for each event they wish to attend individually. The cost of each event is displayed on the description of each activity visible on the school calendar and on the school social board. IH Torquay accepts card payment only.

Prices start at a minimum of £10 for events such as coastal walks, cream tea, theatre tickets which offer an affordable experience. For those seeking more extensive and long-distance explorations, we offer full day trips priced maximum at £65 to Bath, Stonehenge and Salisbury, Dartmoor, Tintagel and Boscastle, Looe and Polperro.

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### Cancellation Procedure

To accommodate the dynamic schedules and potential changes in students' plans, IH Torquay offers a straightforward procedure in place.

This procedure typically involves:

- Providing a specific deadline by which students can manage their participation in an event. This deadline is usually a few days before the scheduled events. Students are encouraged to cancel as early as possible if they are unable to attend, giving the opportunity to other students to participate in the events.
- Developing a backup plan for situations where the initially scheduled event advertised in the calendar and the social board is cancelled due to adverse weather condition or unforeseen circumstances. This system allows the students to access another activity.

# Procedures for Implementing Disability Measures

International House Torquay organizes outdoors activities such as excursions or coastal walks in Torquay which may pose challenges for people using wheelchairs or with limited mobility, hearing, and visual impairments due to the strenuous nature of the walk.

Our school places high importance on ensuring that all organised activities are intricately designed with inclusivity and accessibility in mind, guided by the overarching goal of accommodating the needs of all participants.

In specific terms, we have implemented a set of procedures within our Social Programme to address the requirements of students with mobility issues.

These measures include:

- Providing wheelchair-accessible vehicles for exploring areas with uneven terrain and ensuring accessible parking spaces close to the location.
- Offering adaptability and flexibility in the starting point of coastal walks, allowing them to begin from locations featuring flatter and more accessible routes going at a leisurely pace.
- Providing accessible rest areas with seating, shade, and drinking water facilities.
- Enabling students with limited mobility to make reservation in advance by submitting specific mobility requirements prior to their arrival.

# Torquay

Torquay is a perfect example of a British seaside town, offering a mix of Victorian – era architecture, a vibrant harbour, an international marina, sandy beaches and wonderful array of continental style cafes, restaurants, and cocktail bars.

Torquay is the town where the crime writer Agatha Christie was born, and it is known as the “English Riviera” due to its picturesque seaside setting, palms, and mild climate. The name “English Riviera” has historical root dating back to the Victorian era.

During this period, Torquay, and the surrounding areas, became popular resort destinations for the British elite, like the French Riviera was a favoured destination for European aristocracy.

In September 2007, the English Riviera became one of the eight UNESCO Global geoparks in the UK for its rich historical and cultural heritage. The Geopark covers 6,200 hectares of land and 4,100 hectares of seabed.

The Geopark status was granted to Torbay because the area has a varied geology covering several geological periods, which are exposed at the surface in many areas.



Cockington Village



Cockington Village is an enchanting blend of meticulously designed gardens, expansive open parkland, serene rural surroundings, and extensive woodlands.

Within its 450-acre country park, you will discover charming ornamental lakes, a historic Manor House featuring centres and studios, and idyllic village reminiscent of a chocolate box, charming, thatched cottages, and a quaint 11th Century church.



Kents Cavern



Kents Cavern is one of Europe’s top Stone Age caves, offering an extensive network of captivating caverns open year-round. The cavern is renowned as “Britain’s Oldest Home” due to the identification of a jaw fragment that dates back 41,000 – 44,000 years, marking the earliest evidence of a modern human settlement in Britain.

Visitors can explore its intriguing passageways and fascinating cave formations learning about the ancient history, geology and archaeological discoveries associated with this remarkable site.



Torre Abbey



Torre Abbey, originally established as a monastery in 1169, was a significant centre for religious life in the local community. Later the Abbey became the home of the Cary family and today it is a museum.

Visitors can explore the history of the Georgian Cary Family. Of particular interest is the museum featuring exhibitions related to writers, weapons and war, fine art, archives, archaeology, maritime and religion. The award-winning garden is famed for its superb flower planting, and it pays homage to Agatha Christie throughout the years.



Agatha Christie Mile



The Agatha Christie Mile is a scenic and historically trail in Torquay, dedicated to celebrating the life and literary legacy of the world-renowned author, Agatha Christie.

This mile-long pathway takes visitors on a journey through various locations that held significance in Agatha Christie’s life, including her birthplace, childhood home, and places that inspired her famous detective novels.

It is a must-visit for fans of the English writer, offering a glimpse in the world of the “Queen of Mystery” and her enduring impact on the literary and cultural landscape.



Greenway House



Greenway House was the holiday home of Agatha Christie.

The relaxed and atmospheric house is set in the 1950s and was where Christie and her family would spend their summers and Christmas' with family and friends.

Her family have a range of collections and the house is filled with archaeology, silver, botanical China, and books. The estate is surrounded by beautiful gardens overlooking the river Dart.



Torquay Museum



Torquay Museum is a treasure of local history and heritage of Torquay, including geological wonders, archaeological finds, and exhibits related to the life and works of Agatha Christie.

The museum offers a delightful journey through times and provides a deeper understanding of the region's past and its literary connections.



Coastal walks



Our school offers a diverse range of coastal walks along the stunning shoreline of Torbay.

Whether you are a beginner, an avid hiker, a family with young children or a group of students seeking adventure, the coastal walk is tailored for participants of all ages and background at a leisurely pace.

You will have the opportunity to admire stunning views of the rugged cliffs, rock formations and spot various marine wildlife of the English Channel.



Theatre Evening



Our school organises trips to the theatre for events such as musicals and shows as they play a significant role in enhancing social interactions and community engagement.

Theatre events often showcase various traditions and historical periods allowing participants to gain a deeper understanding of different sense of humour and fostering cultural appreciations.

Some of the theatre productions included in the Social Programme have been adapted to Agatha Christie's crimes stories, delighting audiences with their suspenseful and intriguing plots.



## Dartmoor

The trip to Dartmoor is one of the popular trips included in our Social Programme.

We organise a week half day or a Saturday/Sunday full day excursion to the most famous National Park in the Southwest.

Dartmoor National Park is a stunning and rugged expanse of moorland, granite tors, rolling hills, steep river valleys and dense forests covering approximately 954 square kilometres.

The National Park is famous for the variety of free roaming ponies and life-stock, and it is rich in historical and archaeological sites, with ancient settlements and prehistoric stone circles.

What makes Dartmoor a mystique area is the numbers of legends and folklore attributed to this park.

Some of the famous stories include the tales of the Hairy Hand, a phantom pair of hand that allegedly attack travellers on a remote road, the Legend of Kitty jay's grave, which is associated with a tragic love story; and the mysterious beast known as the "Hound of Dartmoor", often compared to the "Hound of Baskerville" from Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes novel.



## Saturday full day visits

On Saturday, our school organises full day excursions to various captivating destinations in the Southwest.

We use the day to explore locations outside of Torbay, so our students can see a bit more of the country during their visit.

We visit a variety of places, so hopefully there is something that suits everyone for example we visit the cities of Plymouth and Bath, the Cornish Coastline and towns of St Ives, and national landmarks like Stonehenge.



## Community Events

We engage in local events and celebrations throughout the year to give our students a good insight into our traditions.

These events provide a unique opportunity for our students to experience the area in a way that not everyone is lucky enough to.

A few examples of events that we part in are the Red Arrows Airshow, Brixham Pirate Festival and the English Riviera Walking Festival.

## ACCREDITATIONS



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